

tension to expect the Colonies to still have faith in the authorities that be after the raising of the Imperial curtain upon such scenes of atrocious cruelty as are being played by England in South Africa.

"With what abhorrence we read of the cruelties perpetrated by Boer and Chinese alike in the present wars, and yet within our own doors, and by our own people, a tragedy is being enacted that would cry shame and carry vengeance with it to even these uncivilised nations! Did the Imperial authorities ignore the Colonial nurses on account of birth, or on account of supposed inability to do their duty? The Colonial nurse is not only better adapted to stand the climate of South Africa, but is also equal to the English nurse as regards experience in surgical dressings, and yet, with these capabilities, our Colonial offer of help was quietly ignored, and our men left to die for want of attention!

"It is to be hoped that out of their present intricate and dishonourable position Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour will emerge wiser and better men. And remember that when our men, in responding to England's call to arms, have been wrecked upon the time-honoured rock of noble patriotism, they are still as much and more so their country's sacred charge as when, in all the glory of their strength and manhood, they offered their life's blood in that country's cause. The Colonies have a right to expect a most sweeping and searching inquiry into these scandals, and nothing short of the highest punishment that a military tribunal can inflict will satisfy those dependencies who sent forth their martyred men.—I am, &c.,

EMILY NICOL,

Secretary Red Cross Brigade.

Auckland, N.Z."

A SYMPATHETIC PRESS.

The truth is that the New Zealand press is now actively exposing the neglect and consequent suffering of its brave sons who so generously volunteered to fight for the mother country in South Africa, and the revelations of some of their reliable war correspondents are arousing a sense of intense indignation from one end of the Colony to the other. The case of Trooper J. F. Saxon, of Wellington, which appeared in the *New Zealand Times*, and which has been sent us to criticise, is given as a typical case by an eye-witness.

DYING AND ALONE.

This eye-witness, writing from Marandellas, says:—

"Knowing that a number of New Zealanders were in the hospital—an old building which had been re-erected at the end of the paddock—a day or two previously, stretched out on a heap of straw in a more or less neglected state, I immediately proceeded to the hospital to see what had become of the unfortunate patients, for whom I had many times felt inclined to intercede. but, of course, would only have laid myself open to be told to mind my own business, as it was no part of my duty as a correspondent to interfere with the camp arrangements. My feelings on entering the building

may be more easily imagined than described, when, to my surprise, I found one solitary occupant—the emaciated trooper, J. F. Saxon, once a fine, strong young fellow, whose acquaintance I had made during the voyage. There, on the dirty floor, in the midst of swarms of flies, fragments of semi-decomposed food and dirty utensils, the poor fellow lay as helpless as a child, with nothing but this filthy chaos and the dirty, dismal walls of the building and complete solitude to cheer his rapidly-ebbing spirits! A second glance was not necessary to convince me that my appearance had interrupted the course of the poor man's grief, for his eyes were still full of tears. And no wonder! I never in my life saw such a scandalous state of things. If the poor man had been a common criminal he could hardly have been treated in a more brutal manner. In reply to my inquiries as to his condition, he said:—"I am well enough, only I feel dreadfully weak—I have been starved—I have had nothing to eat since yesterday evening (this was at 4 p.m.), when I had a bit of biscuit and a drop of tea. I am supposed to get beef tea and cornflour, but I have only had it once or twice. When I complained to the man who is supposed to attend to us, he told me to get up and attend to myself, or go without. I have not been able to walk for some time—I have been too weak. No one seems to take any interest in us, or care whether we live or die.

"MY POOR MOTHER."

"I naturally felt very indignant to learn that a helpless fellow countryman had been treated in such a heartless manner, and expressed determination to let the New Zealand public know how the field hospital was being conducted. But poor Saxon burst into tears, and said, 'Oh, please don't say anything about it just now. It would kill my poor mother if she knew how I was being treated.' It was most affecting. I shall never forget the incident—to see an unfortunate young fellow, once strong and active, crying and sobbing as though his heart would break, evidently conscious that his end was near, and that he would see his aged mother no more. I, of course, did my best to pacify him, and went immediately to the Staff Officer to see what could be done for the poor fellow. I explained that he was in a dying condition without food, attendance, or necessaries of any kind, and that he had been in that condition for twenty-four hours. The officer sent two stretcher-bearers away for the invalid at once, with instructions to remove him to the hospital ship without delay. Nine days later poor Saxon breathed his last, and on the following day (June 17th) he was buried at Beira with full military honours, E Squadron, Victorian Imperial Regiment, forming the firing party."

TO THE MOTHERS OF MEN.

"I have no hesitation in saying that poor Saxon's death was largely—if not entirely—due to neglect, and I say this fully conscious of the seriousness of the statement. The hours of solitary confinement and starvation which he endured prior to his removal to the hospital ship, where he would no doubt receive every attention, as there were female nurses on board to attend to patients, were sufficient to lay the foundation for the death of any man in a place like Beira, and more particularly of a man in the weak, debilitated

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