

Commons on Army hospital administration; and also to Mr. Ian Malcolm, for his courageous letter in the *Times*, on what he calls "the appalling condition of things in Mesopotamia." He writes:—

"The news that is now beginning to come to hand from that distant theatre of war is little short of ghastly. We hear of lack of hospital accommodation, shortage of medicines, anaesthetics, dressings, bandages—in fact, of all hospital equipment—to an extent that is positively alarming. One letter from the spot tells me of three medical officers in charge of 1,000 badly wounded men with practically no dressings or bandages, and having to do their surgery without anaesthetics. Another correspondent writes that a single nurse was in charge of 500 cases, mostly amputations, with only coolies to help her. A third person writes that one officer, shot in the lungs, lingered eighteen days before he died, and never got his bandages changed.

"The War Office representative says that the medical arrangements out in the East are under the Indian Government; as if that relieved the Imperial Government of its responsibilities. After all, it is the War Office here that sent from England fathers and brothers and sons to fight on the Tigris; it is not fair, when they are wounded or dying, that the War Office should wash its hands of them, and leave their fate in charge of the Indian Government. Ultimately Great Britain is responsible."

And he adds, more nurses should be sent there: "The sex that has faced the brutalities of the Germans at Mons, and has worked through the typhus in the Balkans, and endured the rigours of the Serbian retreat, will face the dangers from the Turk and Arab with equal fortitude and calm."

The Central Work Rooms of the British Red Cross Society and Order of St. John have removed temporarily to 48, Grosvenor Square, W., from Burlington House, during the Royal Academy summer exhibition.

SIDE LIGHTS.

The hospitals for wounded in France are often established in large chateaux, situated in a small village in the war zone. The English Sisters serving in such are necessarily brought into close personal contact with the everyday life of the people such as would be impossible under ordinary conditions. And somehow the stranger to France finds something ever fresh in these simple French village people, with their ever-ready hospitality, their beautiful courtesy, and their apparent anxiety to show in every available way their appreciation of the care which they feel their *blessés* are receiving at the hands of English doctors and sisters.

This manifests itself in many ways, one being the many offers of free French lessons we receive.

In this small village of A—, in the East of France, at the present time, quite a number of civilians come, some from a long distance, for treatment at the hospital as out-patients, and some even seeking admission as in-patients.

The military authorities are anxious that we should deal with these cases when possible, but of course beds are seldom available in a busy hospital of this description.

The stone wayside Calvarys and beautiful little shrines are frequently met with in these parts. The cemetery is a beautiful peaceful spot, always carefully tended for "All Souls' Day." The village children had gathered moss and berries, and with the assistance of their school mistress had made two wreaths for each of the graves of soldiers who had died of wounds.

"Take in" nights come, on an average, about three times weekly, if evacuations can be made to meet the demand. The ambulances, well supplied with blankets, hot bottles, hot drinks, first-aid dressings, &c., leave at about 10.30 p.m., and then Sisters and nurses are busy making preparations for the reception of their men and listening for the first sounds of the steady almost solemn and sad approach of ambulances. This time is the highly prized privilege of the night staff.

Many quaint stories might be told of these men entering an English hospital for the first time. To many our night vigil is a perplexity. On one occasion one poor suffering man remarked that if the Sister wished to go to bed he thought he could change his own clothes, as it was only his head that was wounded! Another, slowly recovering from a state of semi-consciousness, asked "*Suis je dans Angleterre?*"

One poor fellow, having apparently lost the sight of both eyes, expressed sorrow that he could not see the English doctors and nurses. One patient, called "the Englishman," from having worked in a baker's shop in Blackheath for some months, felt he had a special right to nail the photograph of our glorious heroine, Miss Edith Cavell, over his bed. Needless to say this was encouraged. Many, many such stories could be related.

The writer, recently taking a walk through a country village in France, was greeted by an old lady with the usual courtesy, and asked to enter and rest. With evident pride the latter produced two photographs, one of a young curé, the other of the same man but now in military dress, the widow's only son. She quaintly remarked, "*Un soldat de la Croix, un soldat de France maintenant.*" She continued to say that she intended living alone in that quiet cottage on the hillside until her son returned to her again. Poor trusting mother! She looked so frail, her very optimism made one wonder when and where she would meet her son; perhaps in a blessed eternity; who knows?

Living and working in the midst of things and hearing daily the sounds of warfare in the distance, should make us pray and work diligently for a speedy and lasting victory and peace.

AMY PHIPPS.

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