SURGEON GENERAL STERNBERG'S REPORT

It Relates Mainly to the Work of the Medical Corps.

Inadequacy of Medical Officers Allowed by Law.

Not Enough in Number in Time of Peace and Many Additions Had to be Made When War Broke Out—Thinks Much Sickness Due to Lowering the Minimum Age for Enlistment From 21 Years to 18, as Youths Break Down.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20.—Surgeon General George M. Sternberg has made his report to the Secretary of War. It relates mainly to the work of the medical corps during the war. The following are the more important features of the report:

The number of medical officers, 192, allowed by law to the army, is inadequate in time of peace. The insufficiency in time of war was met by the assignment of over 650 contract surgeons. The very small proportion of medical officers having experience of a military character impaired the efficiency of the department at the outset, but many of the staff surgeons from civil life showed great aptitude for the service and speedily became of value as administrative sanitary officers.

No provision was made for hospital corps men for the volunteer troops, except that which empowered the Secretary of War to enlist as many privates of the hospital corps as the service may require.

The number of men enlisted and transferred during the war was approximately 6,000.

The want of a sufficient body of trained hospital corps men necessitated the detail of enlisted men from the regiments for hospital duty in several of the camps and the employment of trained nurses at the general hospital. Over 1,700 female nurses have been employed, first at the general hospitals, and later at the field and division hospitals, when it became evident that the field for service purposes for which the latter had been organized would have to give place to the imperative need of caring for the many sick men coming from the regimental camps.

Immediately upon the declaration of war, April 21st, steps were taken to obtain medical supplies for the new volunteer army. The manufacture was expedited with the utmost dispatch. On May 3d foreseeing that it would be impossible to have ready for the issue to the volunteer regiments as soon as they were mustered in the necessary articles of field equipment, I telegraphed the Governors of the several States for the authority to use the medical equipment of the National Guard in the service of the State until our army medical supplies were ready for issue. Most of the Governors who had field equipment responded promptly and satisfactorily, but, unfortunately, many of the State medical departments had no such equipment. Meanwhile the officers in charge of the medical supply depots were directed to make arrangements so that supplies could be immediately obtained for 100,000 men for six months.

Wherever the notice was received from the Adjutant General's office that commands were to be moved or camps formed, I endeavored to anticipate the wants of the troops by telegraphing to the officer in charge of the nearest supply depot to forward supplies for the stated number of men.

In my opinion the reduction of the age limit from 21 to 18 years and the haste with which the volunteer regiments were organized and mustered into service were responsible for much of the sickness which was reported in the early days of camp life. All military experience shows that young men under 21 years break down rapidly under the strain of war service, and every regiment had many of these youths in its ranks. Medical examiners were appointed to testify to the physical conditions of each man before acceptance, but, notwithstanding this, so many men were afterward found on the sick lists of the camps unfit for service, from causes existing prior to enlistment, that special arrangements had to be made for their discharge.

Soon after the newly raised levies were aggregated in large camps sickness began to increase progressively from causes that were so general in their operation that scarcely a regiment escaped from their harmful influence. These causes may largely be charged to ignorance on the part of officers of the principles of the camp sanitation and their duties and responsibilities as regards the welfare of the enlisted men in their commands.

The sites of certain of the camps have been instanced in the newspapers as the cause of the sickness which was developed in them; but a review of the whole situation shows that it was not the site, but the manner of its occupation which must be held responsible for the manner and spread of disease among the troops. April 25, 1898, foreseeing the likelihood of unsanitary conditions in the camps, I issued circular No. 1, impressing upon medical officers their responsibility in sanitary matters and the necessity for a strict sanitary policy, particularly in the case of sick and in the preservation of the camp area from contamination. But the necessity of the military population on the area of these contracted camps prevented the possibility of good sanitary conditions. Camps of this character may be occupied for a week or two at a time without serious results, as in the case of the National Guardsmen out for ten days' practice during the summer, but their continued occupation will inevitably result in the breaking down of the command by diarrhea, dysentery and tphoid fever.

Practically nothing was done to make the men comfortable or to remedy the unsanitary conditions until these were brought to the attention of the Secretary of War by inspectors sent out from the War Department. Then the camps held for so long were abandoned, but not before the manifestations of typhoid infection were rife in them. New sites were carefully selected, regimental camps were expanded, company tentage increased and board flooring provided. Then, for the first time, the troops went into camps suitable for continued occupation.

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One prominent cause of the increase of sickness in the early camps has been commented upon only by a few of our medical officers. These cite the prevalence of drunkenness and of venereal disease due to the facilities and temptations afforded by the proximity of cities to the larger camps. They hold that if the systems of the men had not been weakened by dissipation they would not have succumbed so readily to the other influence which affected them.

It was typhoid fever which broke down the strength of the commands generally, the outbreak becoming distinctly manifest in July. Sporadic cases appeared in most of the regiments in May and June, these cases having been brought in many instances from the State camps. In fact, some regiments, as the Fifteenth Minnesota, suffered more from this disease at their State rendezvous than any of the regiments in the large Federal camps. It appears from a general review of the sanitary reports already filed that the prevalence of the disease was proportioned to the insanitary camp conditions which I have referred to. The probability of its communication to soldiers in camps through the agency of flies was pointed out as a reason for insisting on a sanitary policy of the strictest character.

It is well known to the medical profession that this fever is propagated by a contaminated water supply, and it is now recognized that the great prevalence of this disease in an aggravated form in the camps of the civil war was due to the use of surface and shallow well waters infected by typhoid excreta. To prevent the transmission by the water supply I recommend the use of boiled and filtered water when a pure spring supply could not be obtained, and to enable an efficient filtration of suspected waters to be made, field filters of approved construction were issued on my recommendation by the Quartermaster's department.

CARE OF SICK AND WOUNDED.

The seriously sick were to be treated in their division field hospitals unless their transfer to the general hospital was advisable, under the care of the most experienced physicians and able surgeons on duty with each division. Medical officers left on duty with their regiments were to exercise sanitary supervision over the well men and to determine whether a soldier reporting himself sick should be sent to the hospital or remain as a trivial case under treatment in quarters. The consolidation of the medical force by divisions, implying, as it did, the breaking up of the regimental hospitals, met with a strong opposition from regimental medical officers, particularly from those who were not detailed for special service at the division hospitals.

THE FIFTH ARMY CORPS.

Long before this corps embarked for Cuba, its field hospitals were in condition for efficient service. Subsequent events, however, rendered valueless these preparations of the medical department. When the command embarked on the transports, the baggage wagons and mules were left behind. The ambulance trains of all the divisions, with a large part of the outfit of each of the hospitals, were also left behind. Three ambulance wagons were taken apart and stored on one of the vessels. These did excellent service at San Juan and El Caney. Ten of the ambulances of the third or reserve division hospital were subsequently shipped to Cuba, where they arrived July 2d and were of value in moving the sick and wounded to the hospital at Siboney and to the hospital ships and transports. Of the property and supplies carried to Cuba, a portion was not available for service at the time it was needed, to wit: on July 1st, 2d and 3d, when the wounded from El Caney and San Juan were coming from the front for care and treatment. This was because, in general, no opportunity was afforded to land the medical property. Earnest efforts were made by medical officers to have supplies at the front with the troops. During and after the battles at El Caney and San Juan there was an insufficiency of tents, cots, bedding and medicines due to the causes stated, but all the hospitals were well equipped for surgical work.

After the capitulation of Santiago the troops at the front broke down rapidly under the fatigues they had undergone and the malarial influences to which they were exposed; but by this time an ample supply of tents, furniture, bedding, clothing and medical stores had reached Siboney, together with a corps of trained nurses and a force of surgeons, who were sent to duty at the yellow fever hospitals, being immune to the disease. Meanwhile to relieve the pressure in the field hospitals, such convalescents and sick as could bear the journey were sent to the United States on transport vessels. This was an emergency measure to relieve the hospitals at Siboney and permit of the transfer to them of the men who were sick in regimental camps. The transfer of troops from Santiago to Montauk was also an emergency measure, and the great responsibility of excluding yellow fever infection from every transport rested on the medical officers who had charge of the embarkation. Had they failed in this duty, the effect would have been disastrous during the voyage to the men on shipboard, and the risk of importing the disease into this country would have been greatly increased. It is needless to refer at this time to the complaints of starvation which appeared almost daily in the newspapers during the occupation of Camp Wikoff, for it is now generally understood that the weakness, prostration, anaemia and emaciation of so many of the troops were the results of malarial, typhoid and yellow fever from which the army suffered as a consequence of its exposure to the climatic influences and to infection of Santiago and its neighborhood, pending and subsequent to the surrender of the city.

