

office, she visits each ward in this hospital of 500 beds both morning and afternoon. "And I should like to say," said Mr. Speer, "that in the epidemic of heat prostration in 1896 our Superintendent worked side by side with the nurses. I myself was on duty once 57 hours at a stretch, but when Mrs. Willard went to bed I don't know, for throughout the epidemic, which lasted 10 days or a fortnight, wherever one went, night or day, there she was."

COMMENCEMENT AND GRADUATING EXERCISES.

A function unknown in this country, but one which is of great importance in the life of a nurse in the United States, is that which takes place on the occasion of the Commencement and Graduating Exercises. At the Mills Training School, where the ceremony takes place twice a year, the room is finely decked with flags and floral decorations. There is a substantial repast, and all the graduates are requested to invite a friend. Then addresses are given by members of the Medical Board of the Mills Training School, who are leading professors in the City of New York, and the diplomas are publicly conferred on the graduates.

THE BADGE.

The graduates, in addition, receive a charming little Badge, in the form of a gold cross, bearing the monogram "M. T. C." and the word "Bellevue."

AFTER GRADUATION.

After obtaining their diploma, the graduates for the most part do private nursing. There is a Board of Registry connected with the School, or they may become attached to private registries. The calls from doctors may come to Mrs. Willard or direct to the nurses, whose private addresses are in telephonic communication with the School.

COMPENSATION.

As private nurses, the male graduates receive, on an average, from 5 to 10 dollars a day, and all expenses. They, however, complain strongly of the competition of untrained persons, usually not total abstainers, who demand the same fees as fully trained nurses, and not only annex their practice, but bring great discredit upon them. They are keenly in favour of legislation for the protection of their interests against quacks, and are working to obtain it.

THE AVERAGE OF SUCCESS.

Being interested in the capacity shown by men for nursing, which is usually considered woman's special province, I enquired the views of Mr. Ellsworth and his colleagues on this subject, and was told that of all the applicants to the Mills Training School, only 10 per cent. made a success—that is to say, attained to graduation.

THE NURSES.

The names of the nurses, many of whom have, by the way, given up well paid posts to serve for considerably smaller salaries on board the *Maine*, will be of interest to our readers. They are:—Messrs. R. W. Ellsworth, A. H. Chapman, R. B. Vallance, T. O. Speer, G. J. Cole, W. B. Ruth, W. C. Kuder, J. F. McClintock, C. A. Austin, J. J. Reilly, V. C. Bates, F. U. Greene, A. Gillies, L. M. Howard, L. Crick, and C. N. Nash. All are graduates of Bellevue, and many have already seen active service.

THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR.

In the Spanish-American War, Mr. Ellsworth served for four and a half months on the United States cruiser *Topeka*. He was offered the post of acting steward.

Mr. Speer, Mr. Green and Mr. Ruth served on the hospital ship *Solace* for 9 months. It is noteworthy that on the *Solace*, which was nursed entirely by male nurses, and which made six trips between the States and Cuba with an average of 75 patients, many of whom were severe cases, not one patient died. This is a record of which they may well be proud.

After the battle of Santiago, 47 wounded Spanish were nursed by the male nurses. Mr. Kuder, who nursed the Spanish prisoners at Portsmouth, took his patients to Spain. He had a right royal reception from the Red Cross Society in that country, and a tremendous ovation.

Mr. McClintock and Mr. Vallance worked during the war in the 3rd division of the 7th Army Corps, and Mr. McClintock also served in Cuba.

Mr. Gillies did duty at Camp Wikoff. As evidence of the appreciation of their work, I may mention that those who served on the ships were offered permanent positions in the Navy at double pay; but, as this entailed enlisting for three years, they declined the offer. They, however, received, in common with all volunteers in the Spanish-American War, a present of two months' extra pay, voted by the House of Representatives. It will thus be seen that the male nurses who have come to the assistance of this country at this time of need are a highly qualified body of men, and their services will, no doubt, be of the utmost value. It may, indeed, be hoped that the British Government may realize the difference in value of the services of these well qualified nurses and of our own insufficiently trained orderlies, and that the outcome may be the establishment of a proper system of training of male nurses in our army hospitals. If so, our debt of gratitude to these American nurses will be even greater than at present.

M. B.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)