

for several days to land her supplies on account of the heavy surf and the want of proper facilities. At the landing-place there was but one lighter, which was constantly in use by the Subsistence Department in getting rations ashore. By the energy and untiring efforts of the officers of the Medical Department their supplies were ultimately landed, although such work is no more their special duty than is the building of an ambulance wagon or the manufacture of a hospital tent.

As to the third charge, the proffer of Red Cross supplies was of no value unless associated with the means of landing and transporting them to the front. What was lacking to the Medical Department at the time was not supplies—for there were supplies on every transport in sight as well as on the *State of Texas*—but the means of getting these supplies to the points where they were required.

In considering the reported condition of the *Concho* and other transports used in bringing home sick and wounded soldiers it is to be remembered that the Medical Department can do no more than recommend. Its officers may inspect and suggest needful alterations to fit the vessel for its proposed voyage, but commanding officers can overrule their suggestions. Were the outfitting of extemporized hospital transports in the hands of the Medical Department we may be sure that they would be as excellent in their way as the Hospital Ship *Relief*, which was fitted out under medical officers concerned in the despatch of the sick and wounded, but we feel confident that when the facts are learned it will be found that what was considered to be an imperative military necessity occasioned the use of unfit and unprovided vessels, just as it occasioned the landing of the troops and their advance to an engagement with the enemy without any consideration save that of the military purpose in view. Opinions may differ as to whether the accomplishment of the purpose justified the method of its accomplishment.

NOSTRUM MANUFACTURERS AS FRENCH "STATESMEN."

The decadence of the French Republic under the sway of speculative commercialism is most ominously evident in the fact that an opulent nostrum vendor now occupies the position in the recently appointed BRISSON Ministry which was refused a decade and a half ago by the distinguished physiologist, PAUL BERT. Dr. BERT (like Dr. OLIVER WOLLCOTT, one of the medical signers of the Declaration of Independence, who long remained an authority on finance) was a man of admitted skill in political economy. The recently accepted French minister of finance (M. PEYTRAL) owes his reputation chiefly to his success as a manufacturer and promoter of patent medicines.

M. PEYTRAL, after attempting to form a ministry of his own, lately accepted at the hands of BRISSON the

portfolio of finance. He is the first patent medicine "fakir" who has ever held a cabinet position in France. His fortune was made in the manufacture and sale of quack nostrums and the promotion of quack nostrum companies. He pretends to be a representative "business" man of the radical stripe which panders to the bourgeois ideals of supposed thrift (or rather parsimony) of the speculative commercial classes. Until he secured his election as senator, he distinguished himself by puerile poses of the following type: On one occasion, on the eve of a general election, when stumping Marseilles he blatantly pointed out that his rival had come from Paris in a sleeper, whereas he, like a true democratic bourgeois, had traveled in a third-class carriage. The fact, however, was that he also had journeyed in the sleeper and had only quitted this for the third-class car at the last station before Marseilles.

Nostrum-vending is in France even more disreputable than in the English-speaking countries. The *Code Républicain* nominally prohibits the traffic, and only by evasions of the law, such as FLAUBERT pointed out in "Madame Bovary," can it be carried on. The patent medicine vendor is in France, for this reason, a species of confidence operator in a traffic without the pale of the law. The fact that such an individual should be allowed to juggle with French finance is most significant evidence that the "business" quacks (who caused the downfall of France at Sedan) are again in the saddle. Furthermore, it demonstrates that the welfare of the country is again being sacrificed to "business" interests as represented by avaricious contractors. Meanwhile the question naturally arises, what has become of that sturdy element of the French medical profession which so often exercised such a potent influence for good during all three of the French republics, and especially during the first decade of the present one? Great Britain has significantly elevated the deservedly criticised social status of her medical profession by creating LISTER a Peer for services to medical science. France, once foremost in her reverence for science, has of late fallen so far behind in this particular, that the downfall of even the present pretense of republican forms seems foreshadowed by this triumph of a most degrading form of illegal charlatanism over the once politically potent French medical profession.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WAR CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY IN THE CUBAN
CAMPAIGN.