TROOPS IN THE HOME CAMPS.

The method of hospital organization in these camps was practically the same, and there was much similarity in the conditions affecting them, and correspondingly in their history. Regiments reported but in a few instances with the material and supplies for their medical care; but they brought sick men with them, and these required immediate care. Provision had to be made for division hospitals in view of future field service, and for regimental hospitals in view of the immediate necessity.

Chief Surgeons, officers and divisions began the organization and equipment of their field division hospitals and ambulance companies, but they were met at the outset by the apparent impossibility of securing men for service as cooks, nurses, litter-bearers, ambulance drivers, teamsters, etc.

As a result the hospitals were kept in campaigning conditions; that is, the tents were neither framed nor floored until the increased prevalence of typhoid fever attracted attention to their crowded condition, when the object of their existence became suddenly changed from a school for field service to a hospital for the treatment of disease. Special diet kitchens, under the management of capable individuals, were opened at most of the hospitals. Money for this purpose was sent to them by me from funds contributed and placed at my disposal. Money was also sent directly by individuals and representatives of aid societies, and the Red Cross committees supplied quantities of ice and milk, chickens, eggs, lemons, etc., and articles of hospital clothing were provided by the Red Cross and other aid societies. Subsequently, the order placing the commutation of the sick soldiers' ration at 60 cents rendered these hospitals independent of outside assistance.

About July 20th the troops for the invasion of Porto Rico embarked and sailed. The field hospital accommodation with this force was ample and the supplies abundant.

TROOPS ON THE PACIFIC COAST.

The precautions taken to secure a good sanitary condition on the vessels prior to embarkation and the sanitary supervision exercised over the men during their long voyage must be credited to the excellent condition of the troops at Manila. The want of hospital corps men was the main cause of the failure of chief surgeons to establish their division hospitals promptly; instead of organization for field service, their time was occupied, and their energies spent in endeavoring to procure the necessary men by enlistment or transfer. After a time, when sickness invaded the camps and the division hospitals became filled, operations for field service had to give place to the immediate necessity for caring for the sick. The division hospitals became expanded, as at Siboney and Tampa, into base hospitals with increased needs and increased responsibilities.

GENERAL HOSPITALS.

Up to September 30th, eleven general hospitals were established and fully manned and equipped. These had a capacity of nearly 7,000 beds. At the same time certain post hospitals having good accommodations were used for the treatment of army cases, generally without alteration of their official status as post hospitals.

My report presents tabulations compiled from monthly reports of sick and wounded received from May to September, inclusive, and representing a strength present of 167,168 men. These give full particulars. One thousand seven hundred and fifteen deaths, of which number 640 were occasioned by typhoid fever, 97 by malarial fevers and 393 by diarrhoea and dysentery. The death rates for May and June—0.46 and 0.70—were not in excess of those of the army in time of peace. In July the rate became somewhat higher than that of most well cared for cities—2.15 for the month—or, the equivalent of an annual rate of 25.80 per 1,000 living. In August it became excessive—4.08—equal to annual rate of 48.96 per 1,000. In September the influence of measures taken in July and August to improve the health of the army, became manifest in the falling off of the death rate to 2.45, or the equivalent of an annual rate of 29.40. The same progression came to an acme in August with a sudden fall in September in various ratios given under the specific titles, typhoid, malarial fever and diarrhoea and kindred diseases. This is exceedingly gratifying and must be credited, as stated, to the sanitary measures adopted, for our experience in the civil war demonstrates that in the absence of these measures the high ratio of August would have been continued for many months to come.

From tables of absolute number and of ratios by which the incidents of sickness and mortality of the regular and volunteer troops may be contrasted, it will be seen that the exposure of the regular troops in the Santiago campaign gave them from June to September a higher death rate than the volunteers, and that the rate of the latter for August, the month of maximum mortality, was 3.62, as compared with 5.93 among the regular troops.

VOLUNTEER RELIEF WORK.

My guiding principle throughout the war has been that relief, when needed, should be promptly accepted, without reference to the source from which it came. The relief afforded by the National Red Cross at Siboney was promptly accepted by the surgeons on the spot, but it is evident that that was entirely inadequate to meet the emergency. This association has had full authority to send agents and supplies of various kinds in a most liberal manner for the use of our field hospitals. Other organizations which have rendered very valuable service are the National Relief Commission, having its headquarters in Philadelphia, and the Massachusetts Volunteer Aid Association, with headquarters in Boston. Both of these organizations fitted out hospital ships, which were placed at my service for the transportation of our sick from Porto Rico, and I take pleasure in testifying to the valuable service rendered by the yacht May of the National Relief Commission and the hospital ship Bay State of the Massachusetts Volunteer Aid Association.

