

#### AIR FORCE RELATIONS.

This body, which has branches at or near the various Air Force camps throughout New Zealand, is an approved agent of the Board, and as such gives special attention to the requirements of men attached to the R.N.Z.A.F. At the Wellington headquarters canteen facilities are provided for Air Force men who are entertained at the club-rooms while passing through Wellington. The Air Force Relations distributes wool to its voluntary helpers, and despatches the knitted garments to men of the R.N.Z.A.F. in New Zealand and abroad. In addition, hussifs of a special type made by voluntary helpers are given to all Air Force men proceeding overseas. During the period under review seventeen cases containing foodstuffs and woollen garments were sent to England by the Air Force Relations. During the same period £4,000 was collected by the Air Force Relations for patriotic purposes, and this amount has been credited to the National Patriotic Fund. In general the Air Force Relations, which is under the able guidance of Mrs. Saunders, chairwoman, acts for the Board in providing comforts for New Zealand Air Force men, and the special services rendered are highly appreciated by the men concerned.

#### AIR FORCE TRAINEES.

The provision of comforts for Air Force trainees en route to overseas stations is a responsibility of the Board, and every effort is made to provide these men with comforts to a standard comparable with that supplied to other arms of the Service. At times small cash grants are made in lieu of gifts.

#### COMFORTS FOR DISTRIBUTION OVERSEAS.

A supply of comforts is placed on board every troopship leaving New Zealand, and arrangements are made with the Army authorities for the equal distribution of these comforts to men on the voyage.

During the year Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. F. Waite, D.S.O., M.L.C., was appointed the Board's Overseas Commissioner to supervise the work of distribution of comforts to the overseas forces. Since his arrival in England he has been carrying out the work of distributing comforts to New Zealand units, and has also acted as the Board's representative in purchasing gift goods found necessary in the light of investigations made on the spot. Mr. Victor Jones, secretary of the New Zealand Y.M.C.A. in Egypt, was appointed the Board's agent there, and up to the time he resigned to take a commission with the forces he had performed valuable work for the Board in distributing comforts to the New Zealand units in Egypt. Mr. Jones has been succeeded by Mr. F. E. S. Long. The regular reports received from these representatives indicate the value of having actual representatives of the Board with the forces.

When the Second Echelon arrived in England the High Commissioner for New Zealand, with the assistance of voluntary helpers in London, established a War Services Association at his office in the Strand, and valuable assistance was rendered through this Association in distributing gift parcels from New Zealand, and in entertaining New Zealand soldiers on leave in London.

#### DESPATCH AND DISTRIBUTION OF GIFT GOODS.

Part of the Board's activities is the procuring, assembling, sorting, classifying, packing, and arranging transport of gift goods to the various overseas base camps, to overseas transports, and to Navy, Army, and Air Force camps and stations. This work, which is carried out by the Board in Wellington, not only includes the handling of goods purchased in bulk by the Board, but also gift goods from all provinces. Gift library books are assembled in Wellington and classified by the War Library Service, but the responsibility for packing and transporting is in charge of the Board's staff. One interesting part of the work performed in Wellington is carried out by a "Salvage Squad" whose duty it is to reclaim wool from rejected knitted garments, and to apportion the work of reknitting to various organizations. The sorting and packing of gift goods, often at short notice, involves much work. On one occasion 1,160 cases of gift parcels were prepared for despatch within twenty-four hours after notification of the available space had been received, and the next day this was followed by twenty-three cases, representing a total weight of 83 tons of gift goods. The work involved in extra servicing troopships at short notice is indicated by the following typical example of goods placed on board one troopship before leaving New Zealand: 65,000 cigarettes, 1½ reams of blotting-paper, 3,000 books cigarette-papers, 900 song-books, 12½ dozen crib boards, 15 dozen darts, 5 dozen dart-boards, 60 quoit-pegs, 60 sets quoit-rings, 35 dozen draught boards and men, 108,000 envelopes, 8 dozen mouth-organs, 2,000 hymn-books, 1,440 New Testaments, 2,500 games, 60 dozen pencils, 15 gross of pens, 30 gross of nibs, 4 gross of playing-cards, 20 dozen ping-pong balls, 8 dozen ping-pong bats, 15 dozen skipping-ropes, 6 full-length feature films, 288,000 sheets writing-paper, 1,500 books, 2,500 periodicals, 1 battery set to each unit, and 360 cases of apples.

Frequently urgent requisitions on the Board necessitate the calling in of voluntary women workers. Extra work has been carried out on behalf of the Board by Mrs. R. Johnston, who has for sometime given her service continuously in an honorary capacity. In emergencies Mrs. Johnston arranges her own corps of voluntary workers, and the work performed by these ladies is much appreciated. Several packing staffs of leading merchants in Wellington assist the Board with the packing of the goods when required, and this work is arranged by the Wellington Branch of the Packers' Union, headed by Mr. Ramsden, president.

Before troopships depart inquiries are made by the Board's officers regarding the supply of fresh fruit and amenities for troops on the voyage, and additional supplies are arranged where necessary. Accommodation for ship libraries and for gift officers on troopships is also arranged by the Board.

In addition to assistance accorded by staffs of various organizations, valuable help is given to the Board by various firms in providing empty tin-lined cases, required to case goods forwarded to base camps.