BY LIEUT.-COL. NICHOLAS SENN, U. S. VOLS.,
CHIEF OF THE OPERATING STAFF WITH THE ARMY IN THE FIELD.

NEW YORK, Aug. 1, 1898.

DEAR DR. HAMILTON—

In an editorial of last week's *Record* Dr. Shradly made an unwarranted attack on General Sternberg. The General tele-

graphed me to reply to it. I have done so, and send you original copy, for which I ask a very early publication in your journal in justice to the General and his Department.

I leave for Porto Rico tomorrow on the steamer *Relief*. On the way down I shall have something to say on the reorganization of the Army. I will send you paper from Ponce. Hoping that you are well, I am, with kindest regards,

Yours sincerely, N. SENN.

ON BOARD THE HOSPITAL SHIP "RELIEF," July 31, 1898.

In an editorial of the *Medical Record* of July 30, suspicions are thrown out reflecting on the efficiency, foresight and proper management of the Medical Department of the Army during the Cuban Campaign. The remarks made by the editor are based, as he himself asserts, almost exclusively on a correspondence which appeared in a recent issue of the *Sun*. In commenting on this article the editorial states: "If the report is true, and there seems to be no good reason for doubting it, the Army Medical Department appears in a very unenviable light. It is said that there was a total lack of everything necessary for the proper care of the stricken soldiers. Why this was so it is hard to explain, especially in view of the fact that the war department has constantly declared, in declining voluntary assistance from charitable organizations, that it was abundantly able to cope with any possible emergency in the field, and yet this is the result." The correspondent of the *Sun* made bold in saying: "It was evident that the Medical Department of the Army had failed absolutely to send hospital supplies, or by this time they would have been landed. On the one hand it was pitiful. On the other, it was negligence that could have been the result only of incompetence." I am sure if the editor of the *Medical Record* had been better informed he would not have been so willing to lend his ear to a newspaper correspondent whose success nowadays consists largely in tinging facts with more or less imagination and sensationalism. The medical men inside and outside the army have little, if any, influence over the lay press, but the editor of a medical journal of such high standing with the medical profession throughout the entire country as has been willingly accorded the *Medical Record*, should take the necessary pains to investigate more thoroughly the circumstances which dictated the editorial before casting any reflections whatsoever on the chief of the medical department. Dr. George M. Sternberg is no stranger to the medical profession and the American people. He occupies the exalted position of Surgeon-General of the United States Army, not by political preferment or gradual ascent by promotion, but by merit. President Cleveland made a wise selection when he made the appointment. It was a selection that met with the heartiest approval on all sides. General Sternberg knows from long and actual experience what it is to be a soldier in the field. He has been there. He served with distinction during the War of the Rebellion. He has followed the unruly and wily Indians over plains and mountains during many a campaign. He has investigated yellow fever at home and abroad, regardless of his own health and life. Since he has been placed in charge of the Medical Department of the Army he has been tireless in making many much-needed improvements.

The Army Medical School is one of the many fruits of his labors. He has taken special interest and pride in promoting the intellectual and professional advancement of his young army surgeons, assigning them for temporary duty in large cities, where they could enjoy clinical instruction and laboratory work. He has taken a deep and active interest in the organization and usefulness of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States, and served most acceptably as president. Last year he was honored by the profession by election to the Presidency of the AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION. The earnest devotion to his duties made it impossible

