

Hospital Board, who wrote to the *Spectator* adversely criticising the medical arrangements, said his statements were made on general complaints. He was unable to give particular instances, and was, consequently, ruled out by the Commission.

Mr. Sheridan, a masseur employed on the hospital ships, said that on board the *Orcana* there was only one nurse to fifty sick men, ten of whom were in a dying condition. The *Simla's* orderlies struck in a body on one occasion. Several ships had not sufficient food and brandy, and vegetables were not to be obtained. A trooper of the Imperial Light Horse on board the *Lismore Castle* needed nourishing food, and got two glasses of condensed milk daily. He subsequently died.

Nurse Roberts, who joined the *Sumatra* at Durban on November 4th, deposed that no dressings were then on board, but necessaries were obtained in the town. The patients were satisfactorily looked after, and there was a sufficiency of necessaries on board, but on the voyage from Durban to the Cape the men were fed only on bread and tea. The witness afterwards joined the *Lismore Castle*; there was no important cause for complaint there. She was subsequently attached to the *Assaye*. The "man in charge" was absolutely unfit for his post. He refused to allow the men to be properly cared for, and refused to attend them himself. The ship's officers said they would report him. Finally the Captain ordered him to attend to his patients. On arrival at Cape Town she reported him to Major Latham and Colonel Sumner. She was informed at Cape Town that, as a result of her complaints, she would find it difficult to get further work. She had not been employed on hospital ships since.

Dr. Vannekerk, formerly Superintendent of the Johannesburg Hospital and afterward surgeon on the *Lismore Castle*, said Nurse Roberts was incapable and had been discharged for that reason. Her statement that wounds had been cauterised with nitric acid was untrue. He had never seen patients better attended or provided for than those on the *Lismore Castle*.

N.B.—Nurse Roberts made no complaints with regard to the *Lismore Castle*.

It will be observed that, rightly or wrongly, she conceived the idea stated to exist by Mr. Burdett-Coutts, and pooh-poohed by Mr. Balfour, that her complaints had prejudicially affected her professional career.

Mr. J. Emerson Neilly, writing on the "Lessons of the War" in the *Fall Mall Gazette*, speaks highly of the organization of the Irish Hospital under Sir William Thomson, and says "the whole thing was planned by Dr. George Stoker, who had been at the war with the Russians and Turks and others, and knew from actual experience what was required. The Irish Hospital was equipped with turtle back tents, which are cool during the hours of blazing sunshine and warm by night, giving points to the best bell tents in the field. No indistinguishable red cross flag was trusted to. Dr. Stoker had a huge white umbrella with the Geneva badge broadly painted upon it, so that the cross might be seen as far as the waggon itself. He had his own mules and waggons, and did not trust to the vagaries of the transport department." Here the writer fittingly remarks that although this particular hospital moved about with the others no mules were lost, whereas the regulation transport animals died in bunches or were cut adrift on the veldt when they were "done up." "One morning in June Dr. Stoker got orders to move his section of the hospital up to Pretoria, where Sir William Thomson had the field portion. At breakfast time (8 o'clock) I heard the doctor tell the orderlies to pack up; at 10.30 everything was ready to move; drugs, instruments, and the thousand and one things connected with the establishment were in their proper boxes, and the stationary section of the Irish Hospital was ready to be entrained. Now, if it had been a regulation Army Hospital section, a start would have been made by requisitioning for fatigue men, and after hours spent by everybody getting into everybody else's way a start would have been made to pack. Then the Transport Department would have been notified, and after a time the proper officer would have been fished out from among the overmanned staff, and he would have sent for a colonel or a major to ask him what waggons he had. The colonel or major would have sent an orderly to a sergeant-major, who would have misunderstood the message, and replied that there were one hundred waggons connected with the train. But next day it would have been discovered that most, if not all, of the waggons were away, goodness knew where, and the luckless medical men would have sat down among their goods and chattels and sighed for waggons, and hoped that they would come along within a week or so. The difference between Lord Iveagh's Hospital, with no red tape, and the regulation hospital, tied up with the strangling cord, was as the difference between De Wet and Kitchener. One could move immediately; the other had to wait until the necessary pieces were got together."

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