

SHEEPSKIN WAISTCOATS.

Of the sheepskin waistcoats sent from the Dominion for the use of our troops last winter, I have to state that approximately 5,000 waistcoats, the contents of 106 bales, were issued to the men that were at Mudros, 150 were sent to Salonika for distribution to the staff of No. 1 Stationary Hospital, and 100 were, on the suggestion of the D.D.M.S., issued to our motor and transport drivers during a spell of cold weather. In view of the evacuation General Godley informed me that a further issue of these waistcoats would not be necessary last winter. After conferring by cablegram with you on the subject, and being satisfied by a leather expert that they could be safely stored, I arranged that the balance of about 14,000 were to be stored at our Base Depot Cairo, until such time as they were required. As a precautionary measure it was thought advisable to open up the bales and to treat each waistcoat, and before I left Egypt the Commandant informed me that arrangements had been made to do this.

MOTOR AMBULANCES.

Motor ambulances belonging to our Expeditionary Force were doing general service for the Red Cross Society in Alexandria, Cairo, and Port Said, and were highly appreciated. Before going to Malta I ascertained that some of our motor ambulances were being used there, and I subsequently ascertained that five had, by order of the military authorities in Malta, been taken off a transport which called there on its way to Egypt from England. These ambulances were, I was informed, the most useful on the island, and had arrived at a critical time when many sick and wounded were being landed from Gallipoli. I communicated with General Godley on the matter, and it was arranged that they should remain at Malta until they were required by our Field Ambulances. As they had no distinguishing mark except small brass plates inscribed with the names of the donors, I gave instructions that they were to have the same mark as all our other ambulances—namely, "New Zealand Expeditionary Force" and a red cross. Colonel Parkes found it necessary later to send to Malta for these ambulances, three of which I saw in our garage at Cairo.

STORES.

Owing to the inferior quality of some of the jam supplied to the troops the suggestion was made to me that shipments of the best brands of New Zealand jam would be very acceptable to our men. Such shipments should be sent in tins of the size of condensed-milk tins, and packed in bound cases showing the names and the addresses of the senders.

Regular shipments of New Zealand condensed milk, potatoes, and apples would be acceptable, also oatmeal during the winter months. These, however, could now only be sent as gifts, not as supplies, the Imperial authorities having, before I left Egypt, taken over the control of all supplies. Catering was therefore to rest with them for the future.

While on the subject of stores I desire to refer to our Stores Supply Depot at Zeitoun, which was under the control of Captain May, formerly of the Electrical Branch of the New Zealand Post and Telegraph Department, who joined our Force in London. Everything in the depot appeared to be satisfactory. In method and orderliness it bore more comparison with the French depots I saw at Helles and Lemnos than with any others that came under my observation. Captain May informed me that of the supplies received from New Zealand he had found only one brand of jam and one of butter unsatisfactory. He had made representations to your Department on the subject. This is the only complaint I heard about the quality of the food supplied to our troops, except one with regard to a certain brand of tinned meat. This meat, however, was not supplied by New Zealand.

MILITARY BANDS.

It is desirable that each brigade should have a band. That attached to the First Infantry Brigade was quartered at Anzac with the reserve battalion in Chailak Dere when the battalion was holding the lines at the apex, and its playing in the evenings was greatly appreciated by the men.

REGIMENTAL FUNDS.

A Brigadier-General represented to me that, while some battalions had left New Zealand well supplied with regimental funds, others had come away with little or nothing. Another Brigadier-General stated that units like the Artillery, the Engineers, and the A.S.C. were frequently overlooked by people sending gift goods and money to units. I found that all Commanding Officers had, wherever possible, established regimental funds from which the men could draw to obtain any extras they desired, or accessories for games and sports. Since my return to the Dominion I have ascertained that provision has been made for regimental funds for all units.

WAR CORRESPONDENTS.

During my stay at Gallipoli I found that the life of war correspondents was a particularly arduous and dangerous one. At all times they ran the risk, in the trenches and behind them, of being hit by shells or stray bullets, and during the early operations and up to the end of August their risks were undoubtedly great. I found, too, that all had suffered from one or other of the prevailing illnesses. Though suffering severely from illness, our official correspondent, Mr. Malcolm Ross, in spite of doctors' advice that he should leave Gallipoli, pluckily remained there watching the evacuation operations for ten days. His three articles on the evacuation, which I was privileged to read before their despatch to the Dominion, give a graphic and detailed account of those memorable operations. Mr. Ross had an exceptional opportunity of observing the final movements, for, when the other correspondents were ordered to the war ships, he was sent to a hospital ship, which lay closer to the shore than the former. He had thus a better general view up and down the coast.