

a detail upon which a medical officer is not likely to have practical knowledge, and in a future war would, we imagine, be referred to the Nursing Board.] Another unit the war had brought to notice was the need of convalescent camps where the men could rest and be fed up. These camps were the greatest success; they also supplied hospital orderlies to a large extent, clerks, servants, and men of that sort. Even at Pretoria, where the pressure was comparatively slight, half the orderlies were convalescent soldiers. They were not trained, but they were disciplined, and better than novices and people that you pick up anywhere.

Other units which should not be forgotten were an officers' hospital and a Nursing Sisters' hospital. At Pretoria, for instance, there were 150 Sisters, and as many as eighteen were in a hospital especially arranged for them at one time, chiefly with enteric. Infectious and native hospitals were also necessary.

The best pattern ambulance wagon witness saw in South Africa was the Australian one. He was afraid our poor fellows got very much shaken, but it could not be helped. Personally, he thought the best place to look for ambulance wagons was the United States, where they build them largely of hickory.

The hospital trains were admirable. They saved the situation many times. Witness thought there should be a sanitary officer at the headquarters of each Army Corps.

We had, he said, a good deal of bad luck, but some good luck also. Up to 1897 the medical equipment was very obsolete; some of it dated back to the Crimea. It was then revised and brought up to date by a Committee appointed by the late Director-General. Then, under the Central British Red Cross Committee, formed in good time under the presidency of Lord Wantage, voluntary societies, such as the St. John's Ambulance Association, the National Aid Society, and the Army Nursing Reserve, formerly out of touch with one another, were co-ordinated and brought under one committee. The St. John's Ambulance Brigade sent out nearly 2,000 of their members to South Africa. The witness thought it would be well to pass these men into a Reserve, on the same principle the Post Office adopts, where the men are given 6d. a day and the Government have a lien on their services in case of war.

The witness thought it would be an immense advantage for the Medical Department of the Army to have a regular system of studying the newest methods adopted in relation to the care of the sick and wounded in the armies of other countries. There was nothing he would like better than to start off to-morrow for Berlin, say, and have a look round.

The present hospital tent was of an atrocious

pattern; he did not think the ordinary hospital marquee could be worse. Colonel Gubbins emphasised his belief that it was the greatest mistake to store up supplies, both medical and ordnance. As an instance, he said there was a pattern bedstead brought out in the time of the Crimea, called the "Macdonald." We had got it in our hospitals still, and could not get rid of it. He had worked out a table which showed that, judging by the normal waste, it would take 1,100 years to work off the present stock.

He was at present reconstructing a scheme for the provision of a hospital with 20,000 beds in London in case of an invasion and did not anticipate the smallest difficulty in equipping it. We had the greatest city in the world at our back.

Speaking of the training of orderlies, Colonel Gubbins said: "The orderlies hitherto, in my opinion, have not been sufficiently trained. Theoretically they are supposed to go into the wards and be trained by the medical officers and the Nursing Sisters, but, under the new Regulations, I see there are going to be great changes, and the Nursing Service is going to be more select as regards the whole of the nursing. I had command of a company at Woolwich some years ago of 120 or 130 men, all colour service men, but I found that the great object of every man was to get away from the wards to any other job; canteen waiter, pack store, or anything rather than be a nurse. These new rules which are now being brought out are to encourage good men as nurses. The men will be allowed to elect for different sections; one for the cooks' section, another for the general duty section, but the best men will go to the nursing section and get the greatest reward there, which, I think, is quite right. Very few men are born to be nurses. The best born nurse I ever met in my life was a regimental orderly; if that man had been trained he would have been invaluable. But I think this new system which is coming out will attract the best men, and give them a wish to nurse and make it their profession." The witness did not consider that the orderlies should attend in the operating theatre to aid the surgeon. "You do not want the theatre crammed with a lot of orderlies; they are not called upon to perform operations." Asked if in an ordinary hospital every trained nurse was not supposed to be able to assist if called upon, the witness said: "It is so long since I have been in a civil hospital that I am not acquainted with their practice now, but I am under the impression that only a small proportion of nurses attend in the operating theatre." He added that he did not see any object in filling a theatre with orderlies who were not likely ever to be called upon to operate.

[Do the surgeons in the Army prepare for operations, and clear up afterwards?]

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