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Notes Of The War

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13. The general conditions under which chloral is to be administered are the same as those which regulate the administration of chloroform, and the rules laid down by Sir James Simpson in connexion with this subject must be rigidly adhered to."

NOTES OF THE WAR.

PROFESSOR VIRCHOW, at the request of the Berlin Aid Committee, has drawn up a code of "Health Regulations for the Army in the Field". A large number of copies have been distributed among the soldiers.

ALLEGED MURDER OF A SURGEON.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Daily Telegraph* states that a Turco, while having his wounds dressed by Dr. Mettenzweig of Oranienburg, near Berlin, stabbed him with a knife as he was turning aside to arrange the bandages and other materials. Dr. Mettenzweig died at the end of six days.

THE LAZARETTES IN BERLIN.

THERE were, in the lazarettos at Berlin on September 15th, 2390 Prussians and 336 French. Of these, 323 Prussians and 103 French were severely wounded; 1011 Prussians and 108 French slightly wounded; 52 Prussians and 5 French had disease of the eyes; one Prussian and one Frenchman were suffering from pyæmia; 11 Prussians and 13 French had hospital gangrene; 3 French had small-pox; one of each nation was suffering from dysentery; 717 Prussians and 8 French were slightly ill; and there were 214 Prussian convalescents and 1 French.

SURGERY AT SEDAN.

DR. W. MACCORMAC, of the Anglo-American Ambulance, has written to Colonel Lindsay an interesting description of the proceedings of himself and his colleagues during and after the battle of Sedan. On the 1st September, the caserne in which they were was in the direct line of a constant fire carried on by the Germans for six hours. The building was bomb-proof, but the shells raked the wards from window to window, killing one hospital-helper and severely wounding another. Dr. MacCormac was constantly employed for several days in operating; the operations comprising two cases each of ligature of the subclavian and of the carotid arteries, excisions of joints, and innumerable amputations. Attempts at conservative surgery, in cases of injury of bones, have not been satisfactory, even where the injury has at first appeared slight. The Prussian bullets splinter bones in every direction, generally to such an extent as to demand immediate resection or amputation. Up to the 16th, the date of the letter, there had been no erysipelas, hospital gangrene, or pyæmia, and but one case of secondary hæmorrhage after operations. This immunity from epidemic disease he ascribes to the copious use of carbolic acid, and especially to free ventilation. The windows of the rooms were kept wide open at all times—to the great horror of a French intendant-general, who told Dr. MacCormac and his colleagues that "they were going to kill their patients with *courants d'air*".

A DEFENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY.

MR. BERKELEY HILL and Mr. Ernest Hart, who have been inspecting the ambulances of the British Aid Society in the Sedan district, have written to the *Daily Telegraph* a letter in which they deny the statement recently made by a correspondent of that paper, "that in no single military ambulance have the amateur medical assistants taken off their coats, so to speak, and gone to work like men at what they are engaged to do". They complain that the correspondent has mixed up all the ambulances—British, French, Belgian, etc.—in one common condemnation. They point out that as regards the French surgeons the charge of indifference is not applicable. In the French ambulance, "the very moment that one of us entered the hospital, M. Tilleaux was performing disarticulation of the arm at the shoulder-joint, aided by some of his assistants, while others were dressing in the wards. The joy with which they received our medical stores, taking only what was strictly necessary, betokens no want of interest in their work; and having had no inconsiderable experience of hospital work, in which we have been engaged all our professional lives, we have seen no signs of loafing, but, on the contrary, of earnest and devoted work". Of the medical officers in the service of the British Society, the writers of the letter say that their conduct has been beyond praise; and they protest against the implication, far more the direct statement, that those who have enlisted under the British Society are careless or idle. They repeat the statement that has been already made, that there is a crowd

