

It lasted, I suppose, about four minutes (though one could have sworn to ten minutes). By its aid the Gothas quietly took aim again and bombed and bombed—and we held hands (the chauffeur girl and I), and thought our last hour was going to be a very sticky one.

In the first pause we decided it was no use attempting to go on, because we would certainly catch it again, so we took to the fields and lay down under a tree, and for $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours, with short pauses that detestable bombardment continued. It just rained shells and aerial torpedoes. In the first streak of dawn we crept back mournfully to our car. It had not been touched, but two others just a little further along the road were burning. One lot of six shells had fallen right under our noses in our field. I said, "If there's another, it's us!" The chauffeur girl just had time to say "Don't say such things," when two more fell on the other side of us—just kindly skipping us by a few yards each side. About half way to Royaumont we were met by two ambulances, a doctor, brandy, &c., coming out to pick up the bits; they, of course, knew that we had been caught, and had quite given us up. (Not the least unpleasant aspect of the night had been the cheerful uncertainty as to how near the Boche were and whether they might not be breaking through on another sector.)

Since then we have been over our ears in work, but the Matron and I had one last trip to our camp a week later, the Germans having been held in check all the week. We went up on French lorries, right into the French lines, and, heavens! you never saw such a wreck as our camp was. Troops had been billeted there, and you would think a tribe of monkeys had been through the place—all our trunks had been ripped up and destroyed. We salvaged hospital equipment and a few rags of the staff possessions, but practically everything had gone. However, it doesn't matter much—by the look of the news I should think we would shortly be taking to the roads again.

All the wounded who come in now have been hit on the very ground where we have been walking and picnicing for the last nine months; you can't think how queer it seems—but imagine places that you know as well as, say, Bowral and Moss Vale, becoming the battlefield. It is a fantastic world.

We've had quite a lot of Germans here—and I'm glad to say I find them awful cowards. One Boche officer has given

us as much trouble as six French soldiers; the thing that tickles us most is that he is always so anxious that the lights should be darkened, and when a distant raid came off the other night he yelled with fright. I met him being carried along on a stretcher yesterday, and remarked cheerfully (forgetting that he understands English): "Dear me, I knew who was coming by the noise." (He never stops his complaints.) He tried to kill me with a look.

He's a splendid looking specimen of a very German type. I could imagine him cutting a great dash along the Wilhelmstrasse.

IMPRESSIONS OF A MASSEUSE.

Extract from letter from Roslyn Rutherford, Masseuse at Hop Aux Armies, Abbaye de Royaumont, Asnieres-sur-Oise, Seine et Oise, France.

I have been kissed by an Arab! Horrible, isn't it? He is as black as chocolate, and rejoices in the name of Badas ben Aid ben Aisse, has the proverbial "flashing" black eyes, lovely curly black lashes, and a broken arm and leg. I do his arm. After his treatment, throughout which he nearly collapses with pain, he seizes my hand, and kissing it with great vigour, tells me I am "très gentille toujours."

Life here is one long variety show. Blessés pour in all day long, and are evacuated from the other side with equal gusto. I do odd jobs all over the hospital when not too busy with my massage. Blessés coming in are taken to the salle de pausement to be undressed and washed. They are then marked for X-ray and operation. After which comes the drafting into the wards. I often go into this department because it is most interesting, and often entertaining.

The men are so glad to be here, so glad to see women again, and so very glad to have a wash and a meal. They always bring the very latest news, too, of the Front, which is just here full of interest to us, since with its fluctuating varies our own fate. If it goes well, work is slack, and we are comparatively safe; if ill, the Hospital is continually full, and we live on the verge of evacuating the whole place and going for our lives. We never unpack our boxes, and have out only what is absolutely necessary, so as to be able to move off at a moment's notice.

