

V. WORK OVERSEAS

Pacific

The Board, through its Commissioners and by direct supply from New Zealand, exercised continued control over the comforts service. The Y.M.C.A. and Church Army continued their good work there as expending agents of the Board, and the results achieved indicated that in this theatre the Board, profiting by its previous experiences, had built up an organization as efficient as any such organization could be made, having regard to the scattered island bases and the frequent movements necessary.

No. 1 Islands Group.—Squadron Leader J. R. Herbert and Flight Lieutenant G. J. Brocklehurst acted as Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner respectively in this theatre during the year. The outstanding success of the Board's work with the No. 1 Islands Group was due, in a very large measure, to the energy and directing capacity of these two officers, to whom the Board would like to record its special thanks.

Experiments in clubs in the Pacific were made with the Third Division when a prefabricated building was sent from New Zealand and erected in New Caledonia. The time taken for the building to be prefabricated, transported, and erected was such that the building had very little use before the Division was withdrawn. Profiting by this experience, rest camps with the Air Force were erected on different lines. The buildings were built entirely of Native construction, with wooden floors. The work was carried out by the Works Division of the Air Force, in conjunction with Native labour, paid for from Patriotic Funds. When erected, a special staff was provided by the Air Force, and the buildings were furnished from Patriotic Funds, complete with table-cloths, curtains, crockery, &c., the effect being that, although of Native construction, the buildings had a touch of home. At these camps personnel were given three days' special leave and enjoyed amenities similar to hotel life in New Zealand.

In addition to these rest camps, snack bars were provided on all air strips used by transit personnel. Again this was a joint effort of the Air Department and the National Patriotic Fund Board.

As stated in previous reports, transport difficulties were one of the main problems to be overcome in the Pacific. These were met to a certain extent by the ready and able assistance given by the Air Department in transporting supplies from one island to another.

In every island, Y.M.C.A.s and picture plants were provided, in addition to the usual sports gear, gift parcels, &c.

Flight Lieutenant Brocklehurst returned to New Zealand towards the end of the year.

Fiji.—The New Zealand Forces Club, Suva, and the Catholic Club, together with the Garrick House Rest Centre, continued to function.

On account of the extension of work on this island it became necessary to appoint a full-time Commissioner, Captain J. K. B. Fountain, to assist the Board's honorary representative, Mr. F. L. Smith.

The Board continued to render assistance to the Fijian Comforts Fund in the purchase of amenities in New Zealand for the Fijian Forces.

Canada and the United States of America

The cessation of the Empire Air Training Scheme resulted in a reduction of the patriotic effort amongst New Zealanders in Canada and the United States. New Zealand Government representatives continued to assist in entertaining the reduced number of New Zealand servicemen passing through, and they were ably assisted by various branches of the Anzac Division of the British War Relief Society and by Canadian and American Service clubs, to whom the Board expresses its deep appreciation for their service.