

Army Nursing Notes.

THE Hospital Commission are proceeding with their investigations at Cape Town. Amongst other things, they have visited Woodstock and took the evidence of Colonel Williamson and others, who all testified that the hospital arrangements there afforded no ground for complaint. The Commission will, therefore, have to compare this evidence with the lay view, that of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, taken in England—"The air was foul and the place simply unspeakable. The drains ran out there and the place stank."

And again, Mrs. Richard Chamberlain, who has arrived at home, says:—"Woodstock Hospital was, perhaps, the worst of all. If the wisdom of the medical profession had sought to create the most promising focus for typhus, and such filthy diseases, it could not have improved on Woodstock Hospital."

Dr. Scholtze, who was attached to the Langman Hospital at Bloemfontein in April and May, stated that the milk supply was inadequate, but there was nothing to complain about in the hospitals. There was a difficulty in securing proper accommodation at Pretoria in June, and the number of orderlies was insufficient; the cutting of the railway line by the Boers accounted mostly for the shortage of comforts. The difficulty in remedying the scarcity of blankets arose from the red-tapeism of the Medical Department, which was arbitrary and superfluous. Medical officers were powerless to order supplies locally, where these were procurable. The system of classification adopted by the Department was faulty.

The evidence of Colonel Richardson, of the Army Service Corps, and Surgeon Colonel O'Connor, has also been taken. They both stated that every arrangement had been made to forward medical comforts to the front and to purchase necessaries. The Medical Corps was undermanned in time of peace, but since the war broke out the deficiency had been provided for by the employment of civil surgeons. Colonel O'Connor further stated that few complaints had been received by him. He thought that more opportunities to walk the hospitals and to study the work carried on there should be afforded to army doctors. Meanwhile, on this side, Mrs. Richard Chamberlain has plenty to say, and has volunteered to Lord Justice Romer to give evidence before the Hospital Commission on its return.

Professor Chiene writes to the *Scotsman* from Roodeval, Orange River Colony, an account of the hospital train and hospital arrangements with which he is connected. He proposes enthusiastically the formation of an Imperial Medical Reserve, and says:—

"I shall have much to tell you when I reach home, but one thing has been so forcibly impressed upon me that I must tell you now. The corps of civil surgeons, army reserve nurses, and orderlies of the St. John's and St. Andrew's Ambulance Associations must not be disbanded after the war is over. An Imperial Medical Reserve must be formed to serve Her Majesty in future wars.

Our motto must be "Sympathy," and our badge the endless trefoil knot which I heard first described at the Royal Society of Edinburgh by my old master, Professor Tait. Our ribbon, a blue ground with this knot in red, with a white edging to the knot. Our watchword, "Help to the Sick and Wounded." I would aim at a corps of 3,000, composed as follows:—

1,000 doctors (physicians and surgeons).
1,000 nurses.
1,000 orderlies.

To belong to it would be an honour as well as a duty. What a binding link between the Old Country and the Colonies!"

The following extract from a private letter, from a Volunteer in South Africa, appeared in the last issue of *Truth*:—

"This hospital (Wynberg) is dirty and badly managed. There are fifty-six beds, full of gunshot wounds, enteric, and rheumatic patients, etc. It is a wonder that we did not all get enteric, as we had to drink milk out of the same glass, and have our temperatures taken with the same thermometer as the enteric patients, the thermometer being taking out of the mouth of an enteric case and put, unwashed, straight into the mouth of a wounded man. I had not been many hours in my bed before I found lice in it, and the orderly told me the ward was full of them. During the five days I was there the floor was not washed. There seemed to be no management whatever. The orderlies were simply soldiers, and those on duty at night used to leave the wards and go and smoke in the pantry, so that you could get nothing done for you unless you shouted to the men. As many of the patients were too weak to speak above a whisper, I used to shout for them. [Then follow remarks on the furniture of the hospital, which seems to have been very defective.]

The ambulance trains in which we came down from Springfontein were very clean and comfortable, and I think it only right to speak up for the Welsh Hospital at Springfontein, where I now am. The men coming to Wynberg from the fighting line at Senekal and Ficksburg were loud in their complaints, and remarked that they had been much better treated in the field hospitals where everything in use had to come by bullock waggons!"

Corporal Wynham, of the 1st Australian contingent, who has been in hospital at Bloemfontein, Wynberg, and Maitland Park, and who recently arrived in this country, told a repre-

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