

## ANXIOUS MOMENTS IN HOSPITAL.

We always read *The Gazette* of the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth, with pleasure, and admire the amusing sketches therein. It certainly is wonderfully well got up in every way. *The Gazette* is wholly the product of the 3rd London, and all its contributions are "home made," past and present patients and past and present members of the staff have supplied all the articles and poems and all the drawings, without any exception whatever. We offer hearty congratulations to the editor. The following "Observations of an Orderlette" are interesting to us professionals, as it is not only good to see ourselves as others see us, but to see others as they see *themselves*.

### OBSERVATIONS OF AN ORDERLETTE.

Exactly one year ago on the 6th of this month, at 6.45 a.m. precisely, six V.A.D.s presented themselves in fear and trembling to Night Sister, for they were the first of the girl orderlies, and though "Pioneering" may be good work, it is distinctly terrifying!

They were scattered down the B corridor—itself in the throes of creation—into a world entirely new and almost chaotic, a world which

very quickly dispelled any illusions as to the "picturesqueness" of V.A.D.-ing. Nobody loved us, and apparently nobody wanted us; neither did they know what to do with us.

Our *raison d'être* being to relieve the male orderlies, we were handed over to them to be initiated into the mysteries of laundrying, dispensarying, storing, and the hundred and one jobs that belong to the orderly—including "funk holes" and "sprucing spots," which were introduced with explicit directions as to when and how they should be used! We have heard of an orderly who besought his lady successor (who'd been to the Dispensary and *back* in ten minutes) to "Play the game and not hustle *too* much, or —," but perhaps that's telling tales out of school!

Reinforcements arrived almost daily, and we soon felt ourselves a real part of the hospital. Of course, we made mistakes, and *bad* ones some-

times, and, of course, we got hopelessly lost—starting off gaily from a given point in a given direction, and arriving, breathless and panting, at the same spot. Or starting out with, say, a breakage form for the dispensary—to be told there that it was nothing to do with them but must go to the Lieutenant-Quartermaster's office, and from there being sent to the Engineer, who refused even to look at it without a written permit from the Lieutenant-Quartermaster, who, when you arrived at his office, had just gone over to the Store; and having run him to earth there you would probably be told that it went *direct* to the Geyser man behind the incinerator!

Verily, the Army believeth in not letting its right hand know what its left hand doeth! There have been times when N.C.O.s in charge of stores have wished devoutly that we were male orderlies—to be "told off" in the Army vernacular—when Quartermasters have torn their

hair, and sisters have become almost feline in their despair over us. But we've stuck to it and really tried to thank everybody, from the chiefs of staff downwards, for a deal of patience and a thoroughly sporting chance to 'make good,' and especially to the N.C.O.s and "orderlims".



NIGHT ORDERLETTES COMING ON DAY DUTY BEING DETAILED TO THEIR NEW WARDS.

are we very grateful. For the spirit of splendid *camaraderie* in which they have worked with us has made a very difficult task comparatively easy.

One of the things that puzzled us rather was the prevalence among some of our colleagues of the idea that Orderlettes were a quite inferior brand of V.A.D., and the tone in which they called us "*Awderly*" made us almost wonder if we were some new species of insect after all—and then, fortunately, the humour of it struck us. Whereupon we were sorry for them, for we at any rate had the satisfaction of knowing we had actually helped release a man: which comfort by the way, has dragged us from many a Slough of Despond and pushed many a disagreeable job through—a sort of very present help in trouble.

By the time this appears the Orderlettes will be almost *non est*—for through trial and tribulation have they attained to another sphere. Good luck to them, and the best of luck to our suc-

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