

NURSING AND THE WAR.

Miss Mildred Vernon-Harcourt (Sister, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, Reserve), Miss Catherine Thorpe (Matron, "The Manners Ambulance") and the Hon. Angela Manners (Sister, and Organiser of, "The Manners Ambulance") attended at Buckingham Palace on Saturday last to receive their Royal Red Crosses.

On May 12th, the birthday of Florence Nightingale (the "Lady of the Lamp"), a Lamp Day street collection will be held in London, in aid of the Women's Service Bureau, the Women's Emergency Corps, and the British Women's Star and Garter Hospital.

Miss M. Blakeley, whose portrait we publish on this page, and who has been appointed Assistant Principal Matron in France, has been mentioned twice in despatches and awarded the Royal Red Cross. She has two brothers in the medical profession, to one of whom we are indebted for the loan of her pretty photograph.

According to the summary of work ending March 4th, the total number of V.A.D. members now at work through the Central Department at Devonshire House is 2,878, of which 1,881 are in the wards of military hospitals at home, and 73 engaged in general service in these hospitals; 677 are in military hospitals abroad, 87 in auxiliary hospitals at home, and 160 under the Joint Committee in France, Sicily, Italy, Malta and Egypt.

Sixty-two new applications for nursing service, and 45 for general service have been received at Devonshire House during the last fortnight.

So that through this source alone 837 practically untrained women have been sent on foreign service, to do work that hundreds of trained nurses are longing to do. This is especially hard when one realises that these unskilled workers cost the country almost as much as a highly skilled trained nurse. Great complaints reach us of the excessive responsibility thrown on the trained women in having V.A.D.'s as substitutes for staff

nurses. "Two V.A.D.'s are as good as one staff nurse," an army Matron is reported to have told a complaining Sister. What a ridiculous statement. The Sister writes: "Instead of one reliable worker to help me, I have a staff of two well-meaning girls I have to watch like a cat watches mice, to see that no terrible accidents happen. One is on the rack night and day."

Mr. Justice Bargrave Deane in the Probate Court was asked to admit to probate the contents of a letter dated October 8th, 1915, written by Ada Stanley, who died at the Netley Hospital on December 23rd. Mr. W. O. Willis, counsel, asked that it should be regarded as a soldier's will.

Mr. Justice Bargrave Deane: Is it the old story—can a woman be a soldier?

Mr. Willis: Yes; but I hope we have advanced since the days of Charles II.

His Lordship: But this lady was not even nurse; she was a nursing sister.

How the once honourable title of "Sister" has fallen! High time we had a Nursing Register to refer to in our Law Courts, as in the case of the Medical Register. We shall not then, as now, have persons posing as "Nursing Sisters" who are "not even a nurse." Only legal registration can tackle such evils.

We regret to have received several letters from Sisters home from Serbia referring to the now notorious picture which appeared in the *Daily Mirror*, and which we hoped might have been faked, describing circumstances of a like nature which they

witnessed, which aroused their just indignation.

The picture of nurses "Caught napping" sleeping on straw, and "Somewhere at the Front in Russia," which appear in the following pages, have been kindly lent to us by Miss Violetta Thurstan, who has recently returned from Russia, with its bells still ringing in her ears. "The bells of Russia," she says, "are the most beautiful in the world, deep, mellow and irresistible, incessantly calling the faithful to church, and I can imagine the Russian peasant in other countries



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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)