A SOUTH AFRICAN MEMORY.

(Agnes Macready, in Leisure Hour.)

In spite of the strong light thrown upon warfare during the South African war, there are still people to be met with firmly convinced that the Army Nursing Sister (in ambush evidently amongst the rocks or trees hard by while the engagement is in progress) steps on to the battlefield as soon as the guns have ceased firing, and proceeds to apply dressings or to administer drinks to the wounded by the light of the sun, or preferably the rays of a lantern. This idea, which harks back to other days, has been fostered by descriptive writers and artists in black and white who have drawn largely upon their imagination. But the idea, however admirably it serves as a basis for a picture or romance, is not in accordance with facts, for the modern nurse may find no rest for the sole of her foot within a certain radius of miles from the scene of action.

Her place is in the hospital along the lines of communication, and if occasionally she happens to hear the faint boom of cannon in the distance she considers herself blest as being one of the few fortunate enough to have reached a point near "the front." Of course the siege nurse is exempted from this assertion. But siege nurses, pre-eminent in warlike experiences, form only a small minority.

An Army Nursing Sister on active service is simply an hospital nurse working under some trying conditions and at a higher rate of speed than would probably fall to her lot in an ordinary civilian institute. To the outside world she is a heroine, a second Florence Nightingale; to her own world a burdened woman much troubled by difficulties in the way of obtaining a requisite number of dressing-trays and lotion-basins, clean towels, etc., for the proper performance of her work in an extemporized hospital. When the supply of fresh milk gives out an hour previous to the admission of a convoy of serious enteric cases, or when the can of beef-tea refuses to behave after the fashion of the widow's cruse, it is difficult indeed for the Army Nursing Sister to remember that in the eyes of the public she is placed on the level of a heroine.

And the Sister must be pardoned if, as the sick and wounded come into the wards, she fails to recognize in Private Crump of the Gloucesters, badly wounded, a hero over whose head floats the vision of the Victoria Cross, and sees in him only a poor, neglected man, very dirty, very thirsty, and badly in need of a good wash and generous "feeding up." Allowances too must be made for her should she chance to let fall a remark (on removing a blood-stained bandage from a shattered leg, so shattered as to be of no further service to its owner, a reservist with a delicate wife and seven little children awaiting his return in Scotland) that "War is just hateful," when, according to popular opinion and the story-book, she should be eulogizing the glory of being permitted to lose a leg in defence of the Empire. For the Army Sister is called upon to witness the grey side of a campaign, to stand face to face with the after results of a battle, whether the result is a victory or a defeat.

At the beginning of the war there was naturally some slight confusion in the arrangements of the Army Medical Department. The supply of Sisters was inadequate, and the corps of orderlies of the R.A.M.C., however willing, could not possibly overtake the rush and pressure of work entailed by the hard, hot fighting in Natal before the relief of Ladysmith. Then the army, perforce, fell back on the civilian element, on civilian doctors, nurses, orderlies of "all sorts and conditions." It must be admitted that the army stood the shock of the introduction of new blood remarkably well, although the effects of that shock may still be felt within the precincts of the War Office. The incursion of civilians might be likened to a raid by a crowd of gay, laughing school-boys on the premises of a neat, precise, prim old maid. The laughing school-boys meant no harm, but they had small respect for the antique furniture, the ancient silver, and jars of pot pourri, and wickedly made mock of the venerable parrot which, half asleep on its perch, called out from time to time, "All's well, all's well." But with the progress of the war the civilians gradually, as a whole, fell into line with the army, or the army fell into line with the civilians, and the Medical Department, recovering its balance, issued stringent red-tape regulations, so that it again became 'a matter of infinite importance for "sick Tommy's" slippers to be placed individually to the right and left of his heavy boots on a given line at the bottom of his bed, placed exactly six inches from the wall.

