

plussed by the complete reversal of all established ideas and methods, and said one excellent nurse, rooted up for the first time after forty years' firm planting on British soil: 'With all their wrong methods, it is extraordinary what good results the French obtain.' . . .

"So near the front there are cases which need all the science of the trained nurse to pull them through. Men unnerved almost to madness, men who mistake all the male staff for the enemy—one has only to listen to the ravings of these poor men to know something of the strain of war on them. All night long, officers are giving their orders over and over again—under the influence of chloroform they begin afresh. How long will time take to deaden for those sufferers the ghastly souvenir of war!

THE TRAGEDY OF THE BLIND.

"I was taken to the eye ward to see the operations there. Of all the horrors of war, is not this the worst?"

"Here is a brilliant young lieutenant. His father was only a concierge, but he worked and saved to give his son his chance. The son has gone through with flying colours—now he is blind. He was lying in the officers' ward when I saw him—the ward was darkened, for there were others suffering, too. He had in his hand a portrait of the little girl he had never seen.

'Only take off the bandage an instant that I may once look at my little girl,' he pleaded. 'I dare not,' answered the doctor. Who will have the courage to tell him the truth?"

THE SISTERS.

"And now word has come that one of our Sisters in the North is seriously ill. She had gone to nurse the typhoid and diphtheria patients, and was suffering from diphtheria. I was warned I should probably arrive too late.

"The doctor thanks the nurses over and over

again for their help, and he understands that only trained nurses can be of use in work like this. The officers and priest have improvised a little lunch for me; the nurses are preparing tea. The priest says grace beforehand and returns thanks afterwards. All the years I have lived in France I have never seen this done before; indeed, the tragedy of war has driven us back to the protection of God again. A curious visit it was. I was anxious, and I was glad. 'It's glorious work,' said one of the Sisters, 'in spite of its awfulness.'

"And now one of the Sisters is at death's-door.

I may never see her again. To get to her the quickest way is right along the firing-line.

"We have to pass along the road which the French soldiers have christened 'The Jaws of Death.' A young man on the way tells us the Germans pepper everyone who goes up that road—perhaps we shall be the exception. Up the narrow, stony passage we plough our way—if by any chance the car stops, we are finished—yet, if we go too quickly we shall make a cloud of dust. As it is we are part and parcel of the dusty landscape. I keep my eyes on the enemy's lines. And on we go till we have turned the corner and are safe again for a while.

"I have my permission to eat and sleep at the hotel. I could certainly have done without,

for I have just heard that two of our F.F.N.C. nurses have been killed in a bombardment, and there is no possibility of my moving on till dawn. Fortunately, it turned out not so. Our nurses have gone through so many bombardments now. I have always maintained that men and women alike must risk their lives for the motherland, and the only reason the woman is in the ward, and not the battlefield, is that she is of more use to the motherland in the ward. Then, why, asks my informant, can I not accept the death of two soldier nurses and sleep quietly till dawn?"



THE LEGION OF HONOUR.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)