

## PLAGUE OF WOMEN IN WAR.

Pleasure Seekers and Amateur Nurses Who Do Much Harm—Surgeon Treves' Denunciation of the Rush of the "Smart Set" to Cape Town and the "Social Influence" and "Petticoat Patronage" in the British Army—Anecdotes of Paul Kruger—Boer Correspondence by Scriptural Texts—Grief at Cronje's Capture.

With the exception of the notorious Spin Kop dispatches Mr. Treves' "plague of women" has been perhaps the most discussed topic of the week, says a London news letter to the New York Sun. Not so famous as Sir William MacCormac, whose name as a military surgeon is known to every one, Mr. Treves is nevertheless the foremost surgeon in this country, and when, at a dinner given to him and Sir William at the Reform club last Saturday night, he bluntly declared that "so far as the sick are concerned there are two plagues in South Africa—the plague of flies and the plague of women," some protest was to be expected, and it was not heard in very shrill tones. Indignant women wrote to the papers and reminded the world of Florence Nightingale, and the noble work done by the women nurses all over the world as well as in South Africa. Against these women Mr. Treves, of course, had nothing to say; for them he had nothing but praise. He made his meaning perfectly plain when he said: "Considering the kind of war in which we are engaged, and the number of lives lost, the picture of a number of elaborately dressed ladies masquerading in summer toilets and arranging a picnic about Cape Town is a blot on the campaign." Of course, he referred to fashionable sensation hunters who have gone to South Africa in ships.

When these women got to Cape Town they looked about for amusement and they found it and shared it with numerous young officers who got leave from duty while the troops were still being organized. But when the day came for them to go back to the front, they found that the young officers had been sent to the front, and they were left behind. They were then sent to the front, and they were left behind. They were then sent to the front, and they were left behind.

The extraordinary outburst of resentment which my remarks about women nurses at Cape Town has aroused is due to two things—the misreporting of what I actually did say and an inordinately stupid public.

How any reasoning person can possibly have construed my remarks into a sweeping condemnation of all women workers at the front I cannot, for the life of me, understand, for, of course, nothing half so foolish or unjust was conveyed in what I said at the Reform club dinner. Probably no one living has a deeper sense than I have of the splendid work which many large-hearted, unselfish women, professional and amateur alike, are doing in South Africa today.

You may remember that I was the only consulting surgeon that took out a staff of nurses. I did so because I know that women are indispensable to that important branch of hospital work. For the other women—the amateurs, if you care to call them so—who have given up home, money and comfort to help in the work of alleviating suffering, I have only the deepest admiration. That any one in all the world should have attached any other meaning to my remarks, I am, as I said before, simply amazed.

But—and here Mr. Treves brought his clenched right hand into the palm of his left—but when I explain the condition of affairs in Cape Town, where the other sort of woman is gathered, you will be able to judge for yourself whether I was justified in entering a strong protest against what I described as the "plague of women."

Cape Town was, at the time of which I spoke, packed with women idlers, the majority of them "society" or "smart" people, who, yearning for new excitements, had come out to South Africa to make a holiday. I say, and I say it very earnestly, that the condition of affairs, as brought about by the presence of these ladies, was an absolute disgrace to our country.

The hotels of Cape Town (I will say nothing of Durban) were crammed with these people in the enjoyment of what to them was a picnic on a large scale. The Mount Nelson hotel was packed with them, and if a sick or wounded officer came down from the front in search of accommodation he had not the slightest chance of getting into a decent hotel. These ladies had not the faintest pretext for being in South Africa beyond their own desire to make the campaign a means of obtaining new pleasures and excitements.

That, however, was not the worst side of their presence. When dinner parties and other junky grew wearisome, they would make up parties to visit the hospitals. What shall we do today? Oh, let's go and see the wounded! would be the preparation to an invasion of the base hospitals and an incredible amount of interference with the work of the medical staff. Officers in charge of wounded would, in the course of their duties, be interrupted by ladies bearing permits signed by personages whose request the officers dared not or did not care to refuse.