A day in a military hospital on active service, as a day in a large household, is largely made up of little things, of apparently insignificant trifles. Did the sun shine, or the rain fall when the wounded came in in hundreds from the Red Cross trains after the battle of Spion Kop? I cannot recollect, but I do know that on that big day of days the diminutive Beatrice oil-stove, which from its kettle supplied the ward with hot water for the fomentations and dressings of about sixty odd men, failed to do its duty through a mishap to the wick. A fresh wick was procurable at the quartermaster's stores. According to regulations, however, it was necessary for the order in the requisition book to be signed by the doctor of the division. Alas, the doctor was absent, busy with operations. Finally, in the end, the book was signed, but by that time the quartermaster had gone to dinner. For a number of hours, therefore, patient Tommy's wounds were fomented by means of boiling water carried at great inconvenience a long distance from the kitchen at the top of the hill, naturally arriving in a lukewarn condition, and as a consequence my memories of Spion Kop are not associated with the general air of gloom and depression that assuredly existed in the camp, but with a paltry oil-stove which, through evil behaviour, occasioned amongst Sisters and orderlies much "vexation of spirit."

It was always the "little things" that took hold of one. There was the letter lying in No. Thirty-seven's locker, a letter addressed in a trembling old woman's hand, and bearing the postmark of the Orkney Isles, which had sought Pte. Ross, of H.M. Field Forces up and down South Africa, only to discover him at last sinking slowly into the Unknown Land. The tender words had been read to him ere he lapsed into unconsciousness, and ere he knew how they ran, how "All the people at the kirk were inquiring after you on last Sabbath, my dear son, and hoping that God in His mercy would spare you to come home. Father is keeping better, and looks very often at his old Crimean sword, and seems proud to have a son to follow in his footsteps. Katie has taken to knitting a quilt against your home-coming, and tells me to remind you not to forget to wear the woollen comforter on the 'march.'" So while mother in far-away Orkney takes to running to the door to watch for the postman, for surely it must be nearly time for news from South Africa, and Katie knits diligently at the quilt, Pte. Ross, amid the noise of a barrack-room, turns his face to the wall and falls asleep. And all day long afterwards the trifle of a letter presses home deeper, more acutely, the misery which results from war, than the sight of one hundred men sick and wounded stepping from Red Cross waggons drawn up on the square. Always the little things, the minor events.

Battles might be fought, won or lost, De Wet captured, according to rumor, Lord Kitchener taken prisoner, but dinner invariably held its position as the important feature of the day. The names of Colenso, of Spion Kop, of Wagon Hill and Vaal Krantz are for me rapidly becoming obliterated by the mists of the vanishing years, but memories of dinners, of Tommy's comments anent the quality of the "stewed varied," the scantiness of the "plain roast," the poverty of the soup, and the invisibility of the potatoes, are still fresh and green, for, after all, the ambushing of a company of the "Berks" or Derbys," the surrender of sixty Boers, had small interest for the sick inhabitants of a camp, while a mistake on the part of the cook brought grief and pain and discontent and bitterness to valiant soldiers of the Queen.

One gradually became accustomed to the uncertainty of life on active service, to quick exits and hurried arrivals, to sudden orders and equally swift cancelling of orders, to patchwork days and topsy-turvy hours. The sense of the "unexpected" staved off stagnation.

At any moment a ward of convalescent Tommies in blue flannels might by a stroke of the pen be converted into soldiers in khaki, with orders to march to the station for the purpose of boarding a transport for England. And the end of the war, which end certainly came under the category of "the unexpected," even danced a "Will-o'-the-wisp" before the eyes of the men. Notwithstanding the sad aspect generally of lines of men sick and wounded, mirth and gaiety managed to find seats beside some of the patients. Impossible to forget a Dublin Fusilier, with a superficial shell-wound in the right leg, who danced jigs at intervals for the purpose (as he said) of keeping up a friend's spirits, until the doctor, dissatisfied with the healing progress of the wound, gave him the option of abandoning the step-dances or visiting the guard-room; nor a "comic" from a London music-hall, who with his arm in a sling was only too willing to do a turn at any moment for the benefit of his comrades.

