

MEDICAL

The health of the troops throughout the year has been good. There has been a marked fall in the incidence of epidemic diseases, the chief of which were influenza, measles, mumps, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and cerebro-spinal meningitis. The total deaths from all causes during the year was eighty-three, of which twenty-six were the result of accident.

During the year 3rd Division took part in several actions in the Pacific, and it was on these occasions that the Mobile Blood Transfusion Unit more than justified the expenditure on equipment for refrigeration of blood plasma, and the provision of facilities for anti-shock treatment. The work of the Field Hygiene Section and the Malarial Control Unit undoubtedly contributed to the good health of the troops and the low incidence of mosquito-borne diseases. The numbers of malaria cases reported from 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the Pacific indicate a most satisfactory state of affairs in the control of this disease, but, as expected, an increase in incidence occurred with the forward movement and actions of the Division.

The demand on the Army Optician Service has increased considerably, due to the extension of this Service to personnel of the Royal New Zealand Navy and the Royal New Zealand Air Force. A fully equipped Mobile Optician Unit was dispatched to the Middle East.

The Plastic Surgical Unit has continued to perform valuable service, and it has been arranged that this unit, for general administration, shall be under the North Canterbury Hospital Board, but that all male staff shall be Army personnel. A considerable number of cases, including Service personnel, war pensioners, and civilians are receiving treatment.

Close supervision has been maintained in respect of the treatment and welfare of all unfit soldiers. In addition to 5,231 invalided personnel from overseas, medical boardings were completed for approximately ten thousand furlough and duty personnel.

DENTAL

The routine dental examination and treatment carried out by the New Zealand Dental Corps during the last four and a half years has been steady and continuous and has resulted in a considerably higher state of dental health amongst the youth and adult members of the Forces.

Where practicable, members of the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force and home-defence Force are examined and treated to ensure that, upon being posted to indefinite leave without pay or discharged, they are "dentally fit."

SOCIAL WELFARE WORKERS

Social welfare workers employed in Army camps, stations, or hospitals in New Zealand are now members of the Army on the same conditions as obtain for such workers overseas. As camps, &c., are vacated the services of the workers employed therein are gradually being dispensed with.

PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIAN INTERNEES

The Prisoner-of-war Camp at Featherston now holds 803 Japanese prisoners. No more prisoners have been received during the year.

In the internment camp certain male civilians are still held, but during the year some have been released from internment whilst others have been dispatched overseas preparatory to their repatriation.

ARMS, AMMUNITION, AND EQUIPMENT

Surplus Stores and Equipment.—Equipment in the possession of those units which have been disbanded, including the Home Guard, has been, or is in process of being, withdrawn into Ordnance and M.T. stores. This work is nearly completed.

In general, all units which remain on a non-mobilized basis are in possession of complete war equipment with a minimum care and maintenance staff. When it is found possible to do so, much of this equipment will be withdrawn into Ordnance and M.T. stores, leaving with units only their bare requirements for training purposes.

Surplus artillery equipments have been, or are being, put through Ordnance Workshops, thoroughly overhauled, and prepared for storage, and, together with their ancillary stores as far as possible, are being concentrated at Waiouru, Trentham, Burnham, Akaroa, and Motuiapu.

Mechanical Transport.—Except in the case of certain Army Service Corps companies, the establishments of mechanical transport vehicles for all units have been reduced to a training scale only. The amended requirements can be satisfied almost entirely from holdings of Army types of vehicles, thus freeing all commercial types for disposal through a Disposals Board working under the control of the Commissioner of Supply. The total number of used cars and trucks thus made available is approximately 10,800. Up to 31st March 4,740 used and 98 new vehicles had already been disposed of. Surplus mechanical transport parts are being disposed of through motor-distributing houses.

Tracked vehicles and surplus vehicles of Army type are concentrated at Waiouru, Ngaurawahia, Trentham, and Burnham, with special maintenance staffs to guard and maintain them.