

for sick and wounded and prisoners of war. The cost of parcels and amenities for prisoners of war was £117,615, and for comforts for the sick and wounded £80,458.

The increase in the number of prisoners of war called for greater expenditure not only in the provision of an extra number of patriotic weekly food parcels, but also in the censoring and supplementing of next-of-kin quarterly parcels. The Board defrays the cost of Prisoner of War Inquiry Offices in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin.

Hospital and hospital ships have been serviced to a greater extent with extra comforts and amenities, and the following list gives an idea of some of the extra comforts supplied: Special food parcels, cigarettes and sweets, tobacco and matches, books and magazines, toothbrushes and tooth-paste, razor blades, occupational and curative equipment, pyjamas, slippers, socks, bathrobes, handkerchiefs, cardigans, pullovers, bed jackets and capes, face-cloths and special soap, hospital accessories, special surgical dressings and pads, and skin suits.

The Board desires to express its appreciation of the services rendered by the Joint Council of the Order of St. John and New Zealand Red Cross Society, by their voluntary helpers, and also by the Joint Secretaries, Captain M. S. Galloway and Mr. K. S. Falconer.

IV. WORK OVERSEAS AND IN NEW ZEALAND

(1) *Naval Personnel*.—All New Zealand naval men overseas and on ships going outside the three-mile limit receive quarterly patriotic gift parcels and issues of gift cigarettes or tobacco. This work is carried out on behalf of the Board by the Naval and Merchant Navy Patriotic Sub-committee of the Auckland Metropolitan Patriotic Committee, under the chairmanship of Commander C. H. T. Palmer.

A wide variety of amenities has been supplied to naval vessels and shore stations, the principal items being sports equipment, indoor games, pianos, band instruments, radio sets, electric irons, stationery, and general recreation facilities.

(2) *Air Force*.—The distribution to New Zealand airmen overseas of quarterly gift parcels was organized by the Board, and the provision of sports gear, recreation huts, and other facilities in Air Force camps in New Zealand continued to be a direct responsibility of the Board in consultation with the Air Department.

(3) *Nurses and Servicewomen*.—On transports by which New Zealand nurses and V.A.D.s travel, sweets, cigarettes, games, books, magazines, &c., are provided where possible for their use *en route*. Recreation centres and clubs are provided in localities where a number of servicemen are stationed, and these are available to our servicewomen.

Every three months special patriotic gift parcels, containing toilet requisites and general comforts, are sent to each servicewoman. The work of packing these parcels is undertaken by the New Zealand Union of Townswomen's Guild (Inc.), under the supervision of Miss Viola Kettle, to whom the Board expresses its appreciation.

Four Y.W.C.A. women secretaries who are serving in the Middle East and whose salaries are supplemented by the Board work under the auspices of the British Y.W.C.A. Their duties are primarily to provide for the comfort of uniformed women during their periods of leisure and leave.

In New Zealand, servicewomen are provided with 8 oz. of wool for knitting personal comforts. Extra comforts and amenities are provided from patriotic funds for hostels where servicewomen are stationed.

(4) *Recreational Huts*.—In order to cope with demands occasioned by full mobilization and altered arrangements of camps, the Board adopted the policy of erecting prefabricated bolted huts, usually 60 ft. by 24 ft., which could readily be moved, and which, after the war, would have a higher recovery value than huts wholly erected on the site. In addition, wool-sheds and other buildings near camps were conditioned or altered for recreational purposes. The number of patriotic recreational huts, marquees, chapel huts, or rest centres operated or supervised at the close of the year in New Zealand and overseas was 282, in addition to 23 mobile units.

The capital expenditure on recreational huts and marquees since the inception of the fund to 30th September, 1942, was £209,484, the depreciation reserve to that date was £104,077, and the net value was £105,407.

The capital value of furniture and equipment supplied was £84,513, the depreciation reserve £43,621, leaving a net value of £40,892.

V. NEW ZEALAND FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Throughout the year our Forces in the Middle East were regularly supplied with comforts and amenities, the distribution being supervised by the Board's Commissioner there, Lieutenant-Colonel F. Waite, D.S.O., M.L.C., to whom and to his staff the Board expresses its grateful appreciation for the work performed.

The New Zealand Forces Club in Cairo has continued to be a major recreational centre for New Zealanders in the Middle East, and it has earned the reputation of being the best servicemen's club in the Middle East.

This club was considerably enlarged during the year under review, and now includes officers' dining-room, warrant officers' and sergeants' dining-room, other ranks' dining-room, tea-room lounge, sisters' room, reading-room, library, canteen, information bureau, parcels depot, post and telegraph facilities, 205 beds, hot showers, regimental aid post, barber's shop, common-room for all ranks.

During the year the W.A.A.C. staff was sent from New Zealand, and on arrival a very great improvement was apparent at the club.

On the 8th November a hostel was opened at Alexandria, having beds for forty men, and facilities for the supply of all meals. This hostel caters not only for the personnel of the Army, but for New Zealand personnel attached to the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force who are stationed in this district.

During the year the Division was engaged at Bardia, then moved to Syria, and brought back again to Egypt. These changes made the distribution of patriotic comforts extremely arduous, but nevertheless they were carried out.

Whilst the division was in Syria extra Y.M.C.A.s, apart from those attached to the units, were opened at Baalbek and Aleppo. The free distribution issued during the Bardia action may be quoted: Chocolate, £902; cigarettes, £2,549; toilet goods, £350; tinned food, £101; tobacco, £1,493.