

## THE "TORTOISE" FIELD HOSPITAL.

By MRS. JOHN GAY.

AT Berlin, on June the 13th last, commenced a three days' international competitive exhibition of flying Field Hospitals, under the patronage of the Empress Augusta of Germany, who offered a prize of ten thousand marks to the candidate producing a movable Field Hospital for active service, complete in every detail. The jury, consisting of leading Medical and military

and interesting features in this large encampment, which for a fortnight in July, for years past, has drawn many thousands of visitors. I hope, perhaps, that a short account of the "Tortoise" may prove interesting to Nurses, who are amongst the first to welcome and appreciate improvements in the construction of Hospitals and all appliances which are to assist in the treatment and management of patients.

In active warfare an easily *movable* Hospital is required, which can be pitched as near the battlefield as possible, so that dangerously wounded



View of No. 4 Waggon, "Tortoise" Hospital Equipment, taken at the Camp of the 1st Volunteer Battalion Princess Charlotte of Wales's Royal Berkshire Regiment, at Hampstead Park, Newbury, July, 1888.

men of many countries, did not award the whole sum to one exhibitor, but gave two thousand marks each, with a gold medal, to five candidates, first amongst whom was Capt. A. Savill Tomkins, of the Victoria Rifles (1st Middlesex Volunteers), the other four being Germans. During the recent meeting of the National Rifle Association, held on Wimbledon Common, this admirable Field Hospital, at which Captain Tomkins has been working for some years past and constantly adding improvements, was on view in the Victoria Rifles' enclosure, and formed one of the most attractive

soldiers may not suffer by a longer transit than necessary; also it must be capable of taking up a new position rapidly. To overcome the difficulty and delay necessary to properly erect large tents, the brilliant idea occurred to Captain Tomkins of making each waggon carry its own tent on its back (hence the name of "Tortoise"), which in a very short space of time could be unrolled, spread out all round the waggon, and attached to tent pegs, no special skill being necessary, as every rope for securing it is attached firmly to its proper part, and the arched roof of the waggon makes a firmer

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)