

FRENCH FLAG NURSING CORPS.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR FRENCH SOLDIERS.

Miss Henrietta Hawkins, P.L.G. cert. St. John's House, and for many years a Sister at the Metropolitan Hospital, London, has been appointed Assistant Hon. Secretary to the Corps. She will help Miss Hutchinson, the Hon. Secretary, with certain details of the clerical work, which are ever on the increase, and will undertake the somewhat laborious duty of packing gifts of comforts so kindly sent for the patients in hospitals in which the Sisters are at work. The Committee hope to send a parcel of Christmas Gifts to each hospital from their Special Fund for Sick and Wounded French soldiers, and will be pleased to receive suitable gifts for this purpose by December 1st, at 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

Miss Sarah King-Reid, cert. St. Luke's Hospital, Halifax, and Sister Western Hospital, Fulham, S.W., left for France on the 13th inst., but neither Miss F. Shoring, nor Miss E. D. Burgess were of the party. All being well Miss Mabel Gale, Miss Ellen Lowe, and Miss Lydia Abell, holding certificates of three years' training, and the Certificate of Registration of the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association, leave for Paris on the 19th inst.

"SIDE LIGHTS."

A Sister in the War Zone writes:—

"The War seems to have turned most things topsy-turvy, most of all here in France, where it seems that most things are done the other way about; here one sees a group of soldiers washing the soiled clothes, and there one sees a couple of women digging or following the plough.

"Here, again, are some French Tommies peeling the potatoes for *déjeuner*; and round the corner comes the baker's cart driven by the baker's wife. Time after time, one notices the same change, the women taking the work and place of men, not only the easier kinds of work, but the hard manual labour that usually needs a man's strong frame and physique.

"To-day I saw two women—one old, one young—with broad bands across their chests, pulling two heavy barges up the river; truly a man's work but performed by these women as a matter of course, without a thought as to the hardness of their lot.

"At the time of the vintage, the fields were crowded with women and children, and here and there an old white-haired man, gathering the grapes that provide the money to keep them through the long, hard winter.

"In the village hard by, there is scarcely a man left. The whole life and trade of the place is carried on by the women; even the barber's shop, where the soldiers drop in for a shave and hair cut, is managed by an old woman and her widowed daughter who has lost her husband in the War, and whose grief-stricken eyes haunt one long after the little barber's shop is forgotten.

"Here in the war zone, soldiers abound, waiting, waiting, all day and every day; for the greater part of this great War is spent in endless waiting; this enforced idleness tries them almost beyond endurance; while, in the meantime, the women till the ground, gather in the harvest, do the hundred-and-one great and small things that are necessary to the life of the country, until the husbands and sons shall return to their homes again."

A Sister writes from Hôpital Charmont, Besançon:—"We have been here for six months now and I know you will be interested to know something of our work. This hospital has 600 beds nearly all of which have been occupied by wounded. We have a few *malades* occasionally. Nearly all our soldiers come from Fontinell, Metzzeal and other places in the Vosges district. Until about a week ago we have been very busy, but now the Hospital has been evacuated to make room for *Grand Blessés*, only a few helpless patients remaining. In June, after the great battle at Metzzeal, we had to open an emergency ward of 50 beds, which brought the number of beds up to 300 in our service.

"We have two French Red Cross ladies who help us, they look after the patients' toilet and bring them their tisanes, lemonades, &c. Our work for the most part is in the *Salle de Pansements* but we also give picures, do the massage, take temperatures and pulses and look after the helpless patients. As you can well understand gifts of any kind would be acceptable—clothing, pillows, socks, chocolate, cigarettes, in fact anything. Sister Banks and I are very fond of our soldiers, they are so brave; and grateful for every little service. We have been presented with several little complimentary poems. I enclose one. When the Médecin Chef asked us to renew our engagement, he also said if we wished we could take our three weeks' holiday, but we have decided not to do so at present. We have been shown every kindness and consideration since coming here, and would be very sorry indeed to leave."

LA POÉSIE.

Non seulement le brave soldat Anglais
Est venu battre sur la terre de France,
Venger et donner confiance aux Français
Dans la grande et la vraie délivrance;
Maintenant ce sont des demoiselles d'Angleterre
De bons coeurs sont venues faire nos Infirmières.
Heureux le soldat de l'armée Française
D'être soigné par une Infirmière Anglaise.

The Government Hospitals Commission has provided accommodation for 2,000 wounded soldiers in 11 convalescent homes established in different parts of Canada. The accommodation will be increased as necessity arises. We are sure that the brave soldiers of the Empire will receive every care from our Canadian colleagues.

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