

The *Medical Times* of last week has an excellent leading article on Army Nursing, in which is given a *résumé* of the suggestions made by the Matrons' Council at the War Office, and adds:—

"The Matrons' Council specifically advocated the appointment of a Superintendent Nurse to supervise the work of the Nursing Staffs in the different hospitals during any campaign. The many rumours, which now find credence in every club in London, concerning the conduct of certain persons sent out as Army Nurses to South Africa, quite sufficiently illustrate not only the advantages of such supervision, but even its absolute necessity, if discipline is to be maintained, and if respectable women are to be encouraged to devote themselves to Army Nursing in the future. We refrain from commenting at present upon a painful subject, and would only urge that the admirable work accomplished for the Army and the nation by a large number of excellent Nurses in South Africa, demands that means shall be taken to protect the latter from the unfair slur cast upon them by the conduct of some who have assumed the nursing garb. As long ago as the days of the Crimea Miss Florence Nightingale laid down the wise principle, which is now generally adopted, that women workers should always be supervised and superintended by a woman; and there can be no question that it is a cardinal mistake to place the Army Nursing Service under the direct control of the Medical Director-General and his subordinates. It is, therefore, to be hoped that the War Office will be sufficiently impressed with the practical importance of this matter, and will, in future, form a separate and distinct Army Nursing Department, subject, of course, to the control and direction of the Director-General, but with a female head who shall be responsible for selecting and supervising the Army Nursing Sisters in times both of peace and of war."

The deplorable accident at the West Ham Infirmary when twelve children were injured by the bursting of a water tank was the subject of discussion at a recent Board meeting, when Mr. Chalmers proposed that the Board should pass a resolution thanking the nurses attached to the dormitory in which the injured children were sleeping, for the gallant way in which they went to the rescue. He thought the Board should acknowledge the services of the nurses, as there was no doubt they had saved the lives of the children.

It seems inconceivable that objections should be raised to so appropriate a resolution, nevertheless an excited discussion took place upon it, and the Rev. W. Douglas objected to it on the ground that the nurses had only done their duty. If they were not prepared to perform such duties when called upon, they ought to be. Ultimately the matter was dropped and the resolution was not put.

Why should a different standard be enforced

as to women from that which is recognised as the right of men? No one for a moment doubted that the King would reward the valour of our troops in South Africa by conferring honours upon the most distinguished. The "Honours List" was, indeed, awaited with some impatience. Now that it is published, titles and decorations have been bestowed galore, and still there are more to come. Everyone recognises the propriety of the bestowal of such honours. Yet, will anyone venture to say that those who have received them have done more than their duty? Lord Nelson himself did no more, yet he is placed column high in the centre of this great city that all may note how we honour him for its fine performance. Do the West Ham Guardians consider that women's ideals are loftier than men's and that the consciousness of duty well performed is sufficient reward for their nurses? May be. Nevertheless, appreciation never hurt anyone. The lack of it has spoiled many careers. A word of thanks for work well done is easily spoken, and is a great incentive to future endeavour.

Dr. Rolleston, of St. George's, and thirty-two orderlies, have gone to South Africa, the former to take charge of the Imperial Yeomanry Hospital at Pretoria. This detachment is taking out a quantity of medical comforts, warm clothing, books, and other presents which have been received for the patients in the hospital, also three cases (5 cwt.) of essence of cocoa, a gift from Messrs. Cadbury Brothers, Birmingham.

It is interesting, now that so much attention is being turned upon nursing affairs in South Africa, to read something of navy nursing there a hundred years ago. Writing from the Cape in 1797-1801, Lady Anne Barnard says, in "South Africa a Century Ago":—

"But there is sadly little room for the poor sick fellows, the honest tars, multitudes of whom have been lost for want of air and wholesome accommodation, they having been so closely packed in their hospital with scurvy, ulcers, &c., that it was certain death going into it. Of late, the physician to the navy (Dr. Pattison) has got, with much difficulty, leave to have the use of a stable for horses belonging to some of the horses belonging to some of the officers residing there; and since then 60 men have been put into it, and many of them have recovered. What a pity that more places are not erected for them! With the expenditure of a very little money, hundreds, ay, thousands of people would be saved in this hot climate. What fools, or what dirty, nasty calculators some of the contractors for the public must be! Where is the hospital for the Navy here in Cape-town placed? Above the public ovens, where all the bread used in the place is baked, and where the languishing creatures are baked into the next world along with it."

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