

the course of his remarks, Mr. Atkin paid a high tribute to the humanitarian work organised by the *Daily Chronicle* on behalf of the wounded soldiers in the Greco-Turkish campaign. The value of the aid sent must not be measured by the amount collected (£10,000). It was rather an offering from those among this nation who were dissatisfied with the levity displayed in high quarters when the wrongs of the Cretans were crying to Heaven for vengeance. It was an expression of a burning desire on the part of many to help the weak in an unequal struggle against a tyrannical alliance. Our work in Thessaly was coming to an end, but in Crete there was an immense amount to be done. When he travelled amongst the refugees scattered over Eubœa and Bœotia, six months ago, he was everywhere met with the kindest greeting, and it was noteworthy that the refugees begged that their thanks for what had been done for them—not much after all—should be made known in England. On returning from Northern Greece to Athens he (the speaker) was received in private audience by the King, who spoke with great emotion of the sympathy shown to Greece by the people throughout the United Kingdom. At the end of the interview, the King said: "My people are most grateful for the aid so quickly sent to the sick and the poor. I join them in sincerely thanking all our friends who have given such precious help." The Sisters who took part in nursing the wounded will be pleased to receive their share of thanks.

The great Bismarck is dead, and as was inevitable the strong spirit *wrenched itself free*. It is reported that the death agony was so great that the weeping women were compelled to leave the room. Bismarck died in the arms of his physician, Professor Schweningen, and the strongest man of the century is no more.

Many of the sayings of this stupendous man will be recalled. He characterised Queen Victoria as one of "the wisest statesmen of the time," and yet he crushed under his iron heel the same power for good in her daughter the Empress Frederick.

"Liars, cowards, it comes to much the same thing."

"He who has once gazed into the glazed eye of a dying warrior on the field of battle will think twice before beginning a war," and yet he made ruthless war!

"The French are irreconcilable, savage foes, and if you strip them of the cook, the tailor, and the hair dresser, you will find nothing left in them but copper-skinned Indians."

And he added—"If I have an enemy in my power I must destroy him."—So that the primal forces of the human brute are not confined to the French or the captor of scalps.

Just six years ago Bismarck addressed a number of students, saying that somebody had asked him for a rule of life which could be stated simply:—"There is one word which expresses my rule and my gospel—Work. Without work life is empty, futile, unhappy. No man can be happy who does not work. To the youth on the threshold I have not one word, but three words of counsel to give:—Work! Work! Work!" That is a happy last word.

Our Holiday Letters.

[FROM GHENT.]

(Continued from page 96).



THE other hospitals at Bruges are l'Hôpital des Femmes Incurables, nursed by the Little Sisters of the Poor, and the Hospice de la Potterie. There is also a Military Hospital, but women are not allowed to go over it. The Hôpital des Femmes Incurables is a large new red-brick building on the ramparts. The patients seem very well cared for, and the Sisters are much more to the fore than in the Hôpital de St. Jean. A Sister superintends the cookery, coffee was being served to the patients when I was in the kitchen, and very appetizing it smelt. All the Sisters that I saw seemed alert and brisk. The Hospital has two wings, one being devoted to the paying patients, and the Sisters' quarters. There is a very nice chapel, with a specially beautiful pulpit. I went into the mortuary hoping I might find something nice, but it was quite ordinary, there was nothing at all remarkable about it. The wards are built out from a main corridor somewhat after the block system of St. Thomas', and between the wards are pretty little gardens. Close to this hospital are two other interesting institutions, the Béguinage, and an orphanage managed by the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul. The orphanage is an example of what it is possible to attain in the way of order, neatness, and cleanliness. It would be difficult to *excel* the standard which is reached here in any of the three. The whiteness of the floors reminds one of the deck of a man-of-war, and as for the linen closet I have never seen anything like its exquisite neatness and arrangement. The Béguinage is a most interesting place. Various derivations are given for the name, but it is at least certain that Béguinages have existed in Belgium from the end of the twelfth century, and their object is to promote a religious life, and the devotion of their members to works of charity (principally the tending of sick) and of honourable self maintenance. The members are unmarried women or widows of unblemished characters. They pay an entrance fee, and a certain sum for their yearly board. They are bound to go through a two years' probation before they can be elected as Sisters, after which they are subject to certain regulations, but do not take irrevocable vows. They are proud of the fact that very few of their members avail themselves of their liberty to return to the world. The younger Sisters live together, but after six years they may if they like retire into one of the separate houses. It is these little houses which form what is known as the Béguinage. At Bruges they surround a square of grass, shaded by lofty trees, and very quaint and pretty they are. Each house contains rooms for from two to four occupants. Many of the Sisters make most exquisite lace, which they sell to add to their funds. There are about twenty Béguinages in Belgium with

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)