You know, perhaps, what influence means in the matter of promotion, and so the women would be taken round the wards and the wounded shown to the utter disorganization of discipline and duty. There were cases in which the wounded men, aroused half a dozen times a day by these intrusive intruders, turned from them at last saying, "Good heavens, shall I ever get any peace?"

In another instance, a certain medical officer complained that it was already affected in the day and he had not one of his patients professionally owing to the horde of busybody women who had made his hospital the show-place for the day.

These are the women to whom Sir Alfred Milner referred, and of whom I have spoken as a plague—women who are making the scene of war and suffering a place in which to satisfy morbid curiosity and find new enjoyments.

For the woman who is giving everything in the cause of tenderness and compassion I have a profound admiration; for the other sort I have only disgust.

With regard to the remarks about "social influence" and "promotion," Mr. Treves has been very generally supported. The Westminster Gazette, for example, says:

"No military officer employed at the base would have had the courage to speak out in this fashion, for the very simple reason that such an act would have meant certainly effectually blighting his military career. In this there is no exaggeration. This 'social influence,' this 'petticoat patronage,' is the cancer which for years, and more especially for the last few years, has been sapping the vitality of the British army. It is a notorious fact that the surest method of obtaining a good appointment is for an officer to get his name noted on the list kept by a certain lady of the town. The good word of the dame will more effectively secure the advancement of her nominee than any amount of meritorious service or hard work without such a backing. If Mr. Treves has done anything to expose this scandal he well deserves the gratitude of all English soldiers."

Here are some extracts from a letter written by a bona fide army nurse at the front:

"The 'lady amateur' crops up everywhere when military excitement is going on. Lord Kitchener himself took most stringent measures to keep her out of the Sudan, but she has succeeded beyond all precedent in this South African campaign. The 'society ladies' who shipped as nurses—many of them thus escaped paying their own passages—all wear silk gowns and the flimsiest caps and aprons, and look like the 'nurses' of fancy fairs."

"If amateurs came as 'additional' nurses they could play around brown-bagging and do not much harm; but in many instances the war office authorizes only a certain number of nurses in hospitals and on transports. When society women, with no technical training, take these posts they fill them with their own ideas, and the consequence, as too few in number and terribly overworked by doing their own and the amateurs' duties."

"No end of trouble has been caused by these masquerading nurses to doctors, nurses, and poor, sick, wounded Tommies. They get in everybody's way and have no intention of working. Their idea is to take posts of authority and 'boss' the trained nurses, who have borne the heat and burden of many years in hospitals and on the front."

"We don't grudge them going round the wards in fancy dress, distributing flowers, and petting Tommy Atkins. They can do this picturesquely enough. But interference with the nursing of the sick soldier is too serious a matter. Many of these amateurs were actually sent to the front. 'Somebody' in authority had the courage to send several of them back to the headquarters responsible for their appointment. Social influence has no right to count when it comes to war nursing. It would astonish English people did they know how many of these 'nurses' without one day's hospital training in their lives, are trying their 'princely hands' on Tommy sick. And if ever they are called for good nursing it is these poor fellows from the front—with terribly shattered wounds, enteric, and dysentery."

Meanwhile hundreds of South African highly trained nurses are out of employment owing to the war. Nurses from Kimberley and Johannesburg and Capetown all with wide hands, many almost destitute, while the amateur nurses take salaries and positions. Some of them give their services to the government posts and receive government pay. Very often they spend it in cologne and cushions for the patients; but that does not make it easier for the trained nursing staff, who have to do the work of the amateurs, who have no work to do."

