

OVERSEA TRANSPORT PER TROOPSHIