

729A/2/199

WOMEN'S HOSPITAL CORPS.

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE
CROIX ROUGE DE FRANCE.



S. LGA

UNION DES FEMMES DE FRANCE.

Hopital Auxiliaire }
Hotel Claridge } address
Paris

Sept 27. 14

Dearest Mother Two nice little letters came from you this morning one 5 days, the other 4 days on the journey. We try to send our letters to England by hand: either by means of the American Embassy bag or by private friends. People are kind in offering help of this kind - It will be a great help if you will enclose a few English stamps in each of your letters & then I can stamp my letters ready for posting in England.

Things are going well here. ~~and~~ we are very busy. We have 68 patients: 6 of them French: 2 Turcos & the rest English & Scotch & Irish. There is an officers ward of 12. We have had 2 deaths - both of men brought to us, almost dying. They were buried with military honours with a firing party of 8 French soldiers two walking in front & three on either side of the coffin. We have a lot of surgery: sometimes I am in the theatre from 2-9 or 10 at night & have eight or more operations. The cases come to us very septic & the wounds are terrible. Today we are having an amput. of thigh 2 head cases perhaps trachea & five smaller ones. We have fitted up quite a satisfactory small operating theatre in the "Ladies Lavatory" which has tiled floor & walls, good water supply & heating. I brought a simple operating table in Paris & ~~we~~ we have arranged gas rings & fish Kettle for sterilization.

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GRAND HOTEL DE FRANCE



Gradually we are improving the domestic arrangements & the routine of the nursing. The food is rough & badly served but everyone is very kind about it & it is improving. Personally I don't mind it & I am quite well, in fact very much rested mentally by the complete change of the life here. Also, after years of unpopularity over the suffrage it is very exhilarating to be on the top of the wave, helped & approved by every one, except perhaps the English War Office, while all the time we are still doing suffrage work - or women's work - in another form. The nurses whom we brought from England with us are all humming out satisfactory people. ready to do anything. & we have a good deal of supplementary help from people here. One American man is making himself invaluable in the officers' ward & we have also an old French stock broker who is here ~~full~~ day long slaving for us. The cases are very heavy, especially the severe fractures & thighs. They need 4 people at least to dress them & take the best part of an hour each. As soon as the men become sufficiently convalescent we have to waft them on to a military hospital at Versailles ^{from} which they are either invalided home or returned to the front "where every man is needed". Lord Escher came here yesterday & inspected us & fired questions at us in an aggressive military way. He had no right to do either as we are financed by private donations & the French Red Cross but of course it would have been most impolite to have been anything than very conciliatory to him. We answered all his questions & took him round the wards & gradually his manner changed & we hope he was friendly when he left. The officers are all most appreciative about the Hospital - & so I think are the men although they don't express themselves so easily. Four girls

749A/2/1/9

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Came in for an hour yesterday afternoon & sang hymns in the court yard. The wards open onto it by big French windows so that everyone heard & all found the words the men sang on wars Xian Soldiers & other good sounding hymns. They liked it very much.

We are going to have Scotch songs tomorrow instead of hymns & I fear some gramophone may appear for a short time. All the men are shocked by what they have been through - & normal comforts & little pleasures are a help to them & make them sleep & forget a little. I have had one very complete off work here when I went for a long motor drive - but except for that I have scarcely been

out until after supper. Every evening D. Murray & I try to go out for a stroll. Paris is looking wonderful, especially at night.

The streets in this quarter are almost deserted as most of the good houses are closed. They are beautifully quiet. There is a little moon & over the town search lights are playing all night from the roof of the Madeleine & the Eiffel tower etc. We walked along the river last night - past the Grand Palais & the Chamber des Deputés & came back very refreshed.

It is difficult for us to go out in the day because visitors come all the time & there are ambulances & telegrams & ~~many~~ old garrulous & the washer & the cook & the insistent Countess & the discontented nurse all to be met & soothed & dealt with in succession. We have been joined by two more

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doctors from London - who are just qualified & who will be
very useful in the capacity of dressers.

Any offers of help in the direction of clothing are most
acceptable. Shirts, socks, small Turkish towels,
handkerchiefs are perhaps the most needed.

Dr. Woodcock 27 Nottingham Place is our representative
in England. She will arrange for the packing & transport of
goods to us here. People like to feel that when they give
things, they go straight to the men who need them & we
can absolutely guarantee that.

I wish the whole organization for the care of the wounded -
their transport, the disposition of base & field hospitals
& their clothing & feeding could be put into the hands
of women. This is not military work. It is merely
a matter of organization, common sense, attention to
detail & a ~~bit~~ determination to avoid unnecessary
suffering & loss of life. Medical women could do it so much
better than it is done - especially if the right med. women who chosen
for the job - ahem!! We have a scheme already & are gradually breaking it to
the old officers who come to see us
We are having a wonderful time. - Those we will be
able to do the job really well.

Very much love dearest mother M. D. G.