

members would be the direct representatives of the registered nurses.

I have it on the authority of a passenger by the chartered transport *Nubia*, which left Southampton on February 3rd, says *Truth*, that a lady, "highly connected," who was granted an indulgence passage, was allowed to occupy the women's hospital ward, a large airy apartment, as her cabin. The natural consequence was that when an outbreak of chicken-pox occurred during the voyage, no proper hospital ward was available, and the patients, two women and three children, had to be isolated in a very small cabin quite insufficient for the purpose. If these facts are true—and I hardly see how a passenger on the ship could be misinformed on the point—some one in authority deserves the most severe censure. *Prima facie*, the responsibility rests on the embarkation officer at Southampton; but from the name of the lady who was thus favoured I should be disposed to place it higher up in the official and social scale. Such an incident hardly tends to justify the assurances that have lately been given to the public that social influence no longer operates to the detriment of the Service. I may add that it is also alleged that the lady in question, besides using the hospital ward for herself, obtained first-class cabins for two maids.

Why does not *Truth* give names—nothing but publicity touches the privileged classes? This story reminds one of certain structural alterations made necessary on the American hospital ship *Maine*, where fine airy, single cabins had to be provided for society women and their personal attendants, whilst the American nurses were huddled two in a cabin, to say nothing of lowered ceilings and general inconvenience in other directions.

We observe with pleasure that in response to a question in the House of Commons recently addressed by Mr. Tennant to the Secretary of State for War, "Whether, in view of the fact that the American orderlies and male nurses on the hospital ship *Maine* had received the war medal for their services to our sick and wounded in South Africa and China, he would state why the five certificated American female nurses in charge had been refused the medal," Mr. Brodrick replied that instructions were despatched to the principal ordnance officer, Woolwich, on March 13th, to issue these medals. We are glad that at last Miss Hibbard and the nurses who came to the aid of our sick and wounded troops in the sad days of December, 1899, are to receive some tangible proof that their action is appreciated by the British nation, if not by certain compatriots who treated them with scant courtesy. It is time.

We are glad that Mr. Stephen Chapman, a market-gardener of Gillingham, near Chatham, and

his wife have obtained £250 damages—a small enough sum—from the Gillingham Urban District Council for negligence in the use of a stable near Mr. Chapman's premises as a small-pox hospital during the outbreak of 1901-1902. The plaintiff's family were all attacked by the disease, and his father and mother, his wife's mother, and his daughter all succumbed. In evidence it was stated that there was no drainage of any description at the stable, nor any water supply except from a rain-water butt, neither does there appear to have been any chimney. Mr. Chapman said that some time after the first small-pox patient was sent into the stable "a sort of broken-down caravan" arrived on the scene, and two patients occupied it. He had seen the caravan full of smoke, and the patients put their heads out of the place where there ought to have been a window to get a breath of fresh air. Another witness gave evidence as to the "nurse throwing refuse about carelessly." This "nurse," therefore, it is well to mention, was an old soldier named Hill. In giving his evidence, he said that before he went out he used to hang up his hospital suit and set the "devil" going. The devil was a fire of charcoal and brimstone. He had been in the army twenty-one years. When he left it he "took up nursing," and had had large experience. The jury awarded the plaintiff damages on the ground that "the hospital was a nuisance, and that there was want of reasonable care on the part of the defendants' servants."

It is a sign of the times that several columns of the *Lancet* are this week devoted to dealing with nursing matters. Dealing with the proposition recently made in the *Times* to establish a general hospital with a maternity annexe in an outlying district of London as a National Training-School for Midwives, where "educated gentlewomen" should receive instruction in general and monthly nursing and midwifery, it makes some sensible remarks. 1. It endorses the view that midwives should receive some training in general nursing besides the special training received in a lying-in hospital, and hopes that the new Midwives' Board may find it possible to lay stress upon this point. We have always regarded this as inevitable if a satisfactory standard of education for midwives is to be laid down. 2. It doubts whether any great number of educated gentlewomen will be found to take up an occupation which, in existing circumstances, must be but poorly paid, and in which there are but few opportunities of their reaching such positions as are open to the ordinary general nurse. So do we, unless midwifery nursing among the poor is organised through a national agency such as the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute. 3. It would be little short of a calamity if the scheme led to the formation of a class of superior midwives,

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