

Our association was founded in August, 1914, shortly after the declaration of war, with the object of affording assistance to and extra comforts for the members of the New Zealand Contingents whilst in this country and abroad. Our first important work was the creation of the New Zealand Hospital at Walton, the cost of which was borne by the association, by sums from Lord Liverpool's Fund, by contributions from the New Zealand Government, and by a subsidy, per patient, from the British War Office. It was the only New Zealand hospital in this country all through that time of stress when we were looking after four thousand to five thousand wounded New Zealand soldiers who were arriving from the Dardanelles. Although its modest dimensions prevented our receiving a tithe of them within its walls, it was most valuable as a little corner of New Zealand to which could be transferred those patients in other hospitals who were suffering (call it by what medical name you like) from loneliness, and longing to be amongst their own people. By degrees Walton Hospital grew in size, and obtained the highest commendations from the Headquarters of the Medical Command at the Horse Guards; and finally when—at the desire of the New Zealand Government and the New Zealand Military Headquarters in London—we handed it over we passed on an institution which, whether considered from the point of proper efficiency or due economy, we believe any society might be entitled to remember with pride.

Now as to the work still in our hands. The Executive Committee has entrusted the detail working of our different spheres of activity to various sub-committees, who submit a report of their work monthly to the parent body.

First probably in importance is the Hospitality Committee, with its two branches, Visiting and Entertainment.

The Visiting Committee have charge of all the sick and wounded in hospitals or convalescent homes and camps. As the wounded arrive in hospital in this country the New Zealand Military Headquarters report to us the names and the hospital to which they have been sent. The Visiting Committee pass on this information to their local visitors, or, where they have no local visitors, send out a visitor from this office. The patient is visited, and a report upon his condition forwarded here with a statement as to what minor comforts he stands in need of. The ladies in charge of the packing-room (which I hope you will look in upon) make up the required parcel and send it to the visitor, who takes it to the man. The sort of parcel generally sent consists of cigarettes or tobacco, stamps, stationery, New Zealand illustrated papers, razor and shaving-kit, and change of under-garments. Where the visitor, after consultation with the ward sister, thinks any special food diet not supplied by the hospital would be of advantage to a patient, this is also provided. These ladies also arrange to send cables to New Zealand for the men; they write letters for those unable to write themselves; and they make little purchases for them when asked to do so, the cost of these latter being deducted from the man's pay. We have at present upwards of 170 official honorary visitors, the large majority of them being either New-Zealanders or closely connected with the Dominion; and the fact that probably the first visit a lonely New-Zealander receives in hospital in England is from one of his own countrywomen is, I need hardly tell you, specially appreciated. The hospitals the men are in are scattered all over the United Kingdom—Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Dublin, Belfast, Cardiff, Leeds, Manchester, Isle of Wight (to name only a few)—and the average of visits paid is two a week. The patient's condition, what he has been supplied with, the number of visits paid, are all methodically entered, and if you will pay a visit to our card-indexing room and ask for the latest account of any man you happen to know to be in hospital and in whom you are interested, I think the value and the thoroughness of the work will be manifest to you.

When the patient leaves hospital, or when he is well enough to get out for a few hours, he comes into contact with the Entertainment Committee. They arrange little treats for him—little varieties from the dullness and depression of hospital life. They engage char-a-bancs or motor-buses to bring him from his hospital (if in or near London) to our club-room here, where he is given tea, and meets other New-Zealanders, and sees all the papers, and generally gets a little variety. They also provide conveyances when New-Zealanders are invited out to tea or lunch by kind hosts living near hospitals in the country districts. At an earlier period in our history much of this transport was provided by local well-wishers, but since chauffeurs have been called up to serve in the Army, and the supply of petrol to private persons reduced to the smallest limit, this form of assistance has ceased, and if the association did not provide transport our men could not enjoy any hospitality. The Entertainment Committee also arrange concerts in the hospitals—quite a big feature in their work. They obtain (mainly free) tickets for theatres and concerts in London for the men. They have lists of hospitality for officers and men offered all over the country, and put them in touch with these kind friends, with the result that numbers of New-Zealanders have enjoyed their leave in historic houses, have had shooting, fishing, and riding given them, and have found themselves amidst a family life where they have been made to feel absolutely at home.

Before leaving this brief account of the visiting and hospitality work I should like to emphasize that it is no new development, and that just as we are providing it to-day for some five thousand of our gallant men after their splendid services in France, we were doing it just as thoroughly a year ago for five thousand of those who had fought and bled at Gallipoli.

I now turn to the New Zealand Expeditionary Force Clubs Committee. The germ of this work was the Recreation Hut at Walton, run by the association when that hospital was under our control, but now, consequent upon lack of room, converted into a ward. The association has a recreation-room in these offices, at the Residential Club House in Russell Square, at Salisbury, and at Codford; and others are building and will be shortly opened at Hornchurch, Brockenhurst, and Walton. This form of assistance to soldiers is, of course, a very common one, and is carried out successfully by the Y.M.C.A., the Salvation Army, the Church Army, and several other bodies. We confine our activities in this direction to looking after our own men in those places where we have the direct approval and encouragement of the New Zealand military authorities. We run them on thoroughly New Zealand lines—New Zealand ladies in charge, New Zealand cooking, New