And humor was frequently at hand in the red-tape arrangements of the army. On one occasion, visiting a ward, I was confronted with the spectacle of a strong, able-bodied soldier, who had been helping in the ward for about six weeks previously, whilst waiting for a ship, lying prone on a stretcher, with two orderlies standing in readiness as bearers. In consternation, I asked if Brown had broken his leg? "It is all right, Sister," a sergeant replied, "the men have to start at once for England, and as Brown is down on the papers as a stretcher case, as a 'stretcher' he must go to the railway station." It was useless to explain, useless to give evidence that Brown, fit and strong after a very slight attack of malaria, was able to walk and carry his kit, too, for Brown was entered in a certain form in the blue papers, and who dare gainsay the fact? So along the tree bordered, shady road I watched my strong, healthy friend being carried slowly to the station, where he was carefully lifted from the canvas and placed in a recumbent position among the sick men, "according to regulations." And never a smile was seen on the face of sergeant or bearer. But mirth and gaiety are seldom found abroad when the shadows of night fall upon the camp, for in the dreary watches of the night the evils that follow in the wake of our army take form and shape. Then Pain unveils her face, and Suffering stretches forth her hand, while Death boldly opens doors and throws wide the window.

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Outside the moonlight falls soft but cold upon Wagon Hill with its big graves, like flower-beds, of the 18th Devons, the 17th Imperial Light Horse, the rows of the King's Royal Rifles, and the solitary grave of the 5th Lancer, but so softly does it lie on the hill that the disfiguring outlines of the trenches and sangers have lost half their harshness. The air is the still air of the small hours, so still that the murmur of the Klip River, unheard in the day, becomes distinctly audible. It is an enviable night in which to keep watch. As I go my rounds I have frequently found No. 10 in Hut 39 awake, and a night passed under these circumstances is inexpressibly dreary. Having a few minutes to spare (for since midnight Trooper Dare has turned the corner of pneumonia), I wait to hear the story I know No. 10 longs to tell.

He was a clerk in a big warehouse in London when "called up." In spite of being under fire in several engagements, big engagements too, like Pieter's Hill, he had escaped without a scratch, but when the winter set in, lying out on the open veldt in forced marches, he had caught a chill, which resulted in an attack of jaundice. Afterwards, for some reason or other, paralysis set in, and he seems to get no better, cannot now use his legs or arms. Half shyly he asks me if I cared to look at the portrait of his wife and child. From the locker, swathed in the soldier's red handkerchief, I take the photo of a sweet-faced woman and a laughing child. At his request I raise high the lantern to let him look again on the picture, for the helpless hands are unable to grasp the frail pieces of cardboard, and big tears, which he fails to keep back, roll down his cheek. Wife and child and home are very far off indeed, and we are in the hours when the soul feels lonely.

What answer can I give to the question, "Do you think I will be able to go home in the next boat, Sister?" And what can I do but offer to write a letter at the first opportunity to the wife for the helpless fingers which cannot use a pen as of yore?

Such a "little incident," an everyday occurrence in a military hospital, just the picture of a woman and a child wrapped in a red cotton handkerchief lying on a locker beside a sick soldier, yet a "little incident" strong enough to set the tide of revulsion flowing against the iniquity of war in a commonplace woman's heart, who somehow has not succeeded in catching a glimpse of the glory that overshadows the battlefield.

AN AMIABLE PRELATE.

Attractive Glimpses of Cardinal Vannutelli, Papal Envoy to Ireland.

