

much more than seven. But of orderlies the War Office provides more than enough. What is wanted is more trained women nurses, both as Sisters, and specials, in the organization of military hospitals.

The New South Wales Medical Corps and Nursing Staff, which arrived at East London on the 23rd inst. on board the *Moravian*, were entertained in the Town Hall prior to their departure for Sterkstroom. The town was decorated for the occasion, and the men entrained for the front amid the greatest enthusiasm.

Nazareth House, Hammersmith, has received a telegram from Nazareth House, Kimberley, saying, "Sisters safe and well."

The joy in Kimberley at the raising of the siege is tremendous. Rations of late had been very scanty. The European death-rate during the last two months was fifty per thousand, and that of the natives nearly 200. Two hundred and seventeen persons died of scurvy alone during January, and typhoid and dysentery were rampant. All the weakly infants died.

A correspondent from New Zealand writes:—"The following nurses have been chosen for service, and are to be ready to start in the *Lincolnshire* on Saturday, provided that their services are accepted by the Imperial Government:—Nurses Peter, Webster, Littlecott, and Hiatt; dresser, Mr. Pierson. Nurses Webster, Littlecott and Hiatt were trained at the Christchurch Hospital under Dr. Murray-Aynsley and Miss Maude. Miss Hiatt was, for a time, Matron of the Samaritan Home, where unmarried women are admitted for confinement. Requisite funds to send these nurses to Africa have been raised solely by Canterbury (N.Z.) ladies. The New Zealand Government sends no nurses, and but one medical man with each contingent. Dr. Percy Fenwick (youngest son of Dr. Fenwick, of Harley Street), late assistant medical officer at Christchurch Hospital, sails with the second New Zealand contingent on Saturday, January 20th, in the *Waiwera*.

Sir William MacCormac seems ubiquitous; he is here, there, and everywhere, at the front, giving kindly advice, and full of praise for others. Mr. Treves, unfortunately, has been suffering with dysentery, which prostrated him at Chieveley, and it is rumoured that he intends soon to return home; so, presumably, he does not intend to remain in South Africa until the termination of the war.

All the authoritative medical lights in South Africa have denounced as absolutely baseless the allegations made by the *Times of Natal*, under the heading of Military Hospital Deficiencies. But, as we all know, there is no smoke without fire, and so long as the War Office continues to organize military hospitals, excluding the importance of scientific nursing as a factor in the treatment of the sick, just so long do the authorities lay themselves open to justifiable criticism by up-to-date journalists. Every official criticism of the management of the military hospitals in South Africa has been made by medical men; in our opinion, the arrangements of the nursing and domestic departments can only be efficiently criticised and controlled by an experienced and qualified Army Nursing Superintendent, and as no such officer has been appointed by the War Office for active service at the Cape, we cannot accept the indignant denials of Army and Civilian medical officers as infallible.

For instance, the special correspondent of the *British Medical Journal*, at Pietermaritzburg, writes, in relation to the articles in the *Times of Natal*:—"The author of the articles considers the strength of the nursing staff inadequate. To anyone accustomed to the nursing arrangements in civilian hospitals, this view, undoubtedly, at first sight, appears to be well founded. In a military hospital, a Nursing Sister often has charge of 50 or even more patients, if her wards happen to be full. There are, of course, orderlies in addition, in the proportion of about one to every ten patients. These men are really trained male nurses, and must be reckoned in estimating the strength of the nursing staff. In a civil hospital, where there are no male nurses, the proportion of nurses to patients is about 1 to 4. The nursing question is a large one, and cannot be discussed here, for there is much to be said on both sides. It suffices to note that the Army Medical Department deliberately adopts the system of working with a small staff of Nursing Sisters in stationary hospitals, and that the weakness of the female nursing staff in point of numbers is not peculiar to the hospitals of Pietermaritzburg."

When it is realised that the male orderlies are *not trained nurses* in the modern acceptation of the word, it would appear that the War Office elects to deny "Tommy" the highly-trained and skilled care, which patients receive in our civil hospitals, and which even the flotsam and jetsam of humanity now receive in our Poor Law Infirmaries. Is this justifiable in this age of imperial aspirations? Hardly.

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