The Abbaye is very beautiful. It was built by Blanche of Castille for her son Louis IX. All the arches, pillars, etc.,

are arranged in groups of nine. It is in a wonderful state of preservation, but has been patched up a good deal in places. In 1914 it was captured by the Boche, who stabled his horses in the chapel in the usual manner. In November of the same year the S.W.H. took it over, and it has been their headquarters ever since. They had another hospital up north, but had to evacuate it on the last push.

IN AN ENGLISH MILITARY HOSPITAL.

Extract from letter from Enid Armstrong, V.A.D., in North Evington Military Hospital Leicester:—

We five Australians have been here for nearly six-months now; the life is interesting in a way—it could not help being so, when so utterly different from any life one lived before, and I simply love the work. This is a military hospital, and we V.A.D.'s are under the War Office, so that it is, of course, very different to the Red Cross Hospitals.

We have nearly a thousand beds here—a nursing staff of over a hundred—so it's fairly big. In each ward are fifty-three beds, the staff consisting of a sister, a staff nurse, and three V.A.D.'s. Matron has been very good, indeed, to us; she is strict, and on that account not very popular with most of the staff, but we have been reprimanded for nothing so far. Indeed we were given the red efficiency stripe at the end of our thirteen months here, Matron saying she had never greater pleasure in giving it to anyone, and that even had nobody else in the Hospital had it, she would have given it to us—which was very nice, wasn't it?

We get up at 5.45 a.m.—distinctly unpleasant on a bitterly cold morning in winter, but delightful in summer—breakfast at 6.30, then go to the wards at 7. From then till 9 we do the housework of the wards, making beds, dusting, polishing, washing lockers, tidying up generally, and preparing for dressings. These are usually begun between 8.30 and 9, going on all the morning if we are busy. Next comes the clearing up; that, with all the little odd jobs and any special charring or scrubbing, is done in the afternoon, while at 5 the evening work begins, making beds, taking temperatures, also done in the morning; tidying up again, dressings, giving out special drinks, until we go off duty at 8 p.m. We are generally pretty tired by then, I can assure you. Each has two and a-half hours off a day—in morning, afternoon, or evening, one half-day a week, from 2 till 10 p.m., one whole day a month, and three weeks' leave in the year.

Just at present we are trying our level best to get to France, nearly all the thirty Australians who came over either have gone or are going, so we feel it's very hard not to have had our turn yet. There's more responsibility in France, and still more interesting work; but Leicester is a very difficult place to get away from, unfortunately. Still we go, sometime, I feel sure, and it will be a glad day for us when we do!

The best of being in the army these days is that one is well fed, comparatively speaking that is; and, of course, one has not the trouble of outside people in getting food—"the army is always fed." Sugar appears at breakfast, but not again, and bread has been rationed for a long time. Butter, of course, is an absolute rarity; we have it about once a week, on Sundays. Meat only once a day, and three or four times a week come "meatless days." Still we do very well on fish and vegetables. Certainly our health is not giving way. We Australians are all riotously healthy!

PAST AND PRESENT.

Come you again or come no more
Across the world you keep the pride,
Across the world we mark the score.

—Newbolt.

Many Old Students are doing War-work abroad. E. M. Little left here in April, and is with a hospital in France—as Pathologist. While in London she "flatted" with L. Ingram (Edwards), and foregathered with E. P. Dalyell who was on furlough from Salonika, where she has been doing splendid work, and was offered the Directorship of Sanitation.

M. Bowman and R. Rutherford are Masseuses in France, and E. Armstrong is doing V.A.D. work there.

E. Exton is living the life of a lady at home in Brisbane. She visited Sydney this month. F. Stewart (Macdonald) was in town a few weeks ago, also. D. Dryborough (Glasson) and K. Taylor (Glasson) have both been visiting Sydney this year—the former from Java, and the latter from the wilds of Queensland.

M. Glasson (Bray) is still living the primitive life hundreds of miles west of Townsville—where one takes one's bath (when there is any water to take it in) in cupsful beside the pump.