

and so has to fall back upon extracts from other nursing papers. She appeals to all members to give her more support. The material is sent to all the vernacular editors to be used as a basis for the News Sheets of the various areas. It is expected that news of local interest will be added to the vernacular edition.

The following officers were elected for the next term of two years: President, Miss Coltart, Hatpiplia, Central India; Vice-President, Miss France, Peshawar; Secretary, Miss Sutherland, Chingleput; and Treasurer, Miss Salmond, Chingleput. The Editor, Miss Chapman, had not been in office for two years, so was not due to retire. A new officer was nominated and elected, *viz.*, a secretary for the student members. At present they are looked after in the various areas by the vernacular secretaries and only when fully trained do they come into the Auxiliary proper. It was felt that more interest would be created if there could be a General Secretary for the students. Miss Goheen, Miraj, has very kindly consented to undertake this work.

Business brought before the General Meeting included the report from the Madras Nurses' and Midwives' Council on an all-India conference for the discussion of matters connected with the registration of nurses. It was resolved to recommend that the conference should include in its consideration the question of the recognition and registration of foreign nurses who are registered in the Country or State in which they were trained. A request was also made that the Nurses' Auxiliary should consider the number of working hours for nurses in hospital service, taking into account the need for adequate time for studies after working hours.

H. W. SUTHERLAND,
Secretary

JOINT WAR ORGANISATION OF ST. JOHN AND THE RED CROSS IN ENGLAND

By Miss M. SIMON, Organising Secretary, Madras Red Cross

SERVICE TO PRISONERS OF WAR.

Of all the many-sided activities of our great Relief Agency, the Red Cross, perhaps none has a greater appeal than that of sending help to prisoners of war. It is satisfactory to be able to relate that with the assistance of the International Red Cross in Geneva, this service is working well, and post cards of acknowledgment for gifts are received in most cases from prisoners. According to the International Red Cross Convention, it is obligatory on all belligerent Powers to provide a bureau for information about prisoners of war. Germany is fulfilling her obligations in this respect. A permanent Commission of Neutrals, the International Red Cross Committee, works ceaselessly from Geneva to secure parity of treatment, to provide intellectual occupations and recreational and other facilities in prison camps, and a mixed Medical Commission decides on the repatriation of disabled prisoners, transfers of others

to Neutral countries, and similar questions. This Commission is empowered to do the work for which a Government concerned in waging war, has no time.

In England, the Prisoners of War Department of the Joint War Organisation is empowered to send a monthly parcel of suitable food to every prisoner of war, whether of the British or Allied forces. More than £4,000,000 was spent on this work alone during the last War. During the present War, a grant of £9,000 has been made to the International Red Cross for the purchase of food, and this is distributed by responsible persons in Germany immediately the lists of prisoners are received in Switzerland, until such time as regular communication with each individual can be set up direct. Up to August no less than £74,000 had been spent by the Joint War Organisation on this service, apart from numerous gifts in kind, and there are several packing centres in England. British and Allied prisoners receive equal treatment. Not later than one week after his arrival in a prison camp, a prisoner can send a post card to his relatives. British prisoners in Germany are allowed to send per month: officers, 3 letters and 4 post cards; other ranks, 2 letters and 4 post cards; civilians, 3 letters and 4 post cards. No postage is charged.

CLOTHING.

Relatives may send clothing and toilet accessories via the Joint War Organisation—one 10 lb. parcel only. Those who cannot afford to send warm clothing have the satisfaction of knowing that the Red Cross will send an adequate supply as soon as possible, and as soon as *all* prisoners have been supplied with essentials.

The purchase and collection of clothing, especially now winter has arrived, is an arduous and expensive task, but is being carried on as a labour of love. Many individuals have agreed to "adopt" a prisoner, *i.e.*, to pay for his regular supply of food parcels and clothing.

FOOD.

The only food allowed to be sent to prisoners is contained in the Red Cross standard parcels (the contents carefully planned by a dietician). The cost is about 10s. a week.

BOOKS, GAMES, MUSIC, ETC.

These may be sent direct through firms holding permits to send matter abroad. The Educational Book Section of the Red Cross Prisoners of War Department arranges for books to be sent to any prisoner wishing to study a special subject.

INVALID COMFORTS.

Every four weeks, consignments of household drugs, dressings, tonics, invalid foods and comforts are sent to the Senior Officer in Charge of the Prison Camp for use by those needing them. Relatives of prisoners may send such things direct from their own chemist to be included in the parcel, labelled for the person for whom they are intended. For men known to be in hospital or for chronic cases requiring a special diet, individual food parcels are sent regularly. Seventy-five cigarettes (or the equivalent amount in tobacco) are sent to the Camps for each prisoner every week.

