

OUR NEW LEADER

MERRITTE W. IRELAND BECOMES SURGEON GENERAL.

(Special to The Caduceus.)

Washington, Nov. 8.—Major General Merritte W. Ireland took up the reins of office as Surgeon General of the Medical Forces of our Army last week, the day after he returned from France, where he spent almost a year and a half as Chief Surgeon on General Pershing's staff.

He enters upon his new and difficult task with a knowledge of conditions overseas as they pertain to the Medical Department of the Army, second to no man. General Ireland succeeds Major General William Crawford Gorgas, who was retired upon reaching the age limit the early part of last month. The name "Gorgas" is so well known, in fact is almost a household word in this country and abroad, that it is perhaps needless to refer to what he accomplished in upbuilding the Army Medical Department, while he was its Chief. However, it may not be out of the way to reiterate that despite the tremendous expansion of the Department, not once was it called upon to serve or minister to the fighting forces, and found lacking in any respect.

Before the war, General Ireland was assistant to Surgeon Generals O'Reilly and Torney. In this capacity he spent a number of years in Washington, so he is entirely familiar with the work at the staff headquarters. The wisdom of selecting him for his present post, as each succeeding stage of his military career is taken into consideration, becomes more apparent. He combines the rare attributes of a definite, thorough knowledge of medical needs along the fighting fronts and in the rear areas, with a practical experience and an understanding of conditions at the hub of the Department.

General Ireland is 51 years old. Those who have been closely associated with him, characterize the new Surgeon General as one of the most active and vigorous personalities in the Army, a leader and an executive in one.

Regarding his early training and the military positions he held prior to this War, he graduated from the Detroit College of Medicine in 1890 and from the Jefferson Medical College in 1891. The same year he entered the Army as an Assistant Surgeon, and has been in the service ever since.

He served in Cuba and the Philippines in the Spanish-American war. In the battle of Santiago his work was of such a nature as to receive special commendation. From 1902 to 1912 he served as a Major in the Surgeon General's Office here. He was promoted to Colonel in May, 1917 and ordered to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, under General Pershing. A year later he was appointed Brigadier General and Chief Surgeon of the American Expeditionary Forces.

In some quarters there seems to be a slight misunderstanding as to just what are the duties and responsibilities of the Surgeon General of the Army. There is also some confusion

regarding the difference between the Surgeon Generals of the Public Health Service, the Navy, and the Army.

At the present time there are three men in this country entitled to the rank of Surgeon General; one is Rupert Blue of the Public Health Service. His work has to do with the supervision and safe-guarding of the health of the civil population of the country. Since the war, the Public Health Service has co-operated with the Army in many instances, but only in extra-cantonment campaigns of health, education and protection. The Public Health Service is a part of the Treasury Department. From this it is evident that Surgeon General Rupert Blue has no connection with the Army Medical Department.

The Surgeon General of the Navy, Rear Admiral Braistead, is the second man entitled to that rank. His job is to take care of all cases of sickness of enlisted and commissioned men in the Navy; also to heal those who have been disabled in battle. All his work lies within the naval establishment. He is held responsible for maintaining the fight efficiency of the men in the Navy.

The Surgeon General of the Army is charged by military regulations with the same task as regards our commissioned and enlisted forces. He is chief of the Medical Department of the Army. Under his command, come more than 200,000 enlisted men and 30,000 commissioned officers of the Department.

From the time a man is picked up wounded, until he is discharged or returned to the front as an effective, he remains in the charge of the Army Medical Department. Hence, it is evident that all military hospitals establishments here and overseas are under General Ireland's control.

GETS SHOWCASES

By the addition of several glass showcases, the Base Hospital Canteen is now able to display its merchandise in a very attractive manner. The cases are now arranged in horseshoe form and the clerks are able to quickly attend to the wants of the many customers.

Sgt. 1st Cl. Cameron who has been in charge of the canteen for the last year, has accomplished much in building up the business. From one small counter, and a very limited stock of goods to the present equipment, stock and fixtures, is a remarkable achievement and Sgt. Cameron deserves a great deal of credit for his untiring efforts which made all this possible.

Over 1000 customers are waited on daily and the rush at noonday fills the canteen to overflowing.

The canteen carries a complete line of overseas equipment for officers and nurses.

Announcement is made of the arrival of the following secretaries at Camp Greene: William Schroeder, from Detroit, Mich.; John Stanzola, well-known pianist, of Hazelton, Pa., and Louis Potts, of Pittsburg.

Medical Men!

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