

to a barge on the Scheldt, and never left their helpless countrymen until they had landed them safely in hospital at Folkestone. Those in charge of Belgian wounded carried them into the cellars of the bombarded houses and remained with them until rescue came, or they were made temporary prisoners by the Germans. I regret that circumstances have prevented my publishing this testimony to the bravery of our nurses sooner, but I venture to think that this is certainly a case of better late than never."

Very little has been said concerning the extra duties in the way of correspondence undertaken by nursing sisters in military hospitals. The soldiers, however, speak in terms of warmest appreciation of the tact and discretion shown by these ladies in expressing their sentiments. The duties are often of a delicate character, especially when the communications have to be inscribed under the shadow of death, and at best Tommies though they are so smart in talking, are not good in dictating what they want to say. Many commissions are also entrusted, such as the delivery of small mementoes, and the ascertainment of addresses to which information is to be sent. The War Office authorities do their utmost to act as paterfamilias; but soldiers prefer to make these messages matters of personal trust, and are immensely relieved when serious-minded yet kindly nursing sisters undertake them.

We have warned nurses many times since War broke out, how necessary it is for their health and safety that when dressing poisonous wounds they should wear rubber gloves, and now we hear of two narrow shaves from nurses failing to do so. Nearly all the cases which come direct from the front into the hospitals on the French coast are in a very dangerous condition; their wounds, badly septic from the sad condition in which many find themselves, so long before their terrible injuries can be thoroughly cleansed and cared for. Several nurses have through pin pricks and other channels become infected, and fingers, hands and lives have been risked, to say nothing of long weeks of weary convalescence, during which they will be quite unable to work. Rubber gloves are a very great safeguard, and careful nurses should wear them, without fail, when dressing infected wounds. These guards have only one drawback, they are expensive; they should be provided in every hospital for the wounded, and they would be a very sensible New Year's gift from the public to our nurses at the Front.

Mrs. Wells, of West Ham, has (says a contemporary) received from her husband an extremely amusing letter, describing his sojourn in an elaborately fitted nursing home, after the work in the trenches. He says:—

"I am absolutely in clover at the time of writing. There are six of us, all in snow-white beds.

"Each bed has a hot-water bottle, and we have silk pyjamas on. I should like you to see me.

"We keep looking at each other and laughing fit to burst! There are four sisters looking after us, and two or three 'toffs.'

"They have just brought in our tea—two slices of bread and butter that thin that you could shave with it, and they are such 'big pots' at this hospital that we don't like to ask them for more.

"I am going to ask to come home on Monday.

"We got out at Folkestone Station. There were crowds cheering us. They gave us hot Bovril and sandwiches, and then up came his lordship with a sister and stretchers, and Heaven knows what in a great motor-car.

"They helped us up, and away we went. Then, as I said before, they gave us silk jackets and drawers, and so into bed.

"One by one we then had a bath—the first for months. We had not changed our shirts since we came out. So you may guess at our condition.

"I told the sister that I would sleep in the coal-hole if she liked, but she said 'Never.'"

The organization of professional nurses in Germany has greatly suffered from an invasion of voluntary helpers. In the "Organ of the League of German Women," Sister Agnes Karll, the foundress of the organization, gives a brief survey of the first three months of the war. Besides 26,000 Nuns, 12,000 Deaconesses, 1,000 women workers of the Order of St. John, 5,000 Red Cross Sisters, and about 1,000 Deaconesses working in Community, there are 30,000 professional nursing Sisters available for war service. Unfortunately, there is very little demand for the latter. According to the experience of Sister Agnes, thousands of willing but utterly inexperienced women are crowding into the hospitals for a smattering of training, often only for a fortnight, and with usually no theoretical "training" at all. The most astonishing part of it all is that considerably fewer trained nurses appear to be required for war service, than was allowed for by the estimate made in time of peace. A large number of professional nurses have found employment in Hospitals in Vienna, where there has been a considerable shortage. In order to avoid trouble and difficulty at this time, they have felt impelled to give their skilled work without remuneration. The difficulty was that before the trained nurses took up work in these hospitals, the nursing had been done by untrained helpers, drawn from the well-to-do middle classes, who gave their services. Such an arrangement was naturally a failure, and they were replaced by the trained nurses. To re-organize nursing affairs, so that a proper place shall be assigned to the trained nurse, must be one of the first things to be done when peace has been established.

The American Red Cross Society is a model to the world so far as its nursing organisation is concerned. All nurses enlisted must hold a diploma for not less than two years' hospital training, or from States where registration is in force, be registered. *The American Journal of*

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