for him, to his great regret, to attend the Denver meeting. The name of General Sternberg is often seen on the programs of scientific societies from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Labrador to the Gulf. He crossed the Atlantic, last summer, to represent his Government at the International Congress, held in Moscow, Russia, and his work there added much to the luster of American medicine. The Surgeon-General, now so unjustly accused of incompetency, not only is accorded a well-deserved place in the front rank of the profession, but his administration shows executive talents which have served him well during the present campaign. He has shown good judgment in the selection of his advisers. Colonels Alden, Greenleaf and Smart, are all men of large experience and admirable executive abilities, as all can testify who have been brought in contact with them. The charge of incompetence and ignorance certainly lacks foundation in the case of General Sternberg and his administration. Now, as to facts. The correspondent of the *Sun* who furnished all the material for the editorial referred to goes on to say: "The wounded were carried back from the fighting line on stretchers, and laid on the ground to wait until the surgeons could reach them. Many were soon beyond the need of surgical treatment. There were four divisions of the army, and each division was supposed to have its hospital; but as a matter of fact there was but one, the division hospital of the Fifth Army Corps, under Major Wood. There were five surgeons, a hospital steward, and



Brigadier-General George M. Sternberg, Surgeon-General of the Army.

twenty assistants, to care for the wounded—several hundred. They had a number of operating tables, a small supply of medicines, but few bandages, and no food for sick or wounded men. It was comparatively easy to get supplies from the *State of Texas* ashore to the hospital here (Siboney), but there was no transportation to the front." In the opinion of the editor of the *Medical Record* and the correspondent of the *Sun* the Red Cross Association's work was the only redeeming feature of the whole campaign, to judge from the language of the latter: "God knows what we should have done here without the help of the Red Cross—your ship, your surgeons, and your nurses! and there is no other help for us at the front. Our wounded up there must have food, bandages, anything you can let us have in the line of hospital supplies." The editorial in the *Medical Record* brings matters to a focus in the closing extract: "It is right and proper that the Surgeon-General should resent any interference with his prerogatives, but he should not directly invite it by making possible such

a condition of affairs as here described." This inference is entirely unwarranted by facts as they existed during and after the battle of Santiago.

The correspondent and editorial do not even mention the steamer *Olivette* we found July 7 anchored close to the shore before Siboney. This steamer, in command of Major Appel, U. S. A., was used as a hospital ship. This ship was in place and ready to receive the wounded during the battle. The steamer, at the time mentioned, had on board 300 wounded, who received the best surgical attention and nursing. The next day the steamer left for the United States, the medical staff being reinforced by the addition of Acting Assistant-Surgeon Brown of Chicago from the *Relief*. General Sternberg at an early date recognized the importance of hospital ships during this war. The *Olivette* was chartered for this special purpose, was well equipped and reached the seat of war in time. The hospital ship *Relief*, formerly the *John Englis*, under the supervision of its commander, Major Torrey, was transformed into an ideal floating hospital in less than six weeks and reached Siboney July 7, a day before the *Olivette* left for its home port. Do these things show either negligence or ignorance? Do they not rather demonstrate foresight and an earnest endeavor to better care for the sick and wounded in a way creditable to our country and the chief of the Medical Department? This question can safely be left for the wounded to answer. The Surgeon-General accepted the legitimate services of the Red Cross Association and had reason to expect aid from this source, should pressing emergencies present themselves. The medical officers, the wounded and the sick have every reason to be grateful to Miss Clara Barton, for what she did in furnishing ice, delicacies and medical supplies. The *State of Texas* did excellent work in aiding the Medical Department, but that is no reason why those connected with the Red Cross Association should claim all the credit and undertake to criticise a department of the government which has done all it possibly could in anticipating the requirements of a sudden emergency. It is a source of great regret that there should be any friction whatever between the Medical Department and the friends and supporters of the Red Cross Association. It must be clear to every unprejudiced mind that the treatment of the sick and wounded must remain under the direct care, control and management of the Medical Department, and that the function of Red Cross is rather auxiliary to it than as an independent organization if the greatest amount of good is to be realized from it. The hospital ship *Relief* brought an immense amount of medical supplies, delicacies, cots, pillows and blankets. When we arrived at Siboney we knew our presence was much needed, and looked in vain for some one to inform us where and how to land. The precipitous and rocky nature of the shore and the great depth of the ocean made it unfavorable to secure anchorage for several days. A single lighter attended to the demands of numerous transport ships. I am sure no one could blame the Medical Department for the unavoidable delay in unloading the supplies. The little steam launches did what could be done in bringing to the shore what was most needed. Major Torrey worked night and day in supplying the requisitions made by the surgeons in the field and hospitals. There was no red tape here, all they had to do was to inform him what was wanted and it was delivered as soon as it could be brought to the shore. The lack of proper transportation facilities from the landing to the front can not be charged to the Medical Department. It took more than a week of the hardest kind of work to land all of the supplies, and, considering the limited facilities available, it is and always must be regarded as a source of satisfaction that it was made possible at all. The *Relief* brought 1000 cots and an ample supply of blankets, which reached the hospitals with as little delay as possible.

