

would receive letters from girls, complete strangers to them, invariably asking for passes, and often couched in familiar and affectionate language.

I have frequently heard the letters and the letter-writers discussed in my wards by the patients in a way that would have annoyed them very much, but might have taught them a useful lesson.

Nowadays the rules for the patients are much relaxed. Convalescents, with the permission of the doctor, are allowed daily passes out, so long as the privileges are not abused, and may leave the grounds between certain hours. On the road along which they must go there are always numbers of girls waiting for them; and I watched the other day, from the top of a passing car, with no surprise whatever, three of my own patients only arrived from France two days before, out "on pass" for the first time, complete strangers to this part of the country, and knowing nobody, each man walking down the road arm in arm with quite nice-looking, well-dressed girls, evidently belonging to a class of society with little to do and plenty of time to do it in.

It really seems a pity that in these strenuous days, when workers are so urgently needed and many a gentlewoman of their own class is working almost beyond the extreme limit of her endurance in some heated munition works, that there should be so many foolish, idle people, with nothing better to do than waste their own time making acquaintances whom they would never allow to speak to them if they did not happen to be wearing uniform.

One kind of visitor whom I am always glad to see is the nice, middle-aged or old lady, who wants to do something for the soldiers because of her own dear lad out at the Front, especially if she can find someone from the same regiment.

She is kind and motherly and knows what boys like to eat, and she comes toiling up to the wards, very much out of breath, laden with knobbly parcels of "spice loaf" and tea-cakes, baked by herself—the fragrant spring-onion when in season—and as much fruit and "Woodbines," of course, as she can afford. The men just love her, and treat her ever so nicely. One great virtue, in my eyes, is that she comes first to ask me if her dainties will do any of them any harm.

Quite different is the well-meaning, but dreadful woman who rushes behind one's back and thrusts plums and pork pies into the willing grasp of an "abdominal," or comes armed with a yard or so of dirty-looking, unsavoury "polony"—(in the hot weather, when meat does not keep)—and deals it out in sections, which she cuts up on the locker tops with the nearest man's jack-knife. She passes it round amongst the "persistent vomiters" and such-like, when Sister is in the next ward.

Such a woman, let loose in a hospital where one has about seventy cases under one's charge in several small wards, is a perpetual anxiety

and adds many a grey hair to the ever-increasing number.

One good lady slapped down a piece of wet, raw fish, innocent of any wrapping, on every man's locker, and told them that "Sister must cook it for their tea——" Sister—nearly run off her feet by stress of work and possessing no cooking utensils, except a small milk saucepan and a kettle, and nothing but a small gas-ring, with next to no pressure of gas and no fireplace—was obliged gently to remind her that she was not a cook, and had neither time nor means for the purpose if she were one; and to request her to remove her goods, which she did with many snorts of indignation and muttered remarks about the pride of hospital sisters in general.

As some of the wet fish had been laid on top of bed-boards, Sister was not as sympathetic as she might have been otherwise. Talking of bed-boards reminds me to say that most of us have learned by experience that we must take all case papers right away on visiting-day.

It was no uncommon thing to have to turn some flapper off her comfortable seat on a patient's bed, when she was taking an intelligent interest in his case sheets, and asking him to explain what she did not understand at first sight.

The questions put to poor bed-fast creatures, who could not escape, were weird.

The unfortunate man, caught before he had time to close his eyes and feign sleep, would be subjected to torrents of questions of the most inane and senseless description.

One patient, who had had his arm amputated right from the shoulder and had barely recovered from the serious operation and loss of blood, was a perfect bundle of nerves and very sensitive about his condition generally.

A gorgon of a female penetrated into his little ward—regardless of the fact that "Private" was written on the door—stood at the foot of his bed and fixed him with her steely eyes—so he says—for a few minutes, without a word.

She then said, "Have you lost your arm?"

To which he snapped out, nearly in tears—"No, I haven't; I've lent it to the chap in the next ward."

The Central Work Rooms for the British Red Cross Society and Order of St. John, of which Lady Gosford is President, have returned to the Royal Academy Galleries, at Burlington House, which were used as headquarters last year.

The names of over 1,400 voluntary women helpers are on the register, and more are required. There are 732 home workers, and throughout the country 1,600 working parties. These working parties make the supply of needs to local hospitals their first care; and then send goods, according to order, to the Red Cross Stores Department, 83, Pall Mall. The home workers send to Burlington House; and the St. John workers to the St. John's Warehouse, 56, St. John's Square, E.C. Patterns of all kinds can be obtained from Burlington House.

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