

a big wardrobe, and a folding table on which we dine. It is all very tight and like a doll's house. One of our chief troubles is water; there is none fit to drink, and washing water is yellow and brackish and salt, however these are only minor difficulties. We can carry 52 at a time down the Canal, having 16 stationary beds, and 36 swing ones. We halt some time at Bourbourg where everything is disinfected, mattresses, blankets, and all for the next trip. A great many of our patients have been for a year already in the trenches, and they are remarkably clean considering but there is an appalling lot of "live stock" on them, especially the Arab patients. . . . We have been working in France now nearly a year and are quite habituated to their mode of life, and food, and I for one shall be very sorry to say goodbye to "La Belle France." We have kept in touch with events in New Zealand by reading illustrated New Zealand papers, sent us by the Bank in London, and have seen news and photos of members of our contemporaries in Wellington Hospital, who are in different parts. . . . I hear occasionally from Mrs. Holgate; she was very kind in helping us with funds and linen to stock our typhoid hospital in Bergues.

M.H.S. VALDIVIA.

COWES BAY,

ISLE OF WIGHT,

April 1st, 1915.

Dear—, Thank you very much for the copies of "KAI TIAKI" which I have received quite safely. It is such a pleasure to get them and read about the doings of our fellow-workers. The English sisters enjoy them very much and were surprised that we had such a good magazine.

We had a very good voyage over, reaching Falmouth on December 7th, where a boat-train was waiting to take us to London. It amused me very much to see all the tiny fields hedged around for miles and miles.

I called on the High Commissioner for N.Z., and he arranged for me to call at the War Office.

It was fortunate Miss K. Berry was in England, as the Matron-in-Chief at the War Office wanted a testimonial direct from the training hospital matron and I received this appointment as soon as they received Miss Berry's letter. This ship was a

new French passenger boat running from Marseilles to South America and was taken over by the British Government and converted into an hospital ship with 600 cots, divided into 8 wards and an up-to-date little theatre. The staff comprises Colonel-in-Chief, 6 doctors, matron, 12 sisters and 42 orderlies. The matron is the only regular Army sister, the others being civil nurses, on duty since the war, in military hospitals in England. The orderlies are all members of St. Andrew, in Scotland, and are a fine body of men and very willing to learn their work. Our headquarters are Southampton, and we were anchored opposite Netley Hospital for some time; but now our anchorage is Cowes Bay.

The work comes in spasms, two or three trips running and then a spell for a week. Havre and Boulogne are our ports of call for the wounded. The loading and unloading of the wounded soldiers is very well carried out. The R.A.M.C. and Red Cross stretcher bearers are very well trained and carry out their duties splendidly. On our last trip we took the wounded to Watlin, the worst of them being Irishmen. The poor fellows were so badly wounded and the shrapnel wounds are ghastly things, six died on the way; one from tetanus and five from shrapnel wounds. Two operations were also performed, one by amputation (gaseous gangrene), the other appendectomy with peritonitis. When we arrived in Watlin, Sir Thomas Miles came down to the ship and had them sent to his hospital.

The work is very hard while it lasts; but we are always sure of a rest on our return voyage to France, as we only go 12 knots. The H. S. Astris that was fired at by a German submarine is anchored close beside us and she is a fine ship with 1,000 cots. It is quite a sight at night when all the lights are on the ships. There are green electric lights all around the caff rail (I think it is the caff rail) and bright head lights on each Red Cross, it really looks like a fireworks display as there are seven Hospital Ships anchored at present.

Thousands of soldiers have been embarking at Southampton each day, and they pass silently along in the dark every night, and it is wonderful how they all reach France safely. Portsmouth is only three miles from here, so we see the torpedoes, submarines, and hydroplanes out on trial,