

To New Zealand must also be given the credit of having established a system whereby our patients could requisition for any additional comforts they might desire, the cost being debited against their pay. They were allowed to spend up to 3s. a week on articles approved by the hospital authorities, the Chaplains sending round orderlies to ascertain their requirements and to purchase the articles for them. These were in addition to articles such as the following, regularly supplied as free gifts by the Chaplains—viz., razors, shaving-brushes, shaving-soap, strops, pocket looking-glasses, writing-pads, pencils, cigarettes, tobacco, tooth-brushes, tooth-powder, combs, &c. Even watches were occasionally supplied by the Chaplains to those that had lost theirs. Early in December I was questioned by the General then in command of the Alexandria district about this system, which was commonly known as the "chit" system, and which he expressed his intention of adopting for the benefit of the British troops.

At Christmas hospitals and convalescent homes vied with each other in their efforts to give the men as happy a time as possible by decorating the wards and distributing extra delicacies and gifts. In Malta we were not allowed to distribute Christmas gifts to our patients, although at the last moment Australia was permitted to distribute gifts to theirs, as it was found that they had actually been shipped to the island. Before leaving, however, I arranged with the British Red Cross Society that if we had patients on the island next Christmas our representative was to have the same right as Australia had to distribute gifts. Although they did not receive Christmas gifts from New Zealand, which many had been looking for, our sick and wounded received suitable presents from the British Red Cross Society, which organization controlled the distribution of all gifts to sick and wounded in Malta.

Before leaving Malta I also arranged with the authorities that our Chaplain was to be allowed to distribute extra comforts to our patients there, the only stipulation made by the authorities being that the gifts would first have to be placed in the Red Cross store, and then be drawn upon as required by our Chaplain. This concession was, however, subsequently modified.

Of the convalescent camps in Malta I desire to refer specially to All Saints' Camp, the Commandant of which was Major Burton Mabin, of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His management, I satisfied myself, was most efficient, and the camp was, I believe, looked upon by the authorities as a model one.

In Egypt I found that our hospitals were being well supplied by the different branches of the Red Cross Society in New Zealand. Methods of packing varied, and occasionally no lists of the contents of cases were supplied. For the most part the goods were just what were required, and arrived in excellent order. At times there might have been a superabundance of one article and a shortage of others, but any shortage was quickly made up by subsequent shipments. Some goods arrived addressed to our No. 1 and others to No. 2 Hospital.

The distribution of hospital and Red Cross stores is done at the base under the direction of the New Zealand Director of Medical Services. If these hospitals are moved to England or France, as seems likely, it is possible that clothing, &c., of a warmer nature may be required; but no doubt your Department will be advised of their requirements by the medical officers in charge. You will also have the advice of Mr. Bernard Tripp, who, I understand, recently left the Dominion to act on behalf of the New Zealand Red Cross Society. I know how hard the ladies of the Dominion have been working to add to the comfort of our sick and wounded. I know also that their efforts have not been in vain. The hospital authorities are exceedingly grateful to them for the supplies they have forwarded through the Red Cross and other organizations.

My visits to the hospitals and camps enabled me to inform many relatives and friends of members of our Force, who had communicated with me, how patients were progressing, and to carry personal messages to and from them. I was also able to obtain from comrades much information of personal interest to relatives of the fallen. This branch of my work, which occupied no small part of my time, afforded me much satisfaction in that I was able to supplement information supplied officially.

Altogether, I paid upwards of one hundred and twenty visits to our sick and wounded and convalescents in Alexandria, Cairo, Mudros, Gallipoli, and Malta, and everywhere I went I heard nothing but good about our men from medical officers, nurses, and others.

The following is a list of the hospitals, convalescent homes, and convalescent camps I visited:—

Alexandria: Greek Hospital (in which a certain number of beds were reserved for the military); No. 21 General, Ras-el-Tin; Lady Godley's Convalescent Home; Lady Godley's Convalescent Home for Officers; Australian Convalescent Home, Ras-el-Tin; Egyptian General Hospital; Annex to Deaconesses' Hospital; No. 19 General (Deaconesses') Hospital; No. 15 (Abbassia School) Hospital; Glymenopoule Hospital (administered by Egyptian Public Health Department); British Red Cross Convalescent Hospital; Bombay Presidency Hospital (formerly St. Stephen's Casino); Indian General Hospital (now used for Indians only); No. 17 General Hospital (Victoria College); Montazah Convalescent Home; Nurses' Rest Home, Aboukir.

Cairo: New Zealand No. 2 General Hospital, Pont de Koubbeh; "Aotea" Convalescent Home, Heliopolis; Lady Godley's Convalescent Home, Zeitoun; Lady Godley's Convalescent Home, Helouan; Shoubra Infectious Diseases Hospital; British Red Cross Hospital, Gezireh.

Port Said: New Zealand No. 1 Stationary Hospital.

Mudros: Australian No. 2 Stationary Hospital; Australian No. 3 General Hospital; Convalescent Depot; No. 18 General Hospital (British); No. 3 Canadian Hospital.

Gallipoli: Australian Hospital, under Walker's Ridge; various Clearing Stations from Anzac to Bauchop's Hill; British Hospital, Helles, near Lancashire Landing.