The "personal parcels service", by which the next-of-kin can send a parcel every three months, is temporarily suspended.

PERSONAL SERVICE.

We often wish that we in India could give practical help, other than by giving our money and by sewing and knitting for the sick and wounded in hospitals. The chance may come to us before we think! Great Britain is more fortunate in this respect, and a very large number of honorary workers in all parts of the country are at present doing definite Red Cross work. First come the Trained Nurses and V.A.D. whole-time workers, whose services are used in many capacities. They may be found in all the Red Cross Auxiliary Hospitals and Convalescent Homes. Twenty thousand beds have been asked for from the Red Cross by the Ministry of Health, and a number of large country houses have been turned into hospitals. All the necessary service other than nursing—the cooking, cleaning, gardening, library and recreation organisation for patients—may be among the duties assigned to the women in Voluntary Aid Detachments. Specialised training is given to equip them for their work.

Nurses and V.A.D.s serve on hospital ships. One young officer, badly wounded during the evacuation from Flanders, writing to his sister in Madras, said, "It was like waking up in heaven to recover consciousness on the hospital ship after the hell we had been through, and to find a British Nursing Sister bustling about settling her charges as if we were all in an ordinary hospital ward." Many nurses have risked the dangers at sea, in escorting parties of children to America and the Dominions. They serve with Ambulance Units at refugee clearing stations, in the mobile hospital units for dealing with severe head and chest wound casualties which cannot be moved, in air raid shelters and relief posts, and the Red Cross which they wear on their uniform is the sign to all of prompt and skilled help. The many large Departments of Red Cross work are largely staffed by honorary workers. The work of one of these is at the present time of special interest.

WOUNDED, MISSING AND RELATIVES DEPARTMENT.

As its name implies, the purpose of this extremely hard-worked Department is to bring comfort to those who are anxious about lost relatives. There are many left behind in France and Flanders, still classified as 'Missing'. Many of these are being found in hospitals, or definite information about them can be elicited from wounded men in hospitals belonging to the same unit as the missing man. This is the work of the 'hospital searchers', among whom are many barristers, who, we are told, are especially useful, as they are accustomed to weigh evidence carefully! A great deal of the work of tracing wounded French and Belgian soldiers in British hospitals, has to be carried out by French-speaking 'searchers'.

The names of men who cannot be found in England are sent to the International Red Cross, and search is instituted in hospitals and prison camps by Red Cross workers belonging to those countries. A very large number of 'missing' have

been traced in this way, and communication between them and their relatives restored. The names of men in the home hospitals (and formerly in France and Flanders) who are on the 'danger list' are sent simultaneously to the Red Cross and to the next-of-kin. A member of the local Red Cross organisation, telegraphically informed by Headquarters in London, immediately visits the relatives' home, and, if necessary, arranges their journey to the hospital. Meals, escorts and conveyance across London, and, if desired, conveyance and hospitality in the place where the hospital is, are arranged. To poor people unable to pay the fares, the railways grant half-fare concessions, and this may, if required, be supplemented by the Red Cross. This service is being largely used in England and most grateful acknowledgments are received from relatives. There is a similar service now provided for relatives of air raid civilian casualties.

In June the Department was put to a most severe test. In a fortnight we are told that enquiries by post numbered over 10,000, apart from numerous calls paid to the interviewing staff at an office. The Department is open every day from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. When her Majesty the Queen visited it, she took her turn in conducting interviews with many enquirers she found in the waiting room. She expressed her pleasure at the Nursery, full of toys, provided for children accompanying their mothers. Her personal interest and very real sympathy was a source of great comfort to those whom she interviewed.

The Records Section is particularly well served. A number of filing clerks from business firms come in at the end of their day's duty to help in the work, which often goes on till late in the night.

But no one grudges time and help given to the Red Cross.

FOR THE QUIET HOUR

The Comfort of God—A Meditation for the Times

By DOROTHY H. FARRAR, Ph.D.,
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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all mercies and God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.—II Cor. i. 3, 4.

At the beginning of II Corinthians St. Paul has given us a passage which seems like a psalm of thanksgiving. He had passed through affliction which had weighed him down; been in peril of death; suffered from the malicious accusations of enemies and the betrayal of friends; travelled from Ephesus to Macedonia in ill-health and suspense, till at last good news from Corinth put an end to a period of agonizing strain and sorrow. During this time he had leaned upon the God of all comfort and known in pain and darkness