of loafers wearing the red cross: but they believe that, if their badges were examined, not one would be found to bear the stamp of the British International Society, and that the wearers are not directly attached to the foreign ambulances. Messrs. Hill and Hart state that they found very general evidences of a want of organisation and of deficiency in the means of communication and supply between the red cross ambulances of the British and Foreign Societies. The real difficulty for the British Society, they write, has been in the sudden and marvellously rapid development of its resources, which left little time indeed for the regular organisation of its now gigantic task, and in the entire absence of any previous machinery to be used for the purpose. To improvise a large series of ambulances suddenly, in a foreign country, occupied by combatant forces, with all kinds of impediments to traffic and difficulties of transport, would have puzzled very wise and experienced heads, even where the extent and localities were of necessity accurately known, and the amount of resources was ascertained. Moreover, the first administrators sent out were inexperienced, and many employed are still so. The authors of the letter have laid before Captain Brackenbury, the chief agent of the British Society here, and have written home to Colonel Lindsay, some detailed criticisms and suggestions. Many of them had been anticipated by Captain Brackenbury, who, they believe, concurs in all. On the large scale on which the British Society is now able to work, more numerous centres of action must be taken. Experienced administrators, such as deputy-inspectors of the hospitals of the army or navy, are wanted—one at each centre; experienced commissariat officers, and an organised intelligence department. All these wants could not be accurately forecast; they are on the way to be rapidly fulfilled. Meantime thousands have been comforted and saved by the British Society, and both France and Germany have cause to bless its name.

THE GERMAN FIELD-HOSPITALS.

THE following is from a correspondent.

On the 13th of September, an order was issued from Berlin not to establish any more new hospitals for the wounded, as a great number of beds are empty, and the present accommodation appears amply sufficient. How great the available number of beds all over Germany must be, can be guessed if we mention that such towns, as for instance Frankfort or Mannheim, have made up from 1200 to 1500 beds each, and that even the smallest places would not stand behind, but wanted to have a few wounded soldiers to nurse. Everywhere the local practitioners attend them, and the nursing is done by trained nurses and sisters of charity, assisted by ladies of all ranks. The hospitals are mostly temporary wooden buildings, so-called "barracken", of a most simple construction, the only aim of which is to afford protection from rain, and to allow thorough ventilation. The place of windows is taken by wooden frames covered with canvas, which are opened whenever the weather allows. As the cold weather lately prevailing did not admit of their being freely opened, they have in some hospitals been replaced by glass-windows to admit more light, and thereby to render the ward more cheerful. These wards are mostly built entirely of wood; in some places, however, part of the walls is made of bricks. They have either no floor but the dry ground, or, what is much better, and carried through in all the richer towns, the floor is raised about two feet above the ground, and the boards are soaked with oil. The roof is well projecting, and free ventilation is secured by open spaces where the roof rests on the side-walls, as well as on the crown of the roof, which is raised two or three feet. A number of such wooden houses are arranged either without any system at all, simply as the ground at disposal has permitted, or they are placed in rows, or more elaborately grouped round the kitchen, which is generally the central building.

The large barracken-lazareth at Frankfort, with 600 beds, consists quite of a little town of wooden houses in three rows; the houses, containing 20 beds each, being placed with their lengths at right angles to the road between them. At Mannheim they are arranged in the form of a triangle, one behind the other, and connected one with another by a covered passage. The sides of this triangle are flanked by two large wards of 34 beds each, the other wards containing only 22. These larger wards have raised floors and windows. The closets are either partitioned off at one end of the ward, the same as the scullery, or they are altogether outside and projecting from the wards. Moule's earth-closets are much used at Frankfort, but at Mannheim and other places they use barrels, with sulphate of iron or zinc and other disinfectants: these barrels are emptied every day.

There are not many severely wounded at Frankfurt, but a great many are to be found at Mannheim and Darmstadt. These are the places where good surgery and the most modern appliances for the treatment of compound fractures can be seen. At Darmstadt, Professor Lücke