The recent visit of Cardinal Vannutelli to Ireland has inspired the following interesting sketch in "M. A. P.":

Cardinal Vannutelli, who, as Papal Envoy to Ireland for the opening of the celebrated Armagh Cathedral made an all but royal progress through the country, is a very notable man. Cardinal Bishop of the Roman Church (one of six of that dignity in the whole world), Chancellor of the Treasury of the Congregation of Propaganda, Prefect of the Council, Archpriest of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, Bishop of Palestrina, accredited Protector of the Carmelites, the Sulpicians, the Augustinians of the Assumption, and other orders, with a crowd of other titles to honor and offices of responsibility in the diplomatic and ecclesiastical service of the Holy See, he remains through all and in spite of all just Vincenzo Vannutelli, the tallest ecclesiastic in Rome, and the younger brother of the most distinguished Cardinal Serafina.

Devoid of the commanding intellect and personal ambition which often make men in the front rank of power both feared and scrutinized, Cardinal Vincenzo is fortunate in his friends, but still more happy in the possession, in common with his brother, of inexhaustible amiability. He is endowed with Nature's patent of nobility—a frank and simple kindness of heart, and a knowledge of human nature and sympathy with it, from which springs a royal gift of unfailing tactfulness. The clever indirectness of astute diplomacy is outwitted and outmanoeuvred by the refinement and truth of his cultivated good nature.

What unerring instinct was that which prompted the Cardinal to drive to the Protestant Primate's, through the squalid rioters whom odium theologicum and whisky had aroused to fury, as both are apt to do in the North of Ireland! The incident was characteristic. The venerable primate was deeply touched by the kindly act, and the yells and curses of fighting sectaries were exchanged for a burst of friendly cheers. At the simple touch of human brotherhood hatred was dissolved.

The Cardinal was the despair of officials, and especially of the Royal Irish Constabulary. As the stalwart men of the finest gendarmerie in the world kept the ways through the crowds, the Cardinal, a head over the tallest of them, would catch sight of some old man or woman struggling to get near him, and would break the ranks to let them touch his hand and kiss his ring. "What a fine policeman he would make," said an admiring R. I. C.

The same kindness of good feeling was shown in the eloquent and graceful speeches he delivered, in which the varied turn of phrase in his beautiful Italian enabled him to shower compliments without repetition, a feat beyond the power of the bald translations of newspapers to repeat in their report.

It is easy to understand how he comes to be so popular with the Romans. When he comes into Rome from his diocese of Palestrina, a few miles outside the city, as he frequently does for the functions at Santa Maria Maggiore, he is always surrounded by crowds of people, who love to exchange with him smile for smile. But he delights to retire to his diocese, where he was born, for the greater freedom and simpler life which he can there enjoy.

Neither an anchorite or a worldling, neither a sour and immature ascetic nor a man from whom the spiritual world has receded, Cardinal Vannutelli is a kindly, courtly gentleman, and a spiritual-minded priest, one to whom holiness is not incompatible with humanity, and who preserves the harmony of life in bright and cheerful godliness. Notwithstanding the pomp and circumstance of an exalted position, he lives a really simple life; and in this, as in other ways (in some respects even in outward semblance), he is a kindred spirit to Pius X. It is said that it was to the influence of Cardinal Vannutelli more than to any other that the Pope yielded in his passionate resistance to election.

AN INTERVIEW WITH CARDINAL NEWMAN.

In a charming book of travels, recently published by Mother Austin Carroll, the gifted Sister of Mercy, she describes an interview with Cardinal Newman which is especially interesting from the fact that it occurred only a few weeks before the death of the great oratorian. Mother Austin was the bearer of a message to the Cardinal from Bishop O'Connor, of Omaha, then lately deceased, and she had not dared to ask for a personal interview. The Cardinal, however, insisted that she be brought into his presence.

"The interview took place in St. Philip's Chapel, the Cardinal standing at the window of his tribune, supported by Father Neville and another priest. The message being delivered, His Eminence spoke most lovingly of his departed friend: 'He was a great, a good, and a holy man—younger than I by many years. Naturally, I had hoped that he would survive me, but God saw fit to take him and leave me. I know he prays for me, for we loved each other in life, and I had thought he would live to pray for my departed soul.'