THE MEDICAL CORPS.

Before concluding my report of the operations of the medical department during our short and glorious war with Spain, I feel it my duty to call special attention to efficient services rendered by the medical officers of the army in the various responsible positions which the exigencies of the service have made it necessary for them to fill.

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SPECIAL Monday Morning. 50c Dress Goods for 25c per yard.

Monday morning you'll have a rare opportunity in our big Dress Goods Section. That of choosing from 25 pieces of rich mohair luster, brocaded suitings, regular 50c values at 25c per yard. This is really an extraordinary value of superior quality and finish. Comes in all the best colors, navy, garnet, cardinal, olive, light and dark brown, dahlia, myrtle, gray and heliotrope, contrasted with black mohair luster. Is 40 inches wide and will make up very attractively.

New Plaids at 50c yard.

Plaids are always great favorites; they never grow old; always adapted to children's wear and much in favor for pretty Winter waists and occasionally a pattern for a full suit; they embody this Fall a most attractive combination of colorings, so harmoniously contrasted, and with silk striped effects, as to be termed handsome, 25 pieces to choose from. Priced 50c the yard.

Black Storm Serge, 75c yard.

The best choice for a dress to be worn in "all weathers"—is a storm serge. It looks nice in dry weather and a wetting cannot harm it. We show a superb grade, full 50 inches wide, of a dependable black, firm twill and durable at 75c the yard. If you've a need or a thought for a new separate skirt or Winter suit there's a suggestion of economy for you in this item.

Broadcloths, Black and Colors.

There's a quiet richness in broadcloths, to be found in no other known fabric. Then there's economy in a 52-inch weave; it takes so few yards to make a suit. It is a prime favorite for tailor-made costumes, as it is peculiarly adapted to the man tailoring requirements. We show all the popular and new colorings, also black, at $1, $1.25, $1.50 and up to $2.50 the yard.

Plain Cloths, Many Weaves.

The popularity of the tailored costumes has again popularized other plain weaves besides broadcloth, they being the best adapted to the tailor's art. There are some old styles with new richness and many entirely new weaves, viz: Drap d'Ete, serges, camel hair, cheviots, coverts, English worsteds, Venetians, peau de soie and leather cloths in all the wanted colors and black. Priced at 50c, 75c, 85c, $1 and up to $2 the yard.

Perfect Fitting Corset Waists, $1 each.

These waists for women come nearer perfection than any of the many we have handled. They come in gray and black, are made of a fine, firm jeans, have shoulder straps, hose supporter loops and give the same bust support as a regular boned corset. They are gored and corded to shape with just enough bones to aid the steels front and side to keep the shape. A most comfortable stay and the best substitute for a corset made.

New Velvet Stock Collars, 50c each.

They're in the latest bright new colorings of silk velvet, cerise, turquoise, new blue, red, violet, greens, etc., and even though decided in contrast, can be worn with any colored waist you chance to don, with an effective attractiveness; some plain, some with even rows of stitching around. Price, 50c.

Boys' Blue Sailor Caps, 25c each.

They are the sailor style and the military style of caps in this lot, the regulation man-o-war's man's Tams, with Dewey or Hobson on the band in gilt letters, and the soldier's cap with leather visor and brass crossed arms on the front. Splendid Winter caps for boys at a small price.

Children's Trimmed Hats at $1.75.

We've prepared for the little folks a line of trimmed hats which will receive first showing Monday morning. They're productions of artistic merit entirely unlike any heretofore shown at so small a price. Pretty felts of pretty colors and prettily trimmed with ribbon, feathers, etc., and your choice for $1.75.

Stylish Fur Collarettes, $5 to $12.50.

We have a very attractive line of fur garments, all styles and the most stylish. We've scarcely dared speak of them earlier so slight has been the climatic change in seasons, but now as gift time draws near we will anticipate the snappy days we know are to come and tell you of our fur collarettes or short capes, made from various skins and combinations of skins, finished with natural heads, clusters of tails and silk lining. They'll make excellent, acceptable and serviceable Christmas gifts and you'll find them fairly and moderately priced throughout. A new lot just from New York by express to-day on sale Monday. Prices range from $5 to $12.50.