of Bern is at the head of the hospitals, assisted by a staff of young Swiss surgeons. At Mannheim, Professor Bergmann of Dorpat, with several Russian surgeons, and Dr. Lossen of Halle, manage the two largest "barracken-lazareth"; whilst Professor Billroth of Vienna acts as consulting surgeon for the whole of the Mannheim hospitals. The work in these hospitals is done with a regularity and order not exceeded by any permanent clinical hospital; the staffs of young surgeons being sufficiently numerous to take temperatures in all severe cases, and to make notes of the more interesting ones. There were a good many patients that had undergone serious operations—about half-a-dozen resections of the head of the humerus, several excisions of the elbow, a number of amputations, several cases in which ligature of an important artery had been made; bullet-wounds in all possible, and apparently impossible, directions; narrow escapes from balls having passed through the neck and having just spared the carotid, or through the inguinal region without injuring the femoral artery; bullets having passed through the knee- or ankle-joint without setting up suppuration, etc. Plaster of Paris is most extensively used. A very convenient swinging apparatus, which is much used in compound fractures of the lower extremity, consists of a plaster of Paris bandage, in which runs a narrow iron splint, with three projecting rings for suspension along the front of the leg. Professor Volkmann of Halle is the originator of this method; and he has also most conveniently modified what is known in England as the American method of treating fractures of the thigh by simple extension without splints. Instead of attaching the string bearing the weight immediately to the loop of adhesive plaster, he interposes a small piece of wood which is placed horizontally, and which rests and freely moves on the edges of two triangular blocks of wood lying on a board, one at each side of the foot. This arrangement makes the extension much more steady.

Behind the large "barracken-lazareth" at Mannheim, is a tent-hospital containing 32 beds, established by the Dutch, Drs. Schubart and Brondgeest of Utrecht being the chief surgeons. They brought their tents, beds, nurses, and every thing with them. The whole has a very cheerful aspect.

In the Palatinate, we had an opportunity to observe the very strict measures which have been taken to stamp out the cattle-plague, which unfortunately has made its appearance in several places. A military cordon is placed round the affected villages; all the animals in a stable where a single case has appeared are doomed to destruction; the most rigid disinfection of the stable is carried out. Small disinfecting huts are established at all the chief roads coming out of a village; and every one leaving the village is bound by a heavy penalty to stay a few minutes in an atmosphere of chlorine before he is allowed to proceed on his journey. We had to undergo this fumigating process twice yesterday afternoon. Horses and cattle are disinfected by washing their feet with water containing chloride of lime. Cats and dogs are not allowed to be at large. It is to be expected that by these strict measures the further spread of the disease will be prevented.

September 20th, 1870.

THE GERMAN AID SOCIETIES.

OUR correspondent at Berlin writes as follows, under date Sept. 26th.

I have now to speak at present about the private societies found every where, and having for their purpose either the relief of the sick and wounded, or the support of the families of reserve and Landwehr men who have entered the army, or the relief of the troops themselves by sending refreshments, etc.; or, as most of them, fulfilling all these purposes at once. For their common interests, all the local societies for the relief of the sick and wounded throughout Germany have a Central Committee, formed of delegates, and stationed in Berlin, Unter den Linden, 12. This Committee has charge of the intercourse and correspondence with foreign aid societies, and gives directions to the local societies in regard of the places where, and the manner in which, help is wanted. Nevertheless, the local and provincial societies may, under direct communication with the Central Committee, support the hospitals in their own neighbourhood and their own respective troops, and may independently order materials where they are wanted. Besides the local dépôts of materials (clothes, bandages, medicines, food, etc.), there is a Central Dépôt, also at Berlin; general dépôts, resorting of it, at Coblenz, Mainz, Mannheim, and, depending on these, special dépôts at Saarlouis, Saarbrücken, Weissenburg, Hagenau, Courcelles, Remilly, Nancy, Pont-à-Mousson, Sedan, and various other places. Now and then, the Central Dépôt publishes lists of the objects sent by them. For instance, I quote from the last list: 1,000 trunks with charpie, 2,000 with plaster of Paris, 1,100 pounds of carbolic acid, 2,000 pounds of chloroform, 237 pounds of tincture of opium, 2,000,000 of cigars, 260,000 bottles of claret.

