

such marked "valet," or "steward," or "page." No matter in what part of the yacht his Majesty may be, he has but to stretch forth his hand to summon an attendant.

In truth, it is a yacht "fit for a king."

SNAPSHOTS OF THE WAR.

INTERVIEW WITH NURSING SISTER LITTLECOTT.

With the many sons of the Empire who sprang, sword in hand, into the quarrel of their Motherland, went here and there a nursing sister, hoping by the gentler arts of peace to assuage the bleeding wounds of ghastly war. Ashburton numbered one in this band of devoted women in the person of Nurse Littlecott, who recently returned on a short furlough. A representative of this paper waited upon her to gather a few details of her experiences that might be of general interest. A small, slight figure, of gentle ways and velvet-footed movement, the sister looks the ideal comforter of weariness and pain. Her labours of over two years at the front, supplemented by a voyage back in charge of seventy sick, on a troopship filled with 500 West Australians, has left her a trifle thin and tired, but she kindly consented to supply any information at her command. Asked as to the most remarkable case she nursed, she said it was one of hepatic abscess, supervening on enteric and dysentery. This poor unfortunate "Tommy" underwent seven operations, and by skill and care was eventually shipped to his longed-for "home" as cured.

Of the strange vagaries of bullets the nurse had many tales to tell. In one case the bullet caused compound fracture of both thighs. The victim was also shot in five other places in the shoulder, and through the head. Being so encased in plaster of Paris, he was known amongst the orderlies as "The Plaster Mummy." Another poor fellow was shot in the side of the cheek, the bullet making a downward course through his neck, and coming out of his opposite shoulder: a most ghastly case, nearly all his shoulder shot away, yet he too was sent Home cured. Much of the work at the Mooi River base Hospital resulted from the dreadful disaster on Spion Kop. Bitter tales were told by the human fatesman flung up by that surging wave of battle's line.

"Me an' Bill was fighting in the trenches," said one pallid wreck, "an' it was near night. Bill was my pal, you know, sister, when I got a bullet through one arm. I shifted me gun and blazed away with the other till I was shot in that one too. I lay back just as Bill came flopping right across my chest. Bill groaned awful: 'Don't groan, Bill,' I says, 'the stretchers will be around soon,' but Bill never said a word, only groaned just awful. It got dark, an' I said, 'Cheer up, old man, we'll be taken away soon.' But Bill never answered. After a time I guess I went asleep (he became unconscious), and when daylight came things was just as before—only Bill he groaned no longer." Such were the tales told by the brave line men who on that deadly day toiled up the steep ascent dragging their clogging guns with them.

Nurse Littlecott afterwards ascended the historic peak, taking 22 hours in the task, and not then at the steepest place where our heroic men of the line died, "because someone had blundered."

There lie the brave dead in long, drear trenches, 600 of England's sons. "The half of creation we own; we have bought the same with the sword and the flame, and salted it down with our bones."

The most of Nurse Littlecott's medical cases were enteric, from Ladysmith, aggravated by starvation. Yet no Tommy of them all will ever own Buller paid too high a price, or that he is sought but a great success. The men and officers love him with a great devotion, and would willingly die at his call to-morrow if it were but his wish.

After one of the great fights for the relief of Ladysmith, when the convoys of wounded began to come in, a huge dog made his appearance in one of the sister's tents, and prepared to accompany her on her rounds. He went to every one of the thousands of beds, out of one tent into another, looking in every face if perchance it might be his loved and lost master. The sister adopted him, and thenceforward "Bruce" became an institution. Every ambulance train was met by him, with the liveliest show of delight; every poor sick Tommy as he was lifted out was duly inspected, if by chance his loved one came again, till the last one was put into the dhoolies and carried away. Then he dropped his tail and slunk dejected off to go his patient round once more, amid the suffering and the dying.

The dog never by any chance met any but Red Cross trains, and the sisters wondered what instinct prompted his knowledge.

His life ran out before the sister left, and his faithful, loving heart ceased its vain seeking for the loved English officer he called master, lying dead on some lonely kopje side, so the sisters surmised.

Amongst the nurse's patients were some Boers, of whom she has formed a very low estimate, the first she nursed being very sorry for himself. He was suffering from a compound fracture, and badly wanted to get well "to go and shoot some more English." Another old dopper, 80 years of age, captured after Paardeburg, talked freely till they asked him if it wasn't true that he was a relative of Cronje's. Then he said he didn't speak English, and complained to the doctor of the sister that "she always speak English; I no understand English." This same old fox took his hat round the ward, saying it was his birthday, and he wanted a new pipe, which the generous Tommies supplied pence enough to buy.

Of the generosity, bravery and power of what they call "sticket" things displayed by the troops at the front, the nurse cannot speak too highly. This power of gaily accepting all the discomforts and evil chances of life on the veldt is equally the heritage of both the old land and her sturdy sons beyond the seas.