"The Cardinal eulogized Bishop O'Connor's zeal and labors, and asked many questions about the Church on the other side. He expressed much love for America, and blessed his favored visitors several times, with many demonstrations of affection.

"The Cardinal, framed in the raised window of the tribune, looked like an apparition from the other world. Almost tottering; his abundant hair whiter than cotton; nose large and prominent, eyes nearly closed, his wondrous voice clear and resonant, and his intonation perfect. When he recalled his obligations to Bishop O'Connor—who had been his tutor in Rome—and spoke of their happy times at the Propaganda, and his keen sense of sorrow for his death, his beautiful voice trembled with emotion, and his eyes were suffused with tears. Many years before, the writer had met the Cardinal as Dr. Newman, and was pleased and edified at the humility of the distinguished convert. But the last solemn interview is something never to be forgotten."

Cardinal Newman died on the 11th of August, 1890, as old as the century.

AT NIGHT.

Sometimes when Dark has spread for
me her robe of rest,
And Silence guarded by;
The night bird, Sleep, would startle
from her nest,
Stirred by the baby's cry.

When night is deepest now, again and
yet again,
I lie with wide eyes wet,
It was his little cry which waked me
then;
His silence wakes me yet.

—Edmund Vance Cook, in Lippincott's Magazine.

A Picture Which Saved The Lives of Two Men

The beautiful picture of "The Immaculate Conception," by Murillo, which now hangs in the Louvre, is remarkable from the fact that it was at one time the means of saving the lives of two men who were about to be shot. It formerly belonged to Marshal Soult, and was acquired by him while following the retreating army of Sir John Moore. Two monks were taken prisoners by a party of his soldiers, and instead of ordering them to be shot forthwith (the usual method of dealing with this class of prisoners, who were particularly hostile to the French) he commanded them to show the way to their monastery. Here he saw this picture, and wanted to purchase it, but the prior refused, informing him that one hundred thousand francs had been offered for it. This sum the Marshal said he would double, and the prior, thinking he saw a way of rescuing his unfortunate brethren by the transaction, agreed to accept it, providing the Marshal would hand over his prisoners as part of the bargain. Soult, not to be outdone, replied that their lives were valued at two hundred thousand francs, and for this sum he would be pleased to release them. To this the prior was compelled to agree, and the Marshal accordingly gained the painting without parting with a penny. At the Soult sale at Christie's in 1852 this picture was competed for by all the crowned heads in Europe, and was finally knocked down to the French Government for five hundred and eighty-six thousand francs.

A New Cure for Drunkenness.

A European medical journal says: "The Norwegian authorities, who do not make light of the subject of alcoholism, have conceived an original method of curing drunkards of their vice. The 'patient' is placed in a room, which he is forbidden to leave, and all outside communication is cut off. When he is once under lock and key, his nourishment consists in great part of bread soaked in port wine. The first day, the drunkard eats his food with pleasure, and even on the second day he enjoys it. On the third day he finds that it is always about the same thing, and on the fourth day he becomes impatient, and at the end of eight days he receives the wine with horror. It seems that the disgust persists and that this homoeopathic cure gives unexpected results."

The Tomb of Leo. XIII.

Pope Leo XIII.'s permanent resting place in his favorite Church of St. John Lateran has been completed. The monument is the work of Lucchetti, a Perugian sculptor, the cost being $35,000, the sum being contributed by the Cardinals created by him, including the present Pope. It is erected over the entrance to the sacristy on the left of the main altar. The tomb proper, which is surmounted by a full sized statue of the late Pope in a recumbent position, will rest just above the door. An arch ornamented with mosaic figures surmounts the tomb, under which are statues of St. Thomas Aquinas and of St. Francis d'Assisi, at each side of the sacristy door. Leo XIII.'s body will soon be transferred from its temporary resting place in St. Peter's to the new one. The transfer will be made at night, but the date is kept secret for fear of disorders such as happened when the body of Pius IX. was transferred to the Church of St. Lorenzo in 1885.

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