

THE GREEK NURSING UNIT.

Sister Elsie Nunn (1st Military Hospital, Athens) sends us some very interesting snap shots. That of herself and the Greek surgeon surrounded by their patients gives a very good idea of the fine-looking men who compose the Greek Army, and who, all the Sisters report, make such excellent and grateful patients after fighting heroically in the cause of civilization.

If possible, when young, store the memory with travel and adventure—it is the best education ever. Then when you are old, you can sit by the fire side in contentment and be quite sure that there is "no place like home."

This reminds us that the R.N.S. Sisters are finding their environment very interesting, both at Athens and in Asia Minor. Writing from Smyrna, from which place the Sisters have been sent nearer the front, Sister C. J. Baxter says: "The people here are the essence of kindness and we are all very happy. At the Passport office in London we were warned that the Greek officers and men would not treat us as our own soldiers would. We have only met with the greatest kindness in every country.

"Last Sunday we all went to Bougal. It is the residential part of Smyrna where many wealthy Britishers live. There is the house which the people of Smyrna gave to V———. It is now an orphanage for girls. The grounds are lovely, and as far as we could see everything on British lines. The children seemed very happy. . . . Our greatest friends here are the officers of each British naval boat. One ship always informs the relief that we are here and has instructions to look after us; and British residents are equally kind. Just now is the great Turkish feast of the Passone, the 'Byram.' All the Turkish people seem to have a holiday. I cannot tell you anything about it, as no stranger is allowed to see it. However, to-day we had rather an unusual experience. A party of us climbed Mount Pagus. It is the hill on the slopes of which Smyrna is built. At the top are the ruins of the old fortified castle of Smyrna, now only a police station and a monastery remains. We had breakfast in the garden (as we left the

hospital at 5.30 a.m.), and really it *was* lovely. One could see such a wonderful expanse of land and sea, and at the end of the Gulf of Smyrna is the reputed birthplace of Homer. Going down we saw a crowd at a doorway, which we thought was a mosque. It turned out to be a feast at the house of a very wealthy Turkish family in honour of the circumcision of the son, a child of eight. The wealthiest families invite all the poor people whose sons are of the age for circumcision. All and sundry seem to come and all get a most cordial welcome. When the host saw us we were most cordially invited in and a table was set for us. Little round tough things like dough nuts were served with a syrup of sugar; then cheese, Turkish delight and cigarettes. We were advised to ask if we might see the host's wives, and were then trotted off to another house where the feast was. They were not dressed, and begged to be excused; but with great pride we were shown the bed where



SISTER ELSIE NUNN, R.N.S., MEDICAL OFFICER AND PATIENTS,
1st MILITARY HOSPITAL, ATHENS.

the circumcisions were to take place. The embroideries and lace on the bed were really a joy and things of beauty! I have never seen anything so lovely. Then the man displayed his wealth, which he carries in his Fez and cap. The tassels of both were entirely of the most beautiful pearls and his brooches of diamonds and other precious stones were priceless. Altogether it was a unique experience. . . . I hope the Turkish delight will arrive safely. . . . I will not be nearly so long in writing again."

The Greek troops are steadily advancing towards Angora against the hordes of barbarism. There has been very heavy fighting, loss of life, and a large number of wounded, so that the Sisters are working at high pressure, and no doubt enjoying the sense of their skilled use to humanity—a true nurse's greatest pleasure in life.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)