There are many ways in which the beleaguered society woman may help the sick soldier, but the sooner she realizes that her province does not lie in the wards of a military hospital the better.

dame hung her head wearily as she plodded along behind him. He reined up his horse, jumped down, and with-out ceremony lifted the old woman, bundle and all, into his saddle. Then, taking the horse by the bridle, led the animal carefully onward toward his own farm. Just before arriving there the old woman said: "May God be good to you for your kindness to one so old and helpless. There are not many who would do as you have done. If I had been young and comely, as I once was, I could not have understood it." "If you had been young and comely I should not have dared to do it," said he, with just a suspicion of laughter in his hard-set eyes. "Not dared," she said, "and why should I, then, have eaten you?" "You might not," said he, with a low chuckle, "but pointing to his wife, who was standing smiling on the stoop, "I think she would have."

"On another occasion he was out on a love expedition, but found that another young man had arrived there before him. The other suitor was a bit of a coxcomb, as concerns going on the velvet. He had a showy horse and a gorgeous saddle and a new suit of clothes fresh from the hawker's van, and when Paul Kruger arrived on his tough but useful horse with saddle to match and clothing homely and simple, the other chap passed some remarks which caused the last of battle to surge up good and strong in the future president's blood, but the maiden, who had the shrewd sense to know the difference between a male and a man, made him promise not to lay a hand on the other fellow, because he was not worth the bother that would be certain to follow such a blow as young Paul Kruger was sure to give. The duke somehow got an idea that Kruger had promised the dame he would not strike him, and as even in those days Paul was noted for his love of the truth, he thought he might very safely venture to ride so, climbing into his saddle he fired off an unbecomingly loud lot of insolence right in the young man's teeth. Paul stood it until human nature could stand no more. Drawing back until he got the full force of his giant strength well behind the blow, he lashed out and caught the horse behind the ear. The brute staggered from the shock as if a second-class earthquake had risen up and smitten it, then fell flat on its flank, breaking the rider's leg in the fall. 'Oh, Paul, Paul!' cried the duke, 'you put me to bed, you would not hit him, no matter what he said.' 'That is so, dear,' said the young veldsmann, with a twinkle in his eyes, and I kept my word to the letter, for I didn't say I wouldn't hit his horse."

When he was in London an English friend offered to show him the sights of the modern Babylon. Oom Paul fell in with the idea, and the Briton gathered him in to see a ballet show, thinking to get some fun out of his shaggy feelings, but Oom sat and watched the whirling dervishes with a stony face.

"What do you think of the girls, nice and fresh, ain't they?" said the Briton, with a sly wink at the old patriarch.

"The pain's fresh enough, I don't doubt," came the answer, "but I don't smoke," but rather have the old shoes of the one I left behind in Africa than I'd have all the women you've got in England, on the stage or off it. She was good enough for me when she was young, and she's good enough for me now."

Boer correspondence by Scriptural texts has been quite a feature of late. The latest example comes from Berlin, where it was received in a letter from Johannesburg. It is said to have been exchanged by telegraph between the Boer General De Wet and Commandant Cronje before the latter's capitulation. On February 25, at 10 o'clock in the morning, President Kruger telegraphed to De Wet: "Inform Cronje that great reinforcements are on the way, and that he will be freed. Psalm xlii, 21." (Save me from the lion's mouth; for Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.) Hereupon the following exchange of messages took place between the two generals in the field.

"Feb. 25, 12:30 afternoon.—De Wet to Cronje: President telegraphs to hold out. Considerable reinforcements are approaching. As soon as they have arrived, we shall attack early in the morning from the north. Psalm xlv, 7." (But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; sudden shall they be wounded.)

"Feb. 25, 4:15 afternoon.—Cronje to De Wet: My provisions are becoming scarce; for the rest I do not doubt with God's help I shall be able to drive off the enemy to the north. Psalm x, 7." (Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.)

"Feb. 26, 7:30 in the morning.—De Wet to Cronje: Re-enforcements, it is to be hoped, come today. Hold out till tomorrow evening. Are sending provisions as soon as possible. Psalm lxi, 15." (Let them wander up and down for meat and grudge if they be not satisfied.)

