

The Society of the Red Cross in Germany.

The Red Cross Association of Germany is one of the most thoroughly organised societies in the world, and perfectly developed in all its details.

It is like an enormous tree, the trunk of which is composed of the highest military officials, headed by the Emperor and Empress, and the branches of which are the local societies existing in almost every German city or town.

At the annual meeting of the nursing societies of the Red Cross in Germany, held at Munich last November, about twenty-four mother-houses were represented. These "mother-houses" are unlike any secular nurses' training-schools in America, being planned somewhat on the lines of the religious sisterhood; that is, they undertake to train their nurses and to give them a home and provide for them throughout life if the nurses so desire. They send them wherever their services may be needed, give them home and board and uniform, with a little pay, look after them in sickness, and in old age give them pensions or establish old-age homes for them. Comparatively few hospitals in Germany conduct their own training-schools. Instead, they apply to one of the "mother-houses" for as many nurses as they need, paying the mother-house for the services of the nurses. This is why one finds, for instance, in the old Charity Hospital in Berlin, nursing deaconesses and nursing sisters from four or five different schools, each under control of a head nurse from her own school. It is computed that two-thirds of all the nursing work of Germany is in the hands of religious societies, largely Protestant, and the census of 1900 gave the number of women nurses in Germany as 38,000. An interesting feature of the annual meeting of the Red Cross societies mentioned above was a paper read by the Superintendent of the Bavarian branch, Fräulein von Wallmenich, in which she recounted the duties and responsibilities of a nursing matron and her need for a broad education, and described a training-school established in Munich for hospital matrons which seems to be quite similar in its purpose to our course in hospital economics. The course lasts for one year, and comprises lectures on ethics, pedagogy, hospital administration, insurance and poor-law (Germany has a national law compelling old-age and sickness insurance of working-people), elementary architecture, gardening, hygiene, electro-therapeutics, bookkeeping, French and English, chemistry of foods, housekeeping, and cooking,—certainly a most varied and broadening curriculum for a hospital head, and exceedingly suggestive as showing how similar to our own are the problems of nurses in other countries. One class has finished this course.

The monthly paper, *Unter dem roten Kreuz*, is issued by the women's organisations devoting themselves to nursing in the colonies, and gives the reports and activities of the various branches, with many interesting details of the hospital work carried on under their auspices. The December number shows groups of nurses working in Dar-es-Salaam, in Tanga, in Kamerun, in Togò, in Windhoek, in Swakopmund, and Keetmanshoop in Africa, and still another in China.

The nurses are supported by the home societies,

who take the warmest interest in them, sending them Christmas-boxes, new uniforms, little comforts for their rooms and living quarters, and generally looking after them. Some of the letters from the sisters published in *Unter dem roten Kreuz* show that their work is arduous and varied.

Sister Hermine Seiff writes from Keetmanshoop:

"I have had an extraordinary amount to do lately, as I had to cook for eighteen people. The only 'boy' I had to carry water, chop wood, wash dishes, &c., fell sick, and the substitutes changed every couple of days, as no one liked so 'frightfully much work.' Fortunately, now I have an excellent woman, although, to be sure, she speaks not one word either of German or Dutch, and two prisoners carry the wood and water.

"The water question is the most important one here, as every drop must be carried, not only for cooking and dish-washing, but for laundry as well."

Later she writes:—

"My duties have changed lately, as I have had to take charge of the apothecary's department, as well as of the laundry for the hospital. A soldier assists in the kitchen. Whether this arrangement lasts will depend on the approval of the Government. Our field surgeon arranged it so temporarily, as, on account of sickness and changes in the service, the work of these departments was unsatisfactory to him.

"As this drug department not only dispenses medicines and surgical supplies to the hospital and settlement here, but also to several points south, there is quite a good deal to do. Here my early training stands me in good stead, as in the small hospital where I was trained we learned to make the different mixtures, ointments, and solutions, whereas in a large hospital such work does not make part of the nurse's training."

Another nurse in Windhoek conducts a home for children, with kindergarten, sewing and knitting classes, &c.

L. L. Dock.

Consumption in France.

France loses annually 150,000 lives through tuberculosis.

To fight the disease anti-tuberculosis dispensaries are being established, which will not only treat patients whose malady is not considered to be incurable, but will also educate them hygienically, procure for them healthier dwellings and fresh bedding, disinfect their lodgings, and clean and sterilise weekly the linen of the family of which tuberculosis has taken hold.

A gruesome scandal has arisen at the Val de Grace Military Hospital at Paris. It appears that for the purpose of acquiring skill in the treatment of wounds caused by firearms, the corpses of patients are used as targets. As the number of deaths at the hospital itself does not suffice for the supply, the bodies of dead prisoners are sent from Nanterre and Poissy, and stowed away in an ice-room to await the firing party. M. Pierrot, the chief surgeon, declares that this practice has been found beneficial to science, its object being not to discover the effect upon the tissues, but upon the bones. In the winter months, when the trees are leafless, the patients are able to see the corpses from the windows of some of the wards.

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