

NURSING AND THE WAR.

Better late than never! After four years of disorganisation, the *Pall Mall Gazette* inserts the following statement:—

"There is, I hear, much need for inquiry into the management of many of the smaller auxiliary hospitals for discharged soldiers throughout the country. The increasing number of these places has necessarily resulted in a serious shortage of really efficient matrons, and women quite unfitted by experience or temperament for such responsibilities have been appointed.

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"The very regrettable falling off in the number of voluntary workers in such institutions is also attributed to the treatment meted out to them by inefficient matrons. I have heard patients express the opinion that duly authorised inspectors could obtain much information if they sought for it in the proper quarters."

To be fair, the *Pall Mall Gazette* should have made it quite clear that these "inefficient matrons" are usually untrained women, belonging to the "governing classes" or the wealthy plutocracy. These women have been encouraged by the powers that be to dress themselves in fancy nursing dress, including pearls and pearl powder, and to assume charge of our sick and suffering men. Many of them of the "Dill-Binkie" class have never trained for an hour, and in their jealous self-sufficiency, employ only semi-trained nurses or V.A.D.'s to trifle with the lives of our men. This Society nursing matter is one of the big scandals of the war, and if the *Pall Mall Gazette* can buck up the present Director-General of the Army Medical Department and get him to put his foot down and stop the abuse, it will have done the best bit of war work for our sick and wounded the Press could do. It must begin at the top and clear out the Society clique on the Joint War Committee and its subservient officials "who will have it so."

As a Tommie said to us the other day, "Any old Duchess is considered good enough to mess me about."

Tommie knows the touch of a "Pucca Red Cape." Trust him.

There is no doubt that, when working in a French Military Hospital, being a member of the Roman Catholic Church has its advantages, as the large majority of the patients, their friends, and the staff are members of this Communion, and it is quite natural that such conditions make for harmony. Not that we have ever heard it reported that there has been any interference upon the part of the French authorities with the religion of British nurses. We do know, however, of some British nurses who have become Roman Catholics, and of more than one who has entered a religious community.

A friend writes:—"I have been staying in — with little B's godmother. Poor child! I cried bitterly all the way to Paris leaving her there in a dirty, insanitary hole, without a breath of air, just by the Cathedral. I turned up her dress and had a look at her 'undies.' My dear Editor! that's enough to put anyone off being the Bride of Christ. But she is so happy. She is praying hard for the souls of the prostitutes at Woolwich, among whom she worked. They have to be saved. She was permitted to spend a day with me, and to eat with us. It did her a world of good, poor child, to fill her lungs with pure air. What I regret is her wasted training. I told her Confessor so. He was of my opinion, but she chose her own Order. I wish I could believe she was doing good, dear, sweet little Saint, and I hope her prayers for me will make me a less discontented woman."

THE SOB-SISTER.

Mrs. Gertrude Atherton, the famous American authoress, has addressed a warning to her compatriots of how the snivelling Hun will appeal for pity when he no longer possesses power to outrage decency and honour.

Mrs. Atherton says the poor starving children of the Teutonic Empires will be used as a peace weapon, and American mothers will be appealed to in "sweet reasonable voices" by German women in the States to listen to the wails of these darling ones—dying by inches—when peace with a conquered country would save millions of them."

Mrs. Atherton, who holds the German people, their system of Government, their craft, greed and cruelty, in abhorrence, writes: "Beware of the sob-sister appeal to save at any cost the lives of German babies that they may grow to manhood and compel our male babies of to-day to shed their blood in the death struggle of the United States of America."

There are many silly sob-sisters on this side, too.

Also speaking with a woman of gentle birth and apparent personal refinement, we were shocked to hear her say:

"It is a blessing in these days that we have got used to things. In the early days of the war bad news from the front and the sight of the wounded was almost more than one could endure. Nowadays we are all stoics."

A sad day for England if that were true, but it is not.

FRENCH FLAG NURSING CORPS.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick will interview candidates for the F.F.N.C. on Wednesday, October 2nd, and on Saturday, October 5th, from 2.30 to 4 p.m., at 431, Oxford Street (first floor), London, W.

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