

### The American Nursing World.

In the October number of the *American Journal of Nursing* we have the eye of the commander turned upon its column—in other words, Miss Sophia Palmer, its most able editor, has returned from a summer vacation, and has once more taken up her masterly pen, with which she gives us some account of her enjoyable wanderings across the magnificent American continent from Atlantic to Pacific, and home again, and we are not surprised to learn that “although the trip was for pleasure, we visited a number of hospitals along the way, and were entertained by nurses at most of the places where we stopped. We came back with our knowledge of hospitals and nursing standards greatly broadened, our patriotism increased—if that were possible—and our pride in the nursing profession wonderfully stimulated, if that also were possible.”

“The great expanse of unoccupied country between the Atlantic and Pacific impressed us quite as forcibly as it did when we made the trip more than a quarter of a century ago, but the progress that men have made in mastering the obstacles and in developing the resources of the West was a constant surprise and a never-failing interest.

“Even nurses can be interested in ‘irrigation,’ and during our trip we were able to study the system by which the sage-brush desert is made to produce apples that weigh a pound, fruits and vegetables of every kind, and three crops of alfalfa and hay in a season. So easy did it all seem to make things grow that we are tempted to recommend to nurses fruit-growing by irrigation as a refuge when professional interest and strength begin to fail. It is said to be very much easier than farming in the East, although it would seem to require, owing to the use of many labour-saving devices, a higher order of intelligence. It is marvellous to think that only water is needed to make the desert blossom as a rose, and that each year the ingenuity of man is bringing water farther and farther from its source for this purpose.”

#### THE HOSPITAL SYSTEM OF THE COAST.

Of the hospital system on the Pacific Coast Miss Palmer has some doubts—business and not charity, we gather to be its chief attribute:—

“In all of the cities visited we found hospitals, some magnificent in construction and equipment—hotels really for the sick—owned by companies of physicians, who are the stockholders and directors as well as physicians in attendance, and who conduct training-schools and reap large profits from the investment—from 10 to 65 per cent. we were told. Such hospitals are said to be a necessity, especially in California, where so many people in doubtful health flock to avoid the severe climate of other sections of the country. They are intended only for the class of people who are able to pay

and who are accustomed to hotel prices and hotel ‘extras.’

“But we found that the so-called general hospitals and church hospitals cared only for people who could pay or be paid for, endowed beds being very few, even in the church hospitals, and we were told that the poor who applied for admission were sent to the county hospital—that there were no worthy poor on the Pacific Coast, that the man who had no money was either lazy or vicious, as work was so plentiful in a new country that no man need be without means when overtaken by sickness. We also were impressed with the fact that few people seemed to know much about the county hospitals. We had the curiosity to visit the County Hospital in San Francisco—a place with a bad reputation in 1880, and that would seem to have progressed backward, even with the introduction of a training-school. We do not intend to describe this hospital more than to say that it is under the control of the political machine, the members of which, it would seem to us, must be lacking in the common milk of human kindness—a man-governed institution for graft. Many good superintendents of nurses have attempted to reform this place, but as soon as suggestions requiring honest administration have been insisted upon a vacancy has occurred. There is an awakening among the citizens of San Francisco, however, that promises better conditions for the aged and sick who must seek refuge in this place.

“The County Hospital in Los Angeles we did not visit, but we were told it was ‘not so bad as the one in San Francisco,’ and in Portland the County Hospital was spoken of as a place way off somewhere that no one knew about.”

Miss Palmer spoke on State Registration to the nurses of various cities, and in stimulating others to a sense of duty, was herself greatly refreshed in spirit.

#### ANOTHER LITERARY SUCCESS.

The September number of the *Nurses' Journal of the Pacific Coast* closes the first volume of the Journal, and it is gratifying to note that it has paid its own expenses during the first year of its existence. To the editor, Miss Genevieve Cooke, of San Francisco, and her ten nurse collaborators immense credit is due for keeping the quarterly issue of the Journal on so high a literary and professional plane. We wish it all the success it deserves.

#### THE ARMY RESERVE LIST.

The name of Miss Isabel McIsaac, who is an hon. member of our Matrons' Council, heads the new Army Reserve List of the United States. This is a fine example to the rank and file of American nurses who have not responded spontaneously to the invitation to form a Reserve of Army Nurses.

The truth is that promotion with rank, which

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)