Corticelli Home Needlework Books, 9c each.

This is a neat book of 100 pages with 25 colored plates of designs in true colors. It treats on art needle work in the most minute details. Every page is illustrated, showing designs and stitches and giving plainly all information pertaining to the making of same from start to completion. Many will find this book and the ideas contained therein of great value at this season.

Stamped Canvas Table Covers, 45c each.

These are art canvas 36-inch squares in various pretty new colors, stamped in various designs and patterns of floral set figures which make very handsome covers when worked and fringed around. Priced, 45c each.

Arion twist to embroider the above covers, 45c dozen.

New style fringe to edge the above covers, 8½c yard.

Taffeta Silks at 85c yard.

Our line of taffetas always comprise the latest in shades and combinations. This silk being adapted to more common uses than any other ever produced, naturally sells rapidly and keeps us with a reorder order continually on the road. New ones are here for this week's selling and 'twill pay you to see them if you've a silk want for a waist, skirt, ruffling or trimming.

Underskirts for Women.

Our underskirt stock, which is always replete with the latest and best at the very lowest prices, has been reinforced by several new lots, which have just been opened and are ready for this week's selling. If you've a skirt thought in moreen, sateen, knitted, flannelette or silk do not think of purchasing until you've seen our assortment.

Fancy Moreen Underskirts at $2.25.

Striped cotton moreen underskirts are durable for wear and attractive in appearance. In our showing is represented many different blendings of bright color (the hues of the rainbow) contrasted with black. They're full cut, well made skirts, with deep Spanish flounce. $2.25 each.

Crochet Skirts for Women at $1.75.

These are the warmest kind of underskirts for Winter wear, closely knit of worsted, in colors blue and white, pink and white and red and black. They fall below the knee and are not only comfortable but pretty garments.

Metallic Striped Underskirts, $3 each.

These skirts are made from a splendid, heavy grade of black sateen, with small dotted stripes of the various metallic color. They are full cut, well made and have a deep Spanish flounce at bottom. Good, durable Winter skirts. $3 each.

Best German Knitting Yarn, 25c hank.

If you contemplate knitting some warm article or garment for yourself or for a gift to a friend this item will no doubt interest you, as German yarn is the standard for knitting socks, mittens, underskirts, etc., and we can supply any wanted shade at 25c hank.

Men's Wool Underwear, $2.00 suit.

This line embodies the greatest value in men's natural gray wool undershirts and drawers ever sold at $1 the garment. The shirts are double back and front, silk taped around neck and front and ribbed bottom. The drawers have double seats and reinforced gusset and seams. Free from burs, soft and warm to the body.

Men's Vicuna Underwear, $2 suit.

These garments, undershirts and drawers, are of a vicuna color, are heavy wool merino with enough cotton in their make-up to prevent shrinking when washed. They're full sized garments, well finished, the shirts with silk taped neck and front, the drawers fully reinforced gusset and seams. Price, $1 per garment.

Warm Nightshirts for Men, 50c each.

Domet flannel makes warm and comfortable night shirts for cold weather wear. These are made of soft, fleecy quality of colored flannelette in neat checks and stripes on a cream ground, liberally cut and substantially put together. Sizes of neck 14 to 19 inches. Price, 50c each.

Men's and Boys' Heavy Sweaters, $1.00 each.

They were just uncased Saturday and are the best value for the money ever shown in Sacramento. Have double turtle neck collar and are in colors navy, maroon and black, with contrasting stripe around collar, the correct garment for cyclers and for out door workers in Winter. They're elastic and give perfect freedom to the body. Sizes 34 to 44. $1.

Men's Fleeced Underwear, $2 the suit.

These are natural gray wool undershirts and drawers with a soft, heavily fleeced back, making them doubly warm and entirely doing away with that irritation to the skin which prevents many from wearing woolen undergarments who would like to do so. They are well made garments with finished seams and reinforcements. Priced, $1 the garment.

Women's Tailor Made Suits, $10.00.

Monday morning we show an unrivaled value in new arrivals of women's tailor-made suits at $10. They're made of all-wool covert cloth in colors tan, brown and gray, and of wool serge in navy blue and black. They are of the fly front jacket style neatly self-strapped. The chic jackets being full lined with bright colored silk or satin. The skirt correct in cut, hang and sweep. You'd not dream of home sewing when you've seen these.

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