

into the hands of the enemy, who kept them in captivity. Ambulance material often became the spoil of a conqueror, who, perhaps, had no respect for the hospitals, and disposed of them according to his own convenience or caprice.

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In 1863 a conference was assembled in which many Governments took part, and which drew up a programme for the establishment of a Red Cross Society in different European centres, with complete liberty of action, except that they were controlled by a committee sitting permanently at Geneva. Soon more than thirty such societies were formed. The Russian society possesses an almost uninterrupted chain of sections which penetrate the Caucasus, Turkestan, and Siberia, and the Red Cross work is carried so far afield as Java and Borneo.

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The first society to call itself "The Red Cross" was the Dutch one. In 1864 twelve European countries signed the Convention of Geneva, which guaranteed safety for this Red Cross Society, and helped its work; this convention forbade the seizure of ambulances or their material, and declared all hospitals and their medical and religious officials as neutral.

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The United States is to be congratulated upon the equipment of the *Solace*, the first floating hospital ever designed for service in war. The *Solace*—surely a happy name—is a 3,800 ton ship, with a speed of 17 knots, which will enable her to keep close to the American fleets on any expedition against the enemy. She presents a striking contrast to the men-of-war which she accompanies, as her hull has been painted white with a wide strip of green along the side. Her protection is the Red Cross, which floats at her masthead.

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Two large steam launches form part of her equipment, and these will, whenever opportunity offers, dash round amongst the war ships, and remove such of the wounded as cannot properly be cared for on board these vessels. In the event of a ship being sunk it is hoped that many of the ship's company may be saved by these swift launches.

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The forward saloon, on the saloon deck, close to where the wounded will be hoisted on board, has been arranged as an operating room. The light and ventilation are excellent, and it is in every way admirably adapted for the purpose. One of the largest state rooms has been arranged as a dispensary, and another has been transformed into a bath room. This hospital ship is in all respects equipped as a well arranged hospital at home, while the rows of operating tables, and the

tiers of bunks, give some idea of the grisly work it is contemplated may be performed on board before her mission is accomplished.

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In addition to the arrangements made for acute cases the women's steerage has been arranged as a convalescent room, while on the after part of the main deck is located the laundry, and the disinfecting machine occupies the forward part of the hold. A corps of trained male nurses from New York will accompany the ship. We are sorry that the many highly trained women who would gladly have served as nurses should be disqualified on account of their sex; such a disqualification is unworthy of the liberal and large-minded policy which is usually found wherever the banner of the stars and stripes holds sway.

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A SPECIAL correspondent of the *Times*, lately in Egypt, writes to that journal drawing attention to the statements made by Mr. Brodrick, in reply to the questions recently asked in the House of Commons, as to the absence of any sun protection on stretchers carrying the wounded in the Soudan, that the subject of folding hoods has been "under consideration." The *Times'* correspondent points out that this question must have been "under consideration" since 1885, as, in carrying the wounded from Metammeh to Korti exactly the same pressing need was felt by the wounded for some protection from the sun as occurred in the march from Nakheila to Atbara Fort the other day.

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Those who risk their lives for their country as well as their relations at home, have, we think, a right to expect that adequate provision shall be made for the comfort of the wounded. If, as is asserted, the question of providing hoods to the stretchers has been "under consideration for 13 years," it would seem as if we needed a Charles Dickens to arise and point the finger of ridicule at official red tapeism and mismanagement. At the same time we cannot help wondering if it occurred to those on the spot that native mats, properly arranged, afford, in the absence of a more elaborate provision, an excellent shelter from the rays of the sun.

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LORD and LADY ABERDEEN said God-speed to the four nurses of the Victorian Order sent to Klondike, at a reception given at the Rideau Hall, Ottawa. The affair was quite informal and kindly, and the attendance large and representative. One of the features of the evening was the display of costumes, utensils, and many appliances for the comfort and convenience of the nurses and their prospective patients. During the evening delightful addresses were delivered by

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