The number of beds prepared by private societies existing in all

the larger towns of Germany, as Leipzig, Magdeburg, Hanover, etc., for the reception of sick and wounded, is enormous, and, we are glad to say, surpasses everywhere the amount actually necessary; so that you may often find in the papers complaints about not yet having received the expected wounded. Corresponding to the size and means of the town, the largest of these local societies is the "Berlin Aid Society for the German Field Armies". By its own means this society established a hospital of four hundred beds in the Uhlands barrack, and built on the field of Templehof fourteen barracks, for thirty patients each. The furnishing and management in the hospitals are excellent; in some points, I should think, even too luxurious. Besides this society, there are in Berlin a number of smaller societies formed by private circles or in single parishes, and following one or some of the purposes above named. In this way there are here more than a dozen of hospitals *ad hoc*, for twenty to fifty patients each. The large permanent civil hospitals, as the Charité, St. Hedwig's Hospital, St. Elizabeth Hospital, etc., receive also a certain number of military patients. I may add, that by the military authorities three large caserns and the halls of the Central-turnanstalt are arranged as hospitals; so they have at their disposal alone (together with the garrison hospital and the new wooden barracks) about two thousand beds. In the beginning of the war, the wounded were sent to the different hospitals without regarding their nationality; but by-and-bye affairs of discipline made it necessary to send the French to the exclusively military hospitals, where they might be under a stricter superintendence.

Though not really belonging to the Aid for the Sick and Wounded, I mention in a few words the societies, already referred to, which support the families of reserve and Landwehr men. Success has shown what may be done by an army like the German, composed of civilians, and originating out of every class of society and every calling; but proportionally large is the influence of this organisation on home affairs. In consequence of the mobilisation, many thousands of wives and children are destitute, and unable to support themselves alone. Hence it is quite necessary to support these families to a certain degree. Besides numerous parish committees, five large societies have been originated for this purpose, to ensure as judicious and correct as possible a distribution of their means. They have now formed a Central Board, under the presidency of Mr. Seydel, Mayor of Berlin.

With the beginning of the cold season, public opinion thinks about sending refreshments, spirits, and warm clothes, to our troops; innumerable stockings, flannel-shirts, sashes, etc., are bought by local committees, and are to be sent in special trains to the different army corps.

From the beginning of the mobilisation, measures were taken by private and by public authorities to refresh the passing troops on the railway stations: large and small towns emulated each other in doing so. At Berlin, the most extensive arrangements were made on the "east station". Mrs. Lina Morgenstern, who has managed for some years the Berlin "Volksküchen"—institutions furnishing the working-classes with good and cheap dinners—in a most excellent way, has, to the general satisfaction, the superintendence of these arrangements. Within the last few weeks, at the same stations, dressing-places have been made ready for the trains of wounded who pass Berlin and go to more distant hospitals. The medical arrangements at the stations are under the charge of a number of Berlin surgeons, who have made it their duty to be present when the trains bringing the wounded are announced.

The cattle-plague observed a few weeks since in the Palatinate, and supposed to be brought in with the Hungarian cattle, has broken out sporadically at different places in Germany. Some villages near Berlin are surrounded with a military cordon on account of the outbreak: generally, the strictest measures are taken to avoid a spread of the disease.

In 1866, permanganate of potash was the antiseptic remedy *à la mode*; this year it is carbolic acid. In every hospital it is used on the largest scale for dressing and washing wounds, in more or less strict accordance with the directions of Mr. Lister.

The following is a part of a report from Donchery, dated September 17th. Four thousand six hundred and seventy-seven Germans have been up to this day sent home through Belgium; a few more may be sent in ten days or a fortnight. For this purpose, Messrs. von Stein and von Tettan will stay in Libramont and Bouillon until the 1st October, and will be so able to finish their work there entirely. Mr. von Albedyll and Count Kleist remain here; the latter, after breaking up the station at Neufchâteau, went for a few days only to Libramont. Generally, the evacuation of the wounded is very difficult, from the want of carriages. It was in vain tried on our part, by the Intendant-General, and Mr. Hubert Salatin, to send on the wounded by the railway through Mézières and Givet. The Etappen-Inspector of the army of the Meuse wished to establish large hospitals at Sedan, and to send the patients thence through Belgium; but General Boeger thought the air of Sedan and its neighbourhood too unhealthy.