

## AN APPRECIATION OF "AN APPRECIATION"

I was much gratified and surprised on perusing last week's Caduceus to note an article entitled "An Appreciation," taken from an article by Major Harlow Brooks, M. R. C., of Camp Upton, which first appeared in "The Cure," and it is to Major Brooks that we extend our thanks and appreciation for his appreciation of our work.

Major Brooks very truly says that it is somewhat of a shock to the civil physician who is accustomed all his life to the service of women nurses, to have only men, and those usually but poorly trained, to care for the sick, and so dependent does the civil physician become on the service of the efficient trained nurse, that he would at once say that the adequate care of grave medical cases nowadays was impossible without the care of trained nurses, very truly too this question when propounded by military surgeons shows a very wide and definite difference of opinion, and we are much gratified indeed to note that the strictly military surgeon from vast fields of experience claim that the hospital corps man has nearly always made good in the past and "in certain forms of cases" he is more efficient than the female trained nurse, particularly in field work.

We likewise concede that a physician in, and who has in addition served for a number of years in military life and hospitals, as has been the lot of Major Harlow Brooks, is better qualified to speak as an expert on the qualities, be they good, bad or indifferent of the ward man, and though no one as Major Brooks so aptly puts it, has a keener sense of the good qualities, the devotedness to duty, the high character and general efficiency of the trained nurse than we have, still as he truly says she has no superlative or exclusive claim on these virtues, neither do we as ward men wish to disparage the trained nurses in the slightest degree, or to take from them any speck of credit which we grant they so justly deserve, all honor to them, but we do believe in the old maxim of "giving the devil his due."

We thank you again, Major Brooks, for your respect for us and our capabilities, and wish to assure you, sir, we shall always do our utmost to be deserving of the same.

No, sir, as you very truly say, as an "Angel of mercy," we will never grace the cover of a magazine, neither can we ever be accused of urging Robert W. Service to poetic inspirations, at the same time no one will ever justly accuse us of deserting or neglecting a comrade or any one else who may be in distress, as you have known him you say he has never been a real lady, we lay no claim to that, at the same time some of us do not even lay claim to the title of Gentlemen in every sense of the word, but should the occasion arise for a test of the stuff that real men are men of, St. Peter will be able to enter up in his laboratory report as 100 per cent man. Just as Major Brooks says in the

early days of the hospital at Camp Upton, so in the early days here, cold and wintry days, some of some, some of us took over our wards when the carpenters had not even vacated them, my experiences are brought vividly back to my mind. I was put in a ward as wardmaster, wherein the carpenters had not only not vacated same, but that same ward had never even seen a bed up to that time, or anything pertaining to a ward or the care of the sick, we worked live beavers that morning, two others and myself. That was around 9 a. m. and around 11 a. m. Thirteen patients were marched in on us. The experience of ward work was mostly foreign to all of us. We knew little about it and claimed to know less. But any of those same patients who are fortunate enough to be numbered among the living today will tell you that they slept sound and comfortably in an almost spotlessly clean ward that night. Since that time we have many times pondered over the nights when we worked until 11:30 and sometimes midnight, never having left the ward since 7 a. m. that same morning and then reveille to stand before 6 a. m. the next morning. I have likewise seen the time when we admitted twenty-seven new patients after supper time, and have stayed and "written them all up" before leaving the ward, and many is the time we have still been scrubbing the ward floors after 10:30 with lye, hot water, etc. Bear in mind this was not all compulsory, but all voluntary work, in order to get the new wards in ship-shape condition. But we went to it without being asked. We came into the game to do all we could and in doing this we were simply "playing the game." This particular case of my own experience is merely one of many. There were many other boys as badly handicapped as I was; many who worked as hard, and possibly some harder. In other words, as Major Brooks says, other emergencies arose, suicides, murders, medical cases demanding promptness of action, judgment, stamina, and perfect co-operation. During all this time remember there were no female nurses here, and we did not lose a case.

Again, as Major Brooks says, at times we have had to play the role of carpenter, plumber, clerk, electrician, and fill a hundred and one other positions, and have no doubt, as the major observes, at times proved ourselves to be very efficient thieves. There were times when the wards were in dire need of innumerable articles, and as if by magic there have appeared over night such things as shelves, closets, electric lights, hammers, files, desks, pigeon holes, and many such minor articles too numerous to mention.

We admit we are not handsome to gaze upon. In fact, at times, we might prove a shock to some over-sensitive minds, and again no one ever placed us in an heroic role, in prose, rhyme or paragraph. But we will, as Major

Brooks says, do, dare or die whenever the occasion arises, and often when it doesn't. Just take a census of the med det of this hospital at present, for instance, and wherever unrest lies, fathom it, and I'll warrant you'll find in almost every instance that it is as one man said to me, that this is "too tame; we want to get in the thick of it, where the danger lies, where we can see real active service, and where we can be of greatest service to our brothers in arms. If we don't come back we'll have nothing to worry us, and if we do, God willing, it will be a pleasant surprise to us all."

No, sir, you won't find any monuments to our memory, and we do not ask them, but as Reed Lazeer and Agramonte said, the corps man is always only too ready and willing to risk not only his happiness, but also his life to save the life, health and happiness of others.

We may not look graceful or pretty on Red Cross posters, painted in pretty colors, but we will bear crosses at any time and place, no matter how heavy the burden may be.

Again, I must quote Major Brooks, when he says that there are times when we hold out tongues, although it is mighty distasteful to do so, when others are loosened to a more serious degree, and we have as he likewise says stepped aside to be displaced by trained female nurses, but when they need us again and the emergency arises and quick generous service and manly sportsmanship is needed you will know where to find us, and when you do you will always find us "playing the game."

Once again, Major Brooks, for your kind appreciation, we thank you.

SERGT. GEO. E. WOOLLARD.

## WOMEN FOR LAB. WORK.

We are liable to have women in our laboratories any time now, as the Surgeon General's Office in Washington, D. C., has decided to employ them as bacteriologists and pathologists in all base hospitals in this country. This decision was reached a short time ago and already the women may be seen in the laboratories in some of our largest base hospitals. We cannot boast of any in laboratory yet, but the unexpected is likely to occur any time.

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