"Feb. 26, 9:30 in morning.—Cronje to De Wet: The enemy has received tremendous re-enforcements. I am hard pressed. Psalm lxi, 15." (Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me.)

"Feb. 26.—De Wet to Cronje: The re-enforcements are already visible in the distance, but I myself am attacked by superior hostile forces. Psalm lx, 4." (O God, Thou hast cast us off; Thou hast scattered us; Thou hast been displeased; O turn Thyself to us again.)

"Feb. 26, 4:10 afternoon.—Cronje to De Wet: The bombardment is overwhelming. Heavy losses. The majority of the burghers want me to surrender. Psalm xlii, 10." (They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes.)

Mr. A. G. Hales, whose graphic letters have often been quoted here writes this week of how the burghers took Cronje's surrender. "On the very morning," he writes, "that General Cronje surrendered I left Bloemfontein a prisoner under escort. I left the capital of the Free State at about 5 o'clock in the morning of Majuba Day, which, strangely enough, proved to be the day of Cronje's downfall. All along the railway line the Boers swarmed, and every armed man seemed strangely confident that the day of British rule in South Africa was over. Cronje will burst through the circle of steel by which he is surrounded like a wounded lion, said one young Boer to me; he will leap through and make his way into country that will suit him. And there he will turn, and God help Roberts when Cronje awakes down upon him! I, who knew Roberts and the man who were with him, smiled not that I for one moment underestimated Cronje and his stubborn courage, his dauntless daring, or his iron will. I had seen him at Magersfontein, and knew that the Boers had in that stern-braved old farmer of the veldt a leader capable of great things. But I knew also that with Lord Roberts on one side of him, and that mighty military genius, the man of ice and iron, Lord Kitchener, on the other, Cronje had a task in front of him which might have appalled the soul of the first Napoleon himself."

"Later on, when a prisoner at Burghersdorp, when the news came through that Cronje had surrendered, the order to avoid being out of place, the folk would not believe it. They laughed and poked one another in the ribs with the thumb, for they would just as soon have believed that the sun could fall from the heavens and leave the earth in darkness as that Cronje, the iron-willed, tiger-hearted 'Cronje,' could throw down his arms. Had the news come that he had made a mad rush at our guns and perished with all his men around him, they might have believed it—believed it and wept, and even sworn to avenge him. But they would not, they could not, and they did not, believe that he, the man in whom they had placed

their faith, had surrendered with thousands of his men.

"But at last the truth became known; some who had escaped from Cronje's larger brought in the fateful news, and then the stolid-looking fighting man broke down. They wept like boys. Great rugged bearded men dashed their rifles on the ground and spurned them with their boots, whilst down their sun and wind-tanned faces the tears poured readily. Others took the news sadly, with chins drooping on their chests, with hard set faces, white with passionate pain too deep for words; they stood leaning upon their rifles with hands hard gripped until one would think the tightened muscles would leave the impress of the trained fingers upon the cold steel. Others again crawled together and looked dumbly from face to face, like cattle forewarned in the shambles. The blow had stunned them. To them Cronje was something more than a man; he was an idol; what the great Corcoran was to the French soldiery after the battle of Austerlitz so Cronje was to these rude farmers. He was their brain center, their rallying point. Had Paul Kruger betrayed them to their feet for the sake of British gold, they would not have felt the shock as they felt this one man's surrender. If Cronje had loved his country half as well as his country loved him, he would have marched right on to the point of disaster to the Boer army, and have violated his life in order that the memory of his name might have remained as a watchword on the line and in the hearts of his gallant vanguard soldiers. When the crash came when the Boers knew for a certainty that Cronje had broken down, they felt that their idol was shattered. They could not put their feelings into words, but in an outburst their words addressed by the passionate Lord Byron to Napoleon—

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THE SALARIES OF RULERS.  
Pay of High Officials of Other Nations Compared with That of Ours.

