

Two dangers are apparent to which we must be awake—the possibility of infected people landing on our shores and carrying infected lice with them, and of lousy people being admitted to shelters.

There can be little doubt that typhus will spread across Europe. Indeed, it has already appeared in Northern Africa. The conditions in Germany and in the occupied countries—under-nutrition, lack of facilities for personal cleanliness and overcrowding—are those most favourable for its dissemination.

These conditions may well be a vital factor in determining the future course of the war.

THE FIRST DUTY OF REGISTERED NURSES.

All members of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve and the Territorial Army Nursing Service who have not yet been embodied for service in Military Medical units, and who can now make themselves available for service should communicate at once with the Matron-in-Chief, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, A.M.D.4, The War Office, Cheltenham Glos.

The ever expanding Army demands the staffing of units for service at Home and abroad, and a steady stream of State Registered Nurses is required to undertake this work of caring for the sick and wounded of our Army in all the War areas.

Newly enrolled members of the Military Nursing Service are now commissioned into Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve in the rank of Sister, with equivalent rank as Lieutenant. They are part of the armed Forces of the Crown, and come under a modified form of Military Law. This, however, does not prevent them from receiving consideration on compassionate grounds when such concessions are necessary.

At the same time all State Registered Nurses are reminded that their skill and training are needed, for the war effort, in all branches of nursing in the Army, as is that of Medical men, and their voluntary enlistment for service with the Army should be the first commitment of the British nursing profession—to ensure that the fighting forces receive the most expert nursing available from the nation as a whole.

It is hoped that all the State Registered Nurses qualifying at the final examinations will consider whether it is not their first duty to give their skill and training to the men of England and the Empire who are so gallantly fighting our common enemy.

All State Registered Nurses can now apply for enrolment in Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve (who also fill the vacancies in Territorial Army Nursing Service Units) and marriage is no longer a bar to entry.

HOSPITAL SERVICE AFTER THE WAR.

The Minister of Health speaking on February 11th at a luncheon arranged by the Charing Cross Hospital, referred to the recent announcement of the broad lines on which the Government proposes to plan the hospital services after the war, and said:—"The first principle is, of course, that the basis of any hospital service must be the welfare of the patient. There has been in the past, and is now, a large measure of devoted service rendered to patients at hospitals of all kinds. I do not think, however, that we can claim that everyone can under the present arrangements readily obtain the treatment they need."

LETTERS TO THE MATRON-IN-CHIEF, Q.A.I.M.N.S. FROM MEMBERS ON ACTIVE SERVICE—No. 2.

From MISS IVY FLORENCE BUSSELL, Q.A.I.M.N.S.R.

My Experiences of Medical Trooping Duties.

These were somewhat varied and quite enjoyable. Fortunately I love the sea and proved to be an excellent sailor. I worked in three different troopships, each being a large converted passenger liner.

I, with several other Sisters, arrived at a British port at 2 a.m. on a November morning. The weather was bitterly cold, a thick white frost covered the ground. We were met in the bright moonlight by the Senior Medical Officer of a troopship. He, torch in hand, led the way on board. We proceeded along the open deck between rows of sleeping men rolled in blankets. We were shown to our cabins, mostly single ones with comfortable berths. Remembering those men outside, we realised how fortunate we were; and after our eighteen hours' train journey were soon asleep.

The next morning we were shown the ship's hospital. This was a well-laid out ward of 80 ships cots. Eight single ones at one end, and the rest in six two-tier rows. At the other end was a small room fitted with a bunk, steriliser, drawers and cupboards. This was to be our Medical Inspection, Treatment and Night Duty room combined.

There were 20 Sisters attached to the ship's staff. Duty was arranged by the week, four Sisters on day duty, and two on night duty. Six others to follow the next week.

I started night duty on the day we left port, and was surprised to find 32 patients in hospital. Before my week was finished the number had increased to 56. These were mostly Australians who had heavy colds or influenza, due to the sudden change to cold wet conditions. Many, including some British, were violently seasick. These were taken into hospital for a few days as their own accommodation was so crowded and unsuitable. Two cases of pneumonia were admitted and some minor surgical cases.

The sea, during the first few days, was rough. On the second night out we were kept busy by the rolling ship. Forms and screens fell over, and finally we had to abandon their use and leave them on the floor. Bottles in locked dispensary cupboards fell over and continued to roll till morning. In the kitchen a few plates were smashed, and we soon found that on board is a place for everything, and that place the safest. It was some consolation to hear that there were considerable breakages in the galley staffed by regular seamen.

By the end of the first week the weather improved, and soon the temperature rose and work decreased. At one period the temperature was nearly 90° for several days. Then came more patients, this time mostly British. Some developed influenza, but more with a form of dysentery. The cause of this was never really discovered, but was thought by some to be due to the very cool nights. Men who had perspired profusely in the intense heat of the day slept on open decks, or directly under air-shafts or fans with little covering. Some admitted during the night certainly suffered acute spasms of abdominal pain or cramp, which was relieved by warmth.

Our off duty was spent mostly on the decks. The troops' physical training and gunnery classes were quite entertaining. The organised sports, concerts and sing-song parties were also a source of amusement. When classes were over and decks cleared, we were able to indulge in deck games and walking. There was a special physical training class arranged for Sisters at 6.20 a.m. Fifteen to twenty were usually present to enjoy this early morning solitude of the deck.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)