

A Chat with Miss Hibbard.

THE NURSING STAFF FOR THE "MAINE."

MUCH interest has centred in the American nurses who have been deputed to nurse our sick and wounded soldiers on the good ship *Maine*, and it was with the greatest pleasure that we recently made the acquaintance of Miss Mary Eugenie Hibbard and her staff of eminent nurses at the Royal Palace Hotel, Kensington. We received a cordial welcome and at once found ourselves in the sympathetic environment which has always characterised our relations with our American colleagues.

The Superintendent, Miss Hibbard, is a member of the American Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses, and also a member of the Society of the Daughters of the Revolution (the descendents of those who took part in the American War of Independence, and formulated the Constitution of the Republic of the United States of America.) She is proud of the fact that her great-grandfather was a chaplain in the Revolutionary Army, being the second man to graduate from Dartmouth College, New Hampshire. He was attached to Colonel Timothy Bedell's regiment in 1776, and to General Stark's Brigade in 1777. It is noteworthy in passing that the "Daughters" are a large and powerful body numbering some 30,000 of the leading women in the States. From 1889 to 1897 Miss Hibbard had charge of the Grace Hospital and Nursing School, Detroit, Michigan, and in August, 1898, during the war, she offered her services to the American Government to organize any hospital where she might be needed. She was placed in charge of an important Hospital connected with the 2nd division of the 2nd Army Corps at Jacksonville, Florida, and here she remained for eight weeks. It was a busy time, although there were 154 nurses on duty, for there were no less than 825 cases of enteric fever amongst the patients. The influx of these cases may be estimated from the fact that in one receiving ward 40 were admitted in one night. As soon as it was possible, the patients were sent home to their own States and the hospital closed. Miss Hibbard was then asked by the Government to go to Cuba, and to select 50 nurses to take with her; but just at this time, when in New York, making her preparations, she developed typhoid, so Cuba was put quite out of the question.

Subsequently Miss Hibbard was appointed Chief Nurse of the United States General Hospital, at Savannah, Georgia, which contained 1,000 beds, and which was prepared to receive the sick troops who returned from Cuba. She

remained here from March 9th, 1899, to June 23rd, 1899. On the 29th of June she was detailed as Chief Nurse on detached duty at the Surgeon-General's office during Dr. Anita McGee's absence. On November 1st, the position of Superintendent of Nursing on the American Hospital Ship *Maine* was offered to and accepted by her.

In selecting Miss Hibbard those responsible have certainly chosen a lady well calculated to reflect credit on the American nation. Tall and dignified in her bearing, in well fitting black gown of military serge with facings of braid, and with her becoming grey hair rolled back from her brow, and surmounted by a dainty little black velvet bow, she is an ideal Superintendent, and added to these characteristics must be noted a charming manner, a soft well-modulated voice, and a mind keen and alert to grasp the points of any subject under discussion.

Two badges which Miss Hibbard was wearing attracted our attention, and we asked her to explain their signification. The first, in blue enamel, tipped with silver, is the modified Maltese Cross of the Army Medical Department, which she wears as a member, as well as the Chairman, of the Spanish-American War and Army Nurses. The second decoration is the white enamel seven-pointed star, tipped with silver, of the Army Corps. The silver tips signify volunteers, and gold tips the regular Army. It is made in three colours, the first division being red, the second white and the third blue.

The Nursing Staff who accompany Miss Hibbard are:—

Miss Virginia Ludekens, who is Superintendent of the Children's Hospital, Philadelphia, and was granted 6 months' leave of absence from her post in order to serve on the *Maine*. She graduated from Blockley Hospital, Philadelphia, the Nursing School of which was organized by Miss Alice Fisher, and has held the position of Assistant Superintendent at the Presbyterian Hospital in the same city.

Miss Jennie A. Manly, who is a graduate of the Presbyterian Hospital, Philadelphia, and is a member of the Alumnae Association of that School. She afterwards held the positions of Night Superintendent at the Western Pennsylvania Hospital, Pittsburg, and of Assistant Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia. She then held a position in the Government Service at the Relief Station, Long Island, New York City, and afterwards served five months in the Officers' Hospital, Pona, Porto Rico, and six weeks with General Henry at San Juan, P.R.

Miss Margaret MacPherson, whose native place is Maryland, graduated from Rhode Island

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