

II.

Dear Editor: There is a matter that I think ought to be called to the notice of your readers. It came to my attention so universally that nurses did not understand the reason for the existence of the frequently seen prophylactic stations in the Army, I felt that an authoritative statement should be made which shows just how the establishment of such stations fitted in to the general campaign against venereal diseases. As so many nurses have returned to the States, it occurred to me that they could best get the information that this statement contains if it were published in the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING, and I am therefore inclosing a copy to you to ask if you will include it in your next number.

JULIA C. STIMSON,
Director, Nursing Service, A. E. F.

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

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The Chief Surgeon has prepared the following statement, by request:

"Nurses have asked the questions: Why do prophylactic stations exist? and are they designed to lessen the moral restraint upon men or to authorize promiscuity? These questions evidence an ignorance of a vital and public question on which every woman, and especially every nurse, has a right and a duty to be informed. To answer them and clear up further doubts the following information is set forth. Venereal diseases in their large aspect are due to illicit sexual intercourse, being so passed from man to woman and woman to man. They cause a vast amount of disability, even among innocent women to whom they are transferred, often ignorantly, in wedlock, and to children. One of them, gonorrhea, may be acquired during birth; another, syphilis, is transmissible to the child in the womb. The duty of preventing them is urgent and of paramount importance, and has been so recognized by the War Department, and a vigorous campaign for that purpose has been waged since we entered the war. This campaign embraces the following main lines of endeavor, given in the order of their relative importance: 1. Education of all soldiers as to the possibility of necessity for continence, the nature and harm resulting from venereal diseases, the moral, mental, economic and patriotic aspects of their prevention. 2. A consistent, systematized, studied and effective campaign against drink and prostitution. 3. Frequent inspection of all men for venereal disease and prompt and effective treatment of those having it. 4. The provision of prophylactic stations (places of disinfection) for men who by reason of weakness or folly have exposed themselves to venereal disease. 5. Deprivation of pay, and trial by courtmartial, for men who acquire venereal disease, and additional trial and punishment of men who neglected prophylactic measures after exposure. From the above, it is seen that prophylaxis is not meant to lower standards, to make illicit indulgence easy, or to sanction it in any way. It is thought important that all nurses should know these facts."

III.

Dear Editor: After reading an article in the May number of the JOURNAL, which appeals to nurses to assist in the work of reconstruction, I have felt it was time to let the nursing world know why the majority of nurses in the A. E. F. wish to get out of the service as soon as possible after their return. At the present time we have about one hundred and seventy nurses and forty patients at Base 69. All the nurses are made very unhappy by the restrictions placed upon us by our chief nurse. The rules, which multiply each day, read