But even this genial good nature at times is strained to breaking point, as in the story current on the veldt of a Canadian Contingent, whose idolised major was treacherously shot in the back by some Boers hidden in a farmhouse flying a white flag. His men swore a mighty oath that they would capture the murderers, and hang them. They surrounded them eventually, and with their lariats strung them up in a row in front of the same farmhouse. Then the regiment pulled out its pipes, and sat around to smoke. They were still sitting there when an Imperial officer rode up, highly horrified, and proceeded to scarily the sons of "Our Lady of Snows." They smoked on for a time. Then one pulled his pipe out of his mouth and drawled, "I guess there's room for another up there! You'd better git!" The Imperial officer got, and there was nothing officially heard of the matter. Asked as to whether she had seen Lord Kitchener, Nurse Littlecott laughed, and told how on one of his train journeys the sisters took a photo of him, for which he good-naturedly posed on the platform of his carriage. One of the sisters wished to shake hands with him, which fact one his aides communicated to him. It seemed to tickle him greatly, but just as he was about to comply the carriage was wheeled away, and they saw him no more. He stood at the salute as he was whirled out of sight. He is a tall, very straight man, not very like his published pictures, with keen grey eyes, an affection of one giving him rather a sinister expression. Of the many duties falling to a nurse's lot not the least was writing the home letters of the sick, ill or well. Their one cry was, "Say I'm all right, sister. Say I'm having a good time. Don't say I'm sick. They'd only worry over it." Often when the poor brave hearts were nearly sobbing out their last strong breath the cry was still the same, "Say I'll be well soon, sister;

don't say I'm sick." When the letters were to sweethearts things were even more embarrassing, patients saying, "Oh, you'll know what to say, sister; just say what you'd say yourself." The stories told of De Wet are many, but one common property on the veldt goes, that when he was so quiet for some months he had passed himself off as a Yeomanry and gone to England, returning in another troopship in like manner. Of the uselessness of some of the later drafts of Yeomanry many stories are rife. The same column had been captured six times by De Wet's light riders, and stripped of everything till they became famous as "De Wet's supply train." On the last occasion he gave them a sealed order for their commander, which they duly delivered. It ran, "Kindly chain these dogs up, as I am tired of catching them." In vivid contrast to these useless squadrons was the character borne by the "Fern Leaf Boys." This story of one of the earlier battles was told by one of the sick "Dubs," that brave regiment the story of whose famous charge echoed round the world. The gallant Irishmen were new to Boer nomenclature, and when in a desperate bayonet charge a Boer officer pulled out a white flag, screaming, "Don't kill me! I'm a field cornet!" one retorting, "I'm hanged if I care whether you're the whole blooming hand!" drove the terrible steel right through his enemy's heart.

A SUFFERER AT SEVENTY

LIVER COMPLICATIONS.

BILE BEANS BUSY IN HOKITIKA.

The following letter, received from Mr James Siddons, Hokitika, N.Z., is one of the latest we have received in eulogy of the now world-renowned Bile Beans for Biliousness, and is well worthy of perusal. This gentleman is seventy one years of age, therefore the following statements may be taken as coming from mature

experience. He writes: "I am a gardener by occupation at the present time, formerly I followed the sea for a livelihood, but was forced by ill-health to abandon that arduous life; since that time I have been constantly ailing. About ten years ago I was stricken with typhoid fever, and went into the hospital. I recovered, and was discharged from the hospital, but was a long time regaining my strength, and my old troubles again showed themselves. Biliousness and indigestion, accompanied by a severe headache which sometimes lasted all day, caused untold agony, and I lost all appetite. I consulted doctors, but derived little or no benefit, and my complaints seemed to magnify, and I became weak and debilitated. I had no strength whatever, and experienced severe pains, seemingly all over the body. I was unable to gain much sleep, and always felt drowsy. As you may believe this state of affairs soon played up with my mind. I became depressed in spirits, and found great difficulty in collecting my thoughts. But at this stage, when Nature could bear little more, I was advised to try Bile Beans for Biliousness. I followed this advice, took the contents of one box, and derived immense benefit, and continuing with the Beans, my long lost health returned. My only trouble at the present time is an occasional rheumatic twitch, which I must expect at my age. It is in the hope that my experiences may benefit other sufferers that I write this. As for myself, I cannot say too much in praise of Bile Beans for Biliousness." The proprietors must warn the public that the only genuine Bile Beans for Biliousness bear the signature of the "Bile Bean Manufacturing Co." printed in red ink on the label around each box. If your dealer says he has something just as good as Bile Beans for Biliousness, guard against him, for he is trying to sell you something he gets more profit on. Bile Beans are never sold in bulk, by dozen or hundred, but in sealed boxes. In all cases of doubt, send direct to the Australian Depot, Bile Bean Manufactory Co., 39, Pitt-street, Sydney.

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