If the salary of the President of the United States seems ridiculously small for the chief magistrate of the richest nation in the world, the salary paid to some European rulers seems ridiculously large. Think of the czar of Russia—\$12,000,000 a year, while his nation has a debt nearly double ours and a population about one-half more than ours, and the boy king of poor poverty-stricken Spain receiving a salary of \$2,000,000. The salary first fixed for the President was \$25,000. This was by act of Congress passed on September 24, 1793. The salary of the Vice President at the same time was fixed at \$5,000 a year. It was not until 1873 that the salary of the President was raised to its present amount of \$50,000. The salary of the Vice President was raised to its present amount of \$10,000 in 1853. Considering the buying power of money in 1793 and at this time and the state of the country's finances then and now, the earlier salaries were more liberal than those now.

When Washington took office the population of the United States was less than 4,000,000, the national debt approximated \$80,000,000 or about \$25.50 per capita, including slaves, while the entire valuation of property in the United States was only \$600,000,000, an amount less than the present annual revenue of the Republic. Our population now is over 75,000,000, and the debt per capita in 1890 had fallen to \$14.63. In the same year England's debt per capita was \$87.75. Her indebtedness is more than double ours and her population less than half ours. The national debt of France is four times as large as ours and her population less than half ours. In 1890 the French debt per capita was \$116.35 and that of Russia \$20.75. Germany's national debt is nearly a billion dollars more than ours, and her population one-third less than ours. A committee of the New York Republican club, which has been making some investigations regarding the comparative salaries paid by the United States and European nations to their chief officials, says in its report:

"Mullhall, the eminent English statistician, estimated the wealth of the United States at the close of 1896 at \$175,000,000,000, with an annual earning capacity of \$15,500,000,000. If these figures prove correct the census of the present year will show our national wealth to exceed one hundred thousand millions of dollars. The same high authority estimates the wealth of England at the same time at \$59,000,000,000, France at \$47,500,000,000, Germany at \$40,200,000,000, Russia at \$32,125,000,000, Austria at \$22,500,000,000, Italy at \$18,000,000,000 and Spain at \$11,500,000,000. If these figures are correct, the wealth of the United States is by far the wealthiest nation in the world and increasing much faster than any other. Our wealth is nearly equal to the combined wealth of England and Russia, or England and Germany, and exceeds that of France and Russia, or of Germany and Russia, and nearly equals that of Russia, Austria, Italy and Spain combined."

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Sweden—King, \$2,000,000; cabinet officers, \$25,000; ambassadors to the United States, \$28,000; judges, lord chief justice, \$30,000; minister of foreign affairs, \$11,500; minister of the interior, \$11,500; minister of justice, \$11,500; judges, from \$2,500 to \$25,000.

Norway—King, \$2,000,000; cabinet officers, \$25,000; ambassadors to the United States, \$28,000; judges, lord chief justice, \$30,000; minister of foreign affairs, \$11,500; minister of the interior, \$11,500; minister of justice, \$11,500; judges, from \$2,500 to \$25,000.

Denmark—King, \$2,000,000; cabinet officers, \$25,000; ambassadors to the United States, \$28,000; judges, lord chief justice, \$30,000; minister of foreign affairs, \$11,500; minister of the interior, \$11,500; minister of justice, \$11,500; judges, from \$2,500 to \$25,000.

Belgium—King, \$2,000,000; cabinet officers, \$25,000; ambassadors to the United States, \$28,000; judges, lord chief justice, \$30,000; minister of foreign affairs, \$11,500; minister of the interior, \$11,500; minister of justice, \$11,500; judges, from \$2,500 to \$25,000.

Holland—King, \$2,000,000; cabinet officers, \$25,000; ambassadors to the United States, \$28,000; judges, lord chief justice, \$30,000; minister of foreign affairs, \$11,500; minister of the interior, \$11,500; minister of justice, \$11,500; judges, from \$2,500 to \$25,000.

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