

FRENCH FLAG NURSING CORPS.

The organisation of the administration of the Corps is now complete in Paris. Miss Grace Ellison, the Delegate of the French Ministry, and administrative head, resides at the Hotel Bedford, Rue de l'Arcade, and here the Committee have now secured an office, to which all Sisters can apply on all matters of either business or personal interest. Miss Haswell, the Matron-in-Chief, lives at the Folkestone Hotel, just round the corner, and attends daily at the office from 9.30 a.m., so that for the future all arrangements in connection with the work of the Corps will be expedited with as much dispatch as possible.

Miss Ellison is in constant communication with the French Ministry, and is indefatigable in her work for the best interests of the Sisters and their patients, and it is hoped we may announce at an early date certain privileges which she has secured for them. We must never forget, however, that the French Flag Nursing Corps is a pioneer corps, and that discomforts, if such exist, should be borne in the unselfish spirit of the pioneer. We are glad to note from personal observation that this spirit animates most of our excellent Sisters.

Quite recently Mrs. Fenwick has received from a Ministerial department in Paris a letter assuring her (in reply to her letter to the President of the Chamber) of the very sincere esteem in which the English Sisters are held in France, and that the desire to extend their number is a sure guarantee of the sentiment which animates the Government of the Republic in their appreciation of the great professional value and devotion of her compatriots.

Sir Thomas Barclay, "the man who made the Entente," takes a very lively interest in the work of the Corps, and during his visits to Paris is good enough to give advice on questions on which his opinion is invaluable.

We shall soon enter on our second year of work in French Military hospitals, and considering the cold water thrown on the scheme a year ago, and all the croaking prognostications concerning it, we can only rejoice that through the good sense and tenacity of the Sisters, the French Flag Nursing Corps has surmounted innumerable difficulties, and has won for British nursing a very high place in the estimation of our French Allies. "Here to Help," is our motto, and proud to be permitted to do so.

EPERNAY.

We have not had very interesting work here, but I cannot say that we have not been useful. Our patients, up to the present, have been suffering from rheumatism in various forms and gastric

disorders. They are brought here directly from the trenches. The hospital is improvised in a cavalry barracks, and if any of the patients turn out to be seriously ill, or to have an infectious disease, they are sent elsewhere; but we nearly always have a number of acute rheumatisms, who, of course, require skilled nursing. At first, it was very difficult, because we had no nursing appliances whatever (there was one washing bowl for the whole hospital); but through the kindness of Madame la Vicomtesse de la Panouse we have been supplied with what we most urgently needed, such as enamelled bowls, sputum cups, ice bags, soap, &c.; and from the headquarters of the F.F.N.C., at Paris, we received a nice lot of shirts and towels. I had a good many of the shirts made to open at the sides, and they have been such a comfort to the acute rheumatic patients. The infirmiers have appreciated them also, and have realised what a great deal of suffering can be avoided by not having to drag on an ordinary shirt. We have also, by helping with toilettes and encouraging the infirmiers to fetch bowls of water for those who cannot get up to wash themselves, probably added to the comfort of the patients.

We are living in the barracks and, of course, the life is dull and rather lonely; the best way to be happy in it is to have some hobbies. I have learnt photography, which has been of untold pleasure to me; and I have taught it to Miss Gaudin, who is succeeding me as supervisor here. It is to her I am indebted for the photograph I enclose of one of our wards. The Zouave who appears in it has just returned from Germany, after ten months' captivity. He says he was fed on raw beet-root and raw herrings, so it is not surprising that he is suffering from gastric trouble. The corporal standing up is the head infirmier of one division. The infirmiers have been very amiable to work with; many of them are priests, and take it in turn to celebrate Mass at 8.0 a.m. on Sundays, which ceremony we have made it a practice to attend. M. le Médecin Chef and the whole of the medical staff, have been most congenial, helpful and appreciative.

The following gifts have been received at Ambulance 15, Epernay, from the Vicomtesse de la Panouse, President of the Croix Rouge Française Comité de Londres, and from Mrs. Holgate, Paris:—

FROM FRENCH RED CROSS (MADAME DE LA PANOUSE).—30 pillows, 50 pillow-slips, 24 enamelled patients' washing bowls, 24 enamelled dressing bowls, 6 Higginson's syringes, 2 hypodermic syringes, 6 sets cupping-glasses, 3 ice-bags, 1 box of wooden tongue depressors, 12 irrigation nozzles, 48 expectoration cups, 4 spirit lamps, 1 box of soap, 200 handkerchiefs.

FROM MRS. HOLTGATE, HÔTEL D'YENA, PARIS.—4 dozen towels, 12 dozen handkerchiefs, 1/2 dozen small pillows, 1 dozen small pillow slips, 3 dressing bowls, 1 packet of soap.

E. GREGORY.

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