

Meade, E. M. Buchanan, M. S. Milne (Royal Infirmary, Dundee), G. C. Moxon (Royal Portsmouth Hospital), E. A. Cowley, A. MacLeod, H. A. Cruikshank, M. McLeish, A. J. Douglas, H. M. O'Connor, F. K. Fitzmaurice, E. O'Neill, E. H. Hordley, B. Shepley, F. M. Hodgkins, A. S. Siddons, C. Straban, M. E. Ireland, E. Timbrell, E. Johnson, A. E. Turner, E. M. Kent, K. Webb (Western Hospital, Fulham), M. Mavius, D. West (North City Protestant Infirmary, Dublin), and H. M. Young.

Miss Nisbet was one of the Sisters who volunteered for active service in Greece during the late war, and was selected by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, the Superintendent of Nursing, as Sister in Charge of the English Hospital at Chalcis in Euboea, where much good work was done.

During the past week, Mr. Burdett-Coutts has run the gauntlet of bitter attacks from members of the Government Party in the House. But evidence is forthcoming every day to prove that his disinterested action in describing military hospital matters as he saw them in South Africa, was urgently necessary, and the nation will soon realise that it owes a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Burdett-Coutts for his line of action.

Nothing can prove more conclusively the futility of placing before the War Office authorities matters which would necessitate reform. The whole tone of that Department is rigidly feudal, governed, as it is, by a weak autocrat, and his creatures, as intolerant of criticism as they are incapable of assimilating modern thought and method. Had Mr. Burdett-Coutts communicated his statement to the War Office, instead of adopting the practical plan of making it public in the *Times*, we have little doubt that the whole indictment would have been suppressed.

It is useless of Government officials to demand a course of courteous etiquette upon the part of the members of their party. The truth is that we are all weary of high-handed Tory intolerance and ignorance made so apparent in this war, and when it comes to a question of the sacrifice of thousands of brave men from painful and lingering deaths which need never have occurred had these autocrats at the War Office listened to the voice of humanity, after the horrors of the Soudan Campaign, it becomes necessary to cease prating of party etiquette, and to narrow down the responsibility for these wholesale military murders. The army nursing system in vogue at the War Office is obsolete and rotten, and must be rooted out; and if Lord Lansdowne continues to oppose the adoption of reforms which are

conducive to the saving of life in the Army, then he must be rooted out too. Surely the patience of the nation has come to the end of its tether, with regard to this appallingly impossible potentate.

We are of opinion that partisanship, upon the part of eminent medical men selected by the Government for service in South Africa, is a tactical mistake. Mr. Treves' tone of levity in relation to the sick and dying, is entirely out of tune with the public. Sir William Stokes' ignorance of the Intombi theft scandals—which were public property in the press months ago—is also very surprising, not to say disquieting to the public mind. The public is just now in a very stunt mood over Army Nursing affairs, and will not hesitate to discount the strong support by consultants of the Government from which all hope of preferment must come.

This temper was quite apparent in the House when Mr. Balfour proposed a small Committee of Investigation composed of two medical men and one judge. The public won't have a majority medical vote on a Committee appointed to inquire into Army Medical affairs, and demand, in addition, two laymen of general experience. This Mr. Balfour, much against his will, was compelled to concede, and it is to be hoped no one hankering after titular honours, as so many self-made business men do hanker, will be selected. The exclusion of women from all honours and emoluments in public life is, therefore, an additional reason for placing one upon this Investigation Committee—she would have no temptation to report anything but the truth.

The Queen, it is understood, has suffered much disquietude concerning the charges made in connection with our poor sick soldiers at the front, and Surgeon-General Muir, the second in command in the Army Medical Department, has been summoned to Windsor—we presume, to give some account of the arrangements for the care of the sick. It is to be hoped that Her Majesty will grasp the significance of the situation. It is not a satisfactory one for those in any way connected with the Central British Red Cross Committee, or the Army Nursing Service Reserve. It would appear, in empowering these two unprofessional Committees with authority to organize the nursing of the sick in times of war, that the Army Medical Department has made a fatal mistake. Now the nation must speak out and insist upon the Army Nursing Service being organized on an efficient professional basis. Our sick and wounded soldiers have been made

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)