

## INTERESTING ITEMS FROM OUR EXCHANGES.

### NURSING UP IN THE AIR.

When Boeing System, one of the largest air transport lines in the world, announced it had employed a graduate nurse as the third member of the crew on its tri-motored passenger transport flying between Chicago and San Francisco, a new field was opened to the nursing profession. This is the first company to employ women instead of male couriers as members of airplane crews. The experiment started six months ago and the response of the travelling public has been such that company officials feel assured that the service has justified itself and that the employment of nurses, who are known as stewardesses, has been good policy.

The nurses, ten in number, were chosen from some 200 applicants. To qualify they must be graduate nurses with an excellent record as to ability and character at the hospital as which they were employed. Experience and personality are controlling factors in selection. It is interesting to note that there are far more applicants

in hampers. A typical menu is as follows: Assorted sandwiches, cold fried chicken, potato chips, cake, cookies, olives, coffee and lemonade; for the midnight lunch, sandwiches with hot drinks are served. Meals on this transcontinental, twenty-hour flight between the Great Lakes and Golden Gate are interstate affairs, with breakfast in Chicago, lunch over Omaha, dinner at Cheyenne, and a midnight supper over Nevada. Several stewardesses have already flown in excess of 100,000 miles.

The stewardesses supply reading and writing materials, send telegrams and dispatch letters, furnish pillows, and in the high altitude sections of the flight passengers are given blankets if necessary, although the planes have forced heating and ventilation.

Contrary to popular opinion, the stewardesses do not frequently have to administer to those suffering from air-sickness. A check made of passengers travelling on the Chicago-San Francisco line shows that not more than five per cent. are really ill from air-sickness. Experience shows that much of this discomfort could be reduced if passengers would eat properly before boarding the planes, and get on the ships in good physical condition. Some-

times people taking their first flight fail to eat a hearty meal before boarding the ship. This is a mistake, since the person who eats a fairly substantial meal before flight is less susceptible to air-sickness. It is also true that fewer people are air-sick on their second trip than on their first flight, when they are apt to be nervous.

Night flying is new to most travellers, but the stewardesses have found that practically without exception, and even on their first flight, passengers are asleep within an hour or so after the take-off. Many passengers profess a preference for night flying, since passengers on the Boeing line can travel between cities as distant as a thousand miles between dusk and dawn without losing business hours. Stewardesses frequently find passengers who take night flying so casually that they scarcely awaken when a landing is made.

In general, the function of the stewardess is to see that the trip is made comfortable and interesting for the increasing number of people who now recognise that air transportation is an important and increasingly necessary unit in their national scheme of transportation. Regular schedules, large passenger transports, improved airports and great terminals, together with the added dependability of the radio-telephone, enabling the pilot to talk to the ground stations and to pilots of other planes in flight, and lighted airways and directive radio beacons to keep him on his course, have brought about this change.

By Miss Ellen Church, R.N., Chief Stewardess of Boeing Air Transport, operator of the Chicago-San Francisco Air Mail, express and passenger line. From *The Public Health Nurse*.

We learn that there will be stewardesses to attend to women passengers in the Imperial Airways 40-seater machines which are to be put on the London-Continent service in the summer.



A GROUP OF NURSE STEWARDESSES IN AIR TRANSPORT UNIFORM.

than there are positions available. The stewardesses average in age from 21 to 27, and because of requirements in uniform and weight, each approximates five feet four inches in height and one hundred and fifteen pounds in weight.

The uniform, furnished by the company, is most attractive. It is a four-piece suit, including beret and cape. On the planes a grey smock and cap are worn. During the winter season beautifully tailored leather coats are substituted for the capes. The upkeep of the uniform is at the expense of the company.

The nurses have every other day off (or night, as the case may be) and two days or nights at the end of the week. Their workdays average about thirteen a month, although they are paid on the monthly basis.

The duties are varied. One activity is to furnish lunches while in flight. As the first asset of the airplane is speed, lunches are served in flight rather than on the ground, except at Cheyenne, Wyoming, where hot meals are served while planes are being changed. The lunches are carried

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