

## THE COLONIAL NURSING ASSOCIATION.

The nurses of the Colonial Nursing Association have been identifying themselves with the present war, and interesting accounts have been received from various Colonies of the work they have been called upon to undertake in nursing the wounded. From the Straits Settlements, for instance, a description has been received of the recent attack on some Russian cruisers in Penang harbour by the *Emden*. On that occasion the Government Hospital was suddenly called upon to receive 114 wounded men within a couple of hours. The native wards, which had to be utilised for this purpose, were cleared for them at a moment's notice, and efficient arrangements for the reception of the wounded were carried out.

On the coast of Africa, also, Colonial nurses have proved themselves invaluable, their services having been requisitioned on a hospital ship off Duala, Cameroons, and in Nyasaland a nursing sister describes how a colleague and herself, after having been called upon to convert a large empty house into a hospital for the wounded, with very little equipment, were, on the completion of their work, suddenly ordered to assemble, together with all the inhabitants of the place, in a large square, which was surrounded by a brick wall some five feet in height. Here, defended by about sixty native soldiers, officered by seven white men, they passed through a most thrilling time, which is best described in the Sister's own words:—

"The attacking force was estimated at between three and four hundred, and they broke the silence by one solitary shot, quickly answered by us, and then the noise soon became deafening. The enemy's Maxim guns seemed to be at our very gate, instead of so many hundred yards away, and the shouts and yells of their native soldiers made one rather wonder as to what would happen should we fall into their hands! At first their shooting was rather erratic, but gradually they began to find the range, the bricks of the wall were being hit, and dangerous pieces soon began to fly about, branches of trees and leaves were falling, as if blown down by an autumn gale. Holes soon appeared in the corrugated iron roofing of some sheds. Altogether, things were quite exciting enough!

"The doctor was at the other end of the square, and seemed to have all the wounded, for we only had one our side. We dressed him between us and placed him, as we thought, out of danger, but he had only been there ten minutes when he was hit again, so another dressing was required, and again he was moved. A native soldier was hit in the head and killed outright at the very beginning of the fight, another was also struck in the same way, and lingered, unconscious, until evening. A European, too, got his eye nearly put out by a piece of flying brick, and at one time it looked as though our gallant little band of defenders was very soon to be disposed of. The bullets were so thick and fast around us that we women had to lie

down flat on the ground, only getting up when there was something to be done in the way of giving out drinks, seeing about dressings, etc.

"After over three hours' hard fighting the bugle sounded the 'Cease fire.' At first we could not understand what it meant, or what could have happened. The suspense for a few minutes was awful. We soon discovered, however, that the relief column was in sight. They had fortunately heard our big gun in the distance, guessed that we were being attacked, and had made a forced march through most impossible country to come to our rescue, entering the place at the opposite side to where the Germans were. Meanwhile, the enemy were retreating, but our men were far too exhausted to follow them."

## PRACTICAL POINTS.

### Cracks in the Heels.

For cracks in the heels, if not too deep, caused by much walking in frosty weather, the following is a simple and effectual remedy: Wrap the heel in absorbent wool which has been wrung out in boiling water, cover closely with a piece of jaconet and a triangular bandage. Place the heel against a very hot water bottle and keep it there for two or three hours. Remove the dressing, and with a sterilised not too sharp knife blade held horizontally, scrape away as much as possible of the now softened callous skin. Then rub Borofax into the crack and surrounding skin. If necessary repeat the treatment every twenty-four hours until the heel regains a normal condition. The doctor should be consulted about deep cracks, which may require strapping to assist healing. To prevent recurrence rub Vaseline or Borofax into the heel every day.

### Care of Rubber Articles.

The *Interstate Medical Journal* (U.S.A.), says that the deterioration of rubber tubing, gloves, &c., can be lessened by keeping in a cool place and kneading them thoroughly once a month. A more efficacious method is to place them in a deep vessel of enamelled ware made with a false bottom, in which the articles are laid. Beneath this is placed a layer of absorbent cotton saturated with coal oil. The false bottom is perforated, so that the rubber things upon it are enveloped in the vapor of petroleum, a tight cover on the vessel preventing the escape of the vapor. The rubber retains its elasticity indefinitely if the oil is renewed every three months: it must not touch the articles. Rubber that has begun to get hard and brittle may be softened by kneading it in a warm 5 per cent. solution of ammonium chloride and then in a warm 5 per cent solution of glycerine. It should drain and dry in a cool, dark place.

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