

army were brought home from Cuba in transports, which were literally "charnel ships"; that there was an absolute want of all medical supplies, and even of medical men and nurses. Indeed, the fact which stands out prominently from the terrible story told by our contemporary is that there was, and still is, most terrible disorganization, and a total lack of preventive measures against disease. It is stated, for example, in the most matter-of-fact manner, that fever-stricken patients "were lying in the camps, upon the ground, with their clothes on; there were no nurses for any of them; and there was but one sick man who had a cot." It is reported that more than 800 nurses are engaged already, in attending upon the sick, and that there is a great demand for more. On the other hand, we hear from our correspondents that the nurses, who are engaged in ordinary hospital and district work, are already extremely overworked by the depletion of their ranks, in order to supply the nurses who have been sent to the Army camps. There would seem, therefore, to be an urgent need for more nurses, as well as some better system of organization. If the supply of American-trained women is not sufficient, we feel confident that English nurses would deem it a high privilege to be allowed to go as volunteers, to assist in the work of nursing the wounded and sick soldiers, laid low in their great and noble work of freeing Cuba from intolerable cruelty.

So far, we learn, a need for English nurses has not been expressed by the authorities in the United States, and it may be, therefore, that they have already made arrangements for an improved medical and nursing service. Once more, however, we would urge that the terrible sufferings which the American soldiers have undergone—and which are admitted by all to have been to a large extent unnecessary, because they were due to lack of foresight and organization—should be taken to heart by other nations. We earnestly hope that the British War Office will appreciate the lesson, and will so improve the organization of our Nursing Services, that they may be able to cope with the emergencies which any sudden outbreak of war would cause. For the present, we can only add that the most heart-felt sympathy of British nurses will go out to their American cousins, and it will be universally hoped that the present disastrous condition of affairs may be speedily remedied.

Annotations.

WHERE WERE THE ARMY SISTERS?

THE fate of Bombardier William George Davidson, of the 66th Field Battery, who died as the result of an accident during the recent military manœuvres at Salisbury, gave rise to some very strong remarks from Mr. Foster, the coroner for the Aldershot district, by whom an inquest on the body was held. The deceased man was thrown from his horse, and fell under a water-cart, which passed over him, fracturing his collar bone, besides causing other injuries. He was temporarily treated in the field hospital, and the next morning was sent by train to Farnborough, in an ordinary second-class carriage, "because the ambulance carriage had somehow got tied up on the line." He was six hours on the journey, and died the following day in hospital at Farnborough. Medical evidence was given that Davidson had a fractured collar bone and two fractured ribs, as well as a ruptured liver and a ruptured spleen; and it is undeniable that with such terrible injuries he ought never to have been sent on a railway journey.

Captain Freeman, the surgeon who treated Davidson on the manœuvre ground, said that the troops were moving under war conditions, and he and a brigade-surgeon had twelve regiments to attend to; it was necessary, therefore, to send the man to Farnborough.

The Coroner told Captain Freeman that he "must understand that the civil law is to be considered before martial law, until such time as martial law is proclaimed. The Government is bound to take every care of its soldiers in time of peace, and there should have been some provision for the treatment of all serious cases that might occur. With all the institutions and mechanical appliances which a wealthy country like England has, it is a disgrace that this thing should have happened."

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental Death," and added a rider, embodying the coroner's remarks, which they requested the coroner to forward to the War Office.

We entirely endorse this rider. We should like to know (1) if there was no base hospital, and if not, why no provision was made for one; and (2) where were the Army Sisters? Why were they not at hand to give the necessary nursing attention to the sick and

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