Lieut. Crabbs of the 8th Cavalry, showed a creditable degree of ingenuity, energy and often of courage in landing the supplies. The complaint that the sick and wounded lacked medicines and dressing materials is true only to a certain extent. Some of the medicines were exhausted, owing to the unexpected enormous demand, but they were supplied as quickly as could be done under the existing circumstances. The writer had the privilege to operate in all of the hospitals and was always able to find the essential antiseptics and dressing materials required in military practice, and this was at a time when the supplies were at the lowest. There was no lack at any time of stimulants and anesthetics. There is no use in denying the fact that immediately after the battle the tentage and blanket supply were inadequate, but these defects were corrected promptly. War always has had its hardships and discomforts; it can not be prosecuted in parlor cars and clubhouses. Or soldiers expected deprivations and unavoidable discomforts, but on the whole they were subjected to less actual suffering than they had reason to look for. To the credit of the medical officers it must be said they shared the inevitable hardships with the soldiers. They lived on the same food, drank the same water and made the moist ground their beds. The writer will always cherish the memory of the hardships incident to a campaign in a foreign country, a tropical climate and among a strange people. The Cuban campaign was planned and executed so quickly that some omissions and defects had to be expected. It is a source of gratification to know that the complaints made against the medical department have come from newspaper correspondents and camp followers more than from the soldiers themselves. Among the thousands of sick and wounded with whom I have been brought in contact during the Cuban campaign I have seldom heard a complaint; on the contrary, I have heard nothing but words of praise for the hard-working, self-sacrificing medical officers and the department they represent in the field.

Ice-Water Enteroclysis in Typhoid Fever.

TOLEDO, OHIO, Aug. 1, 1998.

To the Editor:—After having had favorable results with ice-water flushings of the bowels in the lowering of high temperatures in typhoid fever, I have wondered that greater stress is not laid upon the use of the measure by those who write upon the treatment of that disease.

The cases are few in number in which I have had the opportunity to test the practice, and it may be that these few cases were such as would have done well under the Brand method, the wet pack, or any other plan of refrigeration; indeed, such is doubtless true.

For several reasons though, my practice, limited as it is, leads me to look upon ice-water enteroclysis as superior to any other method of lowering the temperature which I have seen used.

In the first place, fever patients need much more water than they in their semiconscious condition are likely to ask for, or than they will drink when it is offered them, and it is always the fact that there is less water passed into the bedpan than was forced into the bowel.

I place this reason first because I believe it is important that these patients take into the system more water than they are accustomed to drink even in health, and sterilized water to which has been added common salt, thrown into the bowels, is a rational way of meeting a vital requirement.

I do not know how high the water ascends in the bowels, but that it does hasten the removal of poisonous material from the bowels there can be no doubt. I believe, too, that subsequent injections ascend higher than the first ones did, the bowels becoming more accustomed to the water. The formation of intestinal gases is diminished by the cleansing of the bowel, and the soft rubber rectal tube frequently reaches an