

CARE OF THE WOUNDED.

The Queen, on Monday last, visited the Military Hospital at Edmonton, where over 1,000 wounded are at present being cared for, when 500 of the patients formed a guard of honour. It will be remembered that we recently published a description of this fine hospital, which is the new Poor Law Infirmary at Edmonton, which the War Office took over and adapted. The Matron of the Infirmary, Miss Dowbiggin, who is a member of the Military Nursing Service Reserve, remained on as Matron. Her Majesty, who remained two hours in the Hospital, and was keenly interested in all that she saw, before leaving thanked the Edmonton Guardians for placing the institution at the disposal of the War Office.

A number of London journalists have had the opportunity of visiting some of the military hospitals in the Metropolitan area, and have been shown by Lieutenant-Colonel Woodwark, the Assistant Deputy Director of Medical Services, some of the work which is being done for the sick and wounded. Nothing could demonstrate more clearly the indispensability of modern surgery and nursing in the prosecution of a great war. The toll taken at the present time in life and health is sad enough, without the aid and healing that they bring the holocaust would be indescribable. Amongst the show cases was one of the repair of a nerve, four inches of which had been destroyed. A surgeon, finding this condition telephoned to other hospitals and learnt that an amputation was to take place that afternoon in one of them. He arranged that the limb should be put in a saline bath and brought to him forthwith in a taxi cab. Placing his own patient under an anæsthetic he dissected out of the amputated limb the required four inches of nerve and grafted it into the severed nerve of the patient with the best result.

The removal of a piece of shrapnel embedded in the muscle of the heart was another triumph of modern surgery demonstrated. The patient is now making a good recovery.

The Special Committee of the Balneological section of the Royal Society of Medicine appointed to consider the treatment of disabled soldiers by physical remedies have drawn up a statement on the question, in the course of which they say:—

The reduction of crippling from wounds is a matter of national concern. Nothing which can be effected to lessen the permanent damage which wounded men have to face should be left undone while it can be efficacious. Public attention should therefore be drawn to a system of "combined physical treatment," for which remarkable success has been claimed, yet which hitherto has been given no adequate trial in this country. Capital injuries such as loss of limbs, do not, of course, come within its scope.

What is actually a combination of different forms of physical treatment has been in use for nearly eighteen months at the Grand Palais in Paris. This familiar building has been converted for this purpose into a *hôpital complémentaire* under the military government of Paris. It has now become a very large centre or clinic for the out-patient treatment of wounded men by means of physical remedies. Several similar institutions, following the same methods, have been set up in and around Paris, whilst in the provinces at least seven fully-equipped and four more or less complete establishments have been opened for the use of soldiers.

The object of this physical treatment of the wounded is threefold, and may be thus stated. In the first place it hastens the return of the wounded to their units at the front. Secondly, it effects an economy to the State by reducing the disabilities for which pensions and gratuities are granted. Lastly, it minimises the impairment of civil industry after the war occasioned by the numbers of seriously and permanently crippled men.

The elements of this combined and systematic treatment are some of them familiar, whilst some are but little known in this country. It must be clearly understood that it is a system, and depends for its success on the completeness and regularity with which it is carried out and under expert supervision. Six essential departments are enumerated by Dr. Camus, the Director of the "Corps de Rééducation Physique" at the Grand Palais. They are as follows:—

Preparation by heat in some shape or form, moist or dry, but especially by moving water, as in the *Eau Courante* Bath.

A thorough course of manipulation and massage.

Mechanical treatment by means of apparatus.

Electrical applications.

Re-education of the affected muscles by special exercises and training.

And lastly, a system of careful mensuration of the defect in each case. This is carried out before the commencement of treatment, at weekly intervals throughout the treatment, and at its termination. The results are therefore checked not by personal impressions, but by recording and measuring apparatus designed for the purpose.

The Wounded Allies Relief Committee, of Sardinia House, Kingsway, has presented to the Russian Red Cross Society a second fleet of motor ambulances, and the presentation was made to the Grand Duke Michael of Russia at Whitehall Court, on Tuesday, the 8th inst. Representing the Committee were the Right Hon. Lord Swaythling (Chairman) and Lady Swaythling, Sir Lindsey Smith (Hon. Secretary), and M. Paul May. The ceremony was rendered specially interesting by the presence of eight Russian soldiers, escaped prisoners from Germany, who acted as a guard of honour; and, at the suggestion of the Grand Duke, took a short drive in one of the gift ambulances.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)