

The new fever wards were occupied in March, and have already proved their value and their necessity by the suitable accommodation they have afforded in cases of various infectious diseases.

The Wellington Racing Club Ward was opened in May, and is a convenient and satisfactory addition to the hospital buildings.

An operation-room was arranged and put into working-order; it has been in use when needed since the 20th September, and all operations required are now done in camp. Special furniture has been ordered, and delivery is expected at any time. The trustees for the late Colonel Hope Lewis donated the use of a splendid lot of surgical instruments to the hospital—a most generous and valuable gift.

Many improvements have been effected in the grounds of the hospital compound, and the fine garden has been a great pleasure to patients, visitors, and occupants of the camp generally. Improvements are still going on to render the hospital surroundings as beautiful and attractive as possible.

The various members of the Medical Corps did excellent work during the year, and though there were many changes in the personnel of officers, N.C.O.s, and men, all worked with a good will, and were not found wanting when at times duties were extra arduous and work very strenuous.

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20th January, 1918.

REPORT OF PRINCIPAL MEDICAL OFFICER ON PREVAILING DISEASES AND SANITARY MEASURES AT FEATHERSTON MILITARY CAMP.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES.

Civilian.—All civilians working constantly in camp or coming into camp for temporary work have to be passed by the Medical Officers, and their throats swabbed, before starting. They attend weekly parades, and their living-quarters in camp are kept under close observation. The above routine has proved its value; we have discovered meningococcal and diphtheria carriers amongst them.

Military.—All recruits on arrival are closely examined and their throats swabbed, all carriers going to isolation till cleared. All men going into hospital have their throats swabbed and examined, measures being taken to isolate all carriers. All troops in camp are examined regularly each week for infectious and contagious disease. All men on sick-parade with any suspicion of sore throats go through a course of vapour treatment in the inhalation-room, there being one at each camp attached to Featherston Military Camp. Some 75 to 80 is the daily average under treatment, zinc sulphate or Chloramine T being used. The value of this cannot be overestimated. A close watch is kept for infectious disease on all men reporting on sick-parade. At the same time any thought advisable are swabbed. In this respect the work of the Camp Bacteriologist is invaluable, he being on the spot. Urgent work is not delayed.

All men returning from leave of any kind have to be passed by the Medical Staff before returning to their lines. Suspects, contacts, and carriers all go to isolation until proved ready for release.

PREVAILING DISEASES.

Influenza.—This was combated by extensive use of the inhalation-chamber, the use of a detention ward, the reduction in numbers of men living in huts from 24 to 20, sleeping head and feet alternately, and of those in tents from 8 to 6, in addition to ordinary medicinal treatment and the prevention of visitors to the influenza ward, where patients were segregated.

Pneumonia.—Of this disease we had only 8 cases for the year, and none of the meningococcal type, which formed a complication of measles in 1916.

Cerebro-spinal Meningitis.—Seven cases were admitted to hospital, against 24 for 1916. Men living in huts are more prone to develop the disease than those in tents. Men aged 20–21 in their first three weeks of camp life are much more liable than their older comrades, though one of our cases was 41, this being exceptional. The disease this year did not assume the very severe malignant type characteristic of previous years, 2 only of our cases being of a malignant nature, and there has been a gratifying decrease during the current year.

Venereal Disease.—Provision is made for prophylactic treatment of venereal disease in camp. This has been made use of, and the amount of venereal disease in camp has been relatively very small, as per return elsewhere. Lectures on venereal disease are being given by Captain Pettit, N.Z.M.C., to all units in camp, and are of great value.

Inoculation, Vaccination, &c.—All this is done in the first ten days of the recruit's entry into camp, so that when completed he can be handed over to the Training Staff unreservedly.

(a.) Whenever possible the T.A.B. inoculation is done in two stages of ten days' interval; if not, in one double dose, a subsequent forty-eight hours excused duty being the rule.

(b.) *Antimeningococcal Inoculation.*—It is a routine in our hospitals here for all men admitted to be given a dose of A.M. vaccine. It is significant that no case of cerebro-spinal meningitis has developed this year in hospital during convalescence. This was the rule during previous epidemics of cerebro-spinal meningitis, measles and influenza being the particular diseases involved. Also, all recruits coming directly into Featherston Military Camp into huts and not going into