

CARE OF THE WOUNDED.

OPENING OF THE SUPPLY DEPOT OF THE ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE HOSPITAL.

On Wednesday, January 24th, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, opened the Supply Depot for the St. John's Ambulance Brigade Hospital in France, located at Halkyn House, Belgrave Square, kindly lent by Lord Beauchamp for the purpose. His Royal Highness, who is Grand Prior of the Order of St. John, was received by Earl Beauchamp, K.G., President of the Depot, the Earl of Plymouth, Sub-Prior, Sir Herbert Perrott, Bailiff of Eagle, Sir Herbert Jekyll, Chancellor, Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Secretary General, Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, Chairman of the Depot Committee, Lady Perrott, Vice-Chairman, and other dignitaries of the Order.

After the Duke had inspected the premises, a short dedication service, held in the dining-room, was conducted by the Rev. Prebendary Boyd.

Lord Beauchamp, who was in the chair, in inviting the Duke of Connaught to declare the Depot open, said it was most appropriate that the ceremony should be performed by the Grand Master, who, on a recent visit to France, had seen the hospital of the Order at Etaples.

He spoke of the energy and able administration of Sir James Clark, Chief Commissioner of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, in organizing the hospital, of the fact that all the orderlies were members of the Brigade, and mentioned that the flag which floated from the hospital flag-staff was the same as that which flew over the hospitals of the Order of St. John in the time of the Crusades, and that the hospital, with its 520 beds, was the largest voluntary hospital abroad.

It was evident that one of this size required a large amount of supplies, and so the depot had been opened where ladies would come every morning to roll bandages and prepare dressings and other supplies. One afternoon a week domestic servants came and gave most useful service. It was hoped that one result of the afternoon's function would be more workers and more money.

The Duke of Connaught said it was a great pleasure to him to have been asked to open the Depot, and he thanked Lord Beauchamp, in the name of the Order, for lending Halkyn House for the purpose. They were also very lucky in having Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, as Chairman of the Depot Committee. He thanked all the ladies who had so warmly supported the work with ever increasing interest. They wanted more and more workers, and increased subscriptions. As Lord Beauchamp had said, he had been round the hospital at Etaples. He thought anyone would be struck by the magnificent scale on which it was organized. It was a model hospital, the management excellent, the arrangements splendid, and they had a devoted staff of medical officers,

nurses, and orderlies. He would like to say how much he appreciated their splendid devotion to duty.

His Royal Highness spoke of the flourishing condition of the Order of St. John in Canada. The Order was keeping up its old traditions in working actively for the sick and wounded. It had, in the previous week, made an offer to the War Office to take over the care of disabled soldiers and sailors by maintaining and keeping in repair their artificial limbs and surgical appliances. The Deputation to the War Office was very warmly received, and the Admiralty was very favourably disposed to a similar offer.

The Duke then declared the Depot open. The cordial vote of thanks to His Royal Highness proposed by the Sub-Prior, the Earl of Plymouth, was seconded by Sir Herbert Perrott, who mentioned that they had had application from Etaples for 500 sheets and 1,000,000 bandages, there was therefore ample scope for the work of the Supply Depot. The work of the Brigade in Etaples was the work of the working class.

In returning thanks the Duke of Connaught spoke of the gentle persuasiveness of the Duchess of Bedford, the enthusiastic energy of Lady Perrott, the help of Lord and Lady Mount Stephen and others. The Ladies' Committee had shown a capacity for laying its finger on gaps which needed bridging over.

Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, said that His Royal Highness' presence was a great incentive to them to work for their much-loved hospital. She thanked the Duke for his words and for mentioning her name and the work of the Ladies' Committee. She also thanked Lord Beauchamp for lending his house for the Supply Depot.

A vote of thanks to the Duchess of Bedford and the Ladies' Committee was proposed by Sir Herbert Jekyll, and seconded by Mr. Evelyn Cecil, and another to Lord Beauchamp brought the meeting to a close.

Those present then visited the various rooms in which the work of the Depot is carried on. The workers, in their white overalls and caps, looked very neat and trim, and were so numerous that Miss Constance Todd, Matron of the hospital, who was present, wearing the decoration of the Royal Red Cross, which she had received from the King that morning, must have been inspired to hope for a constant stream of supplies.

In connection with the care of disabled men the aim of the Order of St. John is:—

- (1) To maintain and repair artificial limbs and surgical appliances;
- (2) To render this assistance as far as possible at or near the men's homes, and while they continue in their employment;
- (3) To ensure that full use is made of the appliances provided at Government expense, and that no man remains on crutches or otherwise unfit for employment when an artificial limb or appliance would enable him to become a useful member of the community.

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