

### AN INTERESTING EXPERIENCE.

It seems scarcely possible that three months have elapsed since a group of well-wishers assembled at King's Cross to bid God speed to Miss Violetta Thurstan, who, with Miss Moberly, was off to Russia to make arrangements for the work of the Women's Maternity Hospital Unit for the Refugees. Yet, when one hears something of Miss Thurstan's experiences the only wonder is that the time spent there has not been much longer, so much has been compressed into those few weeks.

Miss Thurstan, full of energy as ever, but looking a little tired after the experiences of a strenuous three months, concluding with a rough passage across the North Sea, explained that much of her work has consisted in visiting Russian institutions, and getting into touch with Russian Committees, and learning their point of view. She has been down on the Volga, and visited far-off villages, and has been taken by the Chief Russian Inspector of Refugees in his troika on a visit of inspection. A troika, be it understood, is a sleigh drawn by three horses, which skims over the snow at a most exhilarating pace.

The refugees include Great Russians, Little Russians, White Russians, Letts, Lithuanians, Armenians, Ruthemans, and others. The Ruthemans, who come from a district in Galicia, have strong Russian sympathies, and when the Tsar paid a visit to Galicia he was welcomed by twelve girls to the village of Sambov, a pretty ceremony, which had a grim sequel, for when the village, in the fortunes of war, passed into the control of the Central Powers, all the twelve girls who took part in the ceremony were hanged.

A very interesting new movement described by Miss Thurstan is the work done by the students of Kazan University for the Refugees. Seeing the conditions of the baraks where the refugees were housed, some ten of these students, who formed themselves into a Students' Sanitary Association, got these baraks condemned and ever since, with a professor at their head, have made the refugees their special care, sharing their life and their food. The ten students sleep and live in one little room, and the row of ten little beds have no pillows, for which, Spartan-like, their occupants substitute their fists. Their joy and pride is the hospital which they have organised for refugees suffering from measles. It will be realised that under the prevailing conditions distress and epidemics are rife amongst these sufferers; indeed, from one train alone 40 dead people were removed, and the trains are constantly bringing more refugees from the Baltic Provinces, Lithuania, Galicia, Poland and the Caucasus. Moreover, it must be remembered that the big towns even before they began to pour in were already over-full, their normal population having been augmented by troops, recruits and prisoners. Kazan is a Tartar town with almost as many mosques as churches.

A very sad feature in the present situation is the number of lost and abandoned children who do not know their names or those of their relatives, and are unable to say from what provinces they have come. A Red Cross Sister found one little baby lying on the ice abandoned by his mother. The Tatiana Bureau at Kieff has had 1,500 enquiries for missing relatives, and has been the means of reuniting many families.

The Maternity Hospital at Petrograd, with sixteen beds and a large out-patient department, was ready to be opened when Miss Thurstan left, but the ceremony had not taken place. Like that at the Queen Alexandra Hospital, it will be a religious ceremony. No one in Russia would go to a hospital which had not been so blessed.

We hope when Miss Thurstan has had time to adjust herself once more to the home surroundings that we may be able to publish more of her interesting experiences from her own graphic pen.

### IRISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Irish Nurses' Association was held on the 4th inst., Miss Eddison presiding. Also present: Mrs. Manning, Miss Towers, Miss Strahan, Miss H. Ryan, Mrs. Crichton, Miss E. Keaveney, Miss Elliott, Miss Carr, Miss Stewart, Miss Reeves, Miss Hughes, Miss Thornton, Miss Kennedy, Miss Roberts, Miss O'Flynn, Miss Michie, Miss Carson-Rae, Miss Shuter, Miss Reed, Miss Daly, Miss Ramsden, Miss Chadwick, Miss Lowen, and Miss Moore.

The usual routine business was transacted.

The Secretary reported that an extremely interesting lecture had been given on the 15th ult. by Dr. Atkinson-Stoney, entitled "Work with the French Red Cross," at which there was a large attendance.

The Annual Report and Balance Sheet was read and approved, and the Annual Meeting fixed for the 17th inst.

### THE M.A.B. AND THE WAR.

The War Office has asked the Metropolitan Asylums Board to provide another hospital with 800 or more beds for wounded soldiers. At the board meeting, last Saturday, it was stated that the hospital could not be provided without encroaching on the accommodation for fever cases.

We regret to learn that Viscount Knutsford has had a somewhat serious accident, having been knocked down by a motor lorry at Barnes. He was taken to the Putney Hospital, where he has made satisfactory progress during the past week, though it is stated that some time must elapse before he will be able to deal with business.

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