

Reconstruction of Wounded Soldiers

A REVELATION

Four hours and a four-mile walk last Monday took us up and down, by stairs and elevators, and over long inclined planes; winding around and around, built so that kindly human helpers may gently carry upon stretchers suffering men, to be put on their feet, if they have any left, or to be made over again physically if human skill and science can work that miracle.

It was an unforgettable visit to the Walter Reed U. S. General Hospital, in Takoma Park, Washington, D. C., a group of thirty-one buildings upon eighty acres of ground, with a capacity of 2400 beds, and often overfull of soldiers and sailors.

The Washington Monument, of white marble, magnificent in stateliness and beauty, overtowers every building at the Capital, but it has no heart.

The great Walter Reed Hospital, named in honor of a doctor who sacrificed his life for humanity, has a heart, and it surely is the heart of the United States.

A National Heart

It is a great red-blooded, throbbing, health-giving heart that feels for the boys, bullet and shrapnel stricken, gassed and poisoned, saber cut, maimed and lamed, some with two legs and two arms gone, and many, very many, with but one leg left.

It was in this hospital that I saw, in the twenty-two wards I visited, 1676 men, and three-fourths of them were in bed.

127 doctors in attendance.
211 trained nurses in attendance.
158 assistant nurses in attendance.
99 aids for massage and electric apparatus work.

and 1378 enlisted men, orderlies, who helped to carry; cooks, dining-room attendants, wooden leg and arm makers, workshop teachers, and experts in trades and professions, all working to the end that the men who are incapacitated by the war may leave the hospital with a new bread-winning ability.

Taking care of these good fellows whom we call "our boys," though they are men of the best type America has ever produced, are the leading surgeons and physicians, and their capable assistants. And besides these there are tidy-up men, doing all sorts of chores and "stunts" to take care of and cheer up their mutilated and war-shocked, convalescent, homesick comrades, by means of the Y. M. C. A., Knights of Columbus and Red Cross recreation rooms, gymnasiums, and music and pleasure-giving halls.

With all the serious conditions and solemn responsibilities, the loss of limbs or arteries or muscles, the shattered eyes and ears, fingers broken and impaired, not a single face wore a scowl or an expression of regret for the sacrifice, either by word or by look—and there were 1676 men in whose faces I read hope, courage and content with the price they had had to pay for their country's sake.

Mothers, Wives, Sisters and Sweethearts

whose boys are in the United States hospitals

Suffer This Suggestion

Your boys offered their all to their country, and the United States truly intends to offer its all and best for the wounded and returned men.

Believe me, I am deeply impressed with the necessity of giving the Government time to nurse and repair stricken nerves, shattered bones and fractured ligaments, and to fit new legs and arms and other parts and make them comfortably workable and practical for service.

Therefore, I most earnestly recommend to you to stop influencing the boys to get home, much as you want them. Do not hurry them out of the hospitals, where the Government is giving them good food, the finest surgical skill and trained nursing, and the splendid oversight of competent, interested military and scientific care.

There is something in the air and management of a hospital such as the Walter Reed at Washington, that says to all the fellows: "Boys, stay with us where you are, patiently, until we have mothered you and mended you to the utmost of our knowledge and ability; only give us time and you shall have our best service, whatever the cost may be to the United States Government, whose servants we are and which has instructed us to spare no pains in time or money to heal your hurts."

How can we say, or how can we feel, that the war and the work of the war are finished, or anywhere nearly finished, until the wounded men have been mended and every one of them put upon a sure path of earning a livelihood?

The Walter Reed Hospital is given as an example. Engaged in this same fine work there are also these

U. S. Army Reconstruction Hospitals

General Hospital No. 2—Fort McHenry, Md.
General Hospital No. 3—Colonia, N. J.
General Hospital No. 4—Fort Porter, N. Y.
General Hospital No. 6—Fort McPherson, Ga.
General Hospital No. 7—Roland Park, Baltimore.
General Hospital No. 9—Lakewood, N. J.
General Hospital No. 13—Dansville, N. Y.
General Hospital No. 14—Fort Oglethorpe, Ga.
Army and Navy General Hospital—Hot Springs, Ark.
Army and Navy General Hospital—Cape May, N. J.
Letterman General Hospital, San Francisco.
Base Hospital, at Fort Des Moines, Ia.
Base Hospital, at Fort Riley, Kan.
Base Hospital, at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

and a great number of patients are being cared for in other hospitals in our large cities.

Surely we must keep up this and other great necessary works, for the rehabilitation of our brave fighting men, for the safe maintenance and safe return of the army overseas, and for the firm establishment of a wise peace.

**In Order to Keep Up the Good Work, Let Us Put Through the Victory Loan Quickly.
It Is Not Only a Duty Loan, But Also a Good-Cheer Loan to Lonesome
Fellows a Long Time in Hospital.**

*And Then—With Good Work Well Done,
Altogether for a New America*

[Signed]

John Sparanate
Citizen