

## The Hospital Ship

I suppose there are very few of us Colonials who before this had any idea of what a hospital ship is like; we have recently had the opportunity of seeing a most beautifully-equipped vessel which has been arranged to carry some hundreds of our wounded men from the firing line to the various hospitals.

It was my privilege to be shown over our Hospital Ship by Captain Post, who has been instrumental in transforming a passenger boat into a perfectly-appointed hospital. It is easily seen what a pride the Captain takes in every detail of the arrangements, from the comfortable nurses' quarters on the upper deck to the mangle in the laundry.

The wounded are conveyed on board through doors in the ship's side into a receiving room where they are examined by the doctors and told off to the different wards according to their injuries. They are stripped, and no doubt washed, and then put to bed in hospital garments. These beds deserve special praise and comment.—They have many contrivances for the comfort of the occupant: the head pulls out and can be adjusted as a bed-rest, the bed itself can be raised at one end and can even be lifted right out from the frame, mattress and all, when necessary. Some of the beds are made to swing with the ship, a wise provision that no doubt will be appreciated by bad cases. Attached to each bed is a bracket to hold a basin, also a chart-holder arranged to turn over and form a small table. I am sure many a poor man will sink into those beds after weeks in the trenches feeling he has found heaven on earth. Hair mattresses, feather pillows, clean sheets,—what more can the heart of man desire!

All garments removed from the soldiers are put straight into calico bags and sent aloft to a disinfecting room—a long room divided in the middle by a wall which separates the clean from the unclean, and containing a huge steriliser with openings on each side of the wall. Dirty clothes are put into one end of this receptacle, disinfected by heat, and taken out of the other end in another room, and thence sent straight to the laundry.

The laundry is complete in itself. There are up-to-date machines for washing and boiling, also for drying, a mangle and electric irons. The operating theatre is right amidships and is well lighted by electricity. The floor is oak parqueterie a treat to look at. Round the theatre are various store-rooms, anaesthetic rooms, sterilising rooms, X-ray room, and, what I think appealed to me as much as anything else, a small room for heating blankets.

The wards, of course, are filled with beds,—rows and rows of them—and each ward has its own equipment of lavatories and bathrooms, pantry, ice-chest, and store cupboards.

The sight of so many beds and the realisation that our own wounded men would be the occupants made one's heart ache, and more than ever one longed to take part on that ship in the work that is ahead and to do one's share in the relief of the great pain and suffering that will be seen there.

The arrangements for the nurses are admirable. A small duty-room is provided for them, with bath-room adjoining, where they can also wash and boil their own clothes as well as dry them. An ironing table with electric iron is also provided. They have deck cabins which look most comfortable.

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The staff of the Hospital Ship, including eleven nurses, were entertained the night before departure at Government House by His Excellency the Governor and Lady Liverpool.

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The New Zealand Hospital Ship, Maheno, left the wharf earlier than was expected on July 10th, and the general public who were interested in those on board, and in the ship's departure, were deprived of the opportunity of seeing the Maheno leave. During the morning the Minister of Defence (the Hon. Jas. Allen) and Miss Allen paid a last visit, and the Mayor and Mayor-ess (Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Luke) went aboard with some final gifts. Later His Excellency the Governor made a final inspection. The Maheno left the wharf about one o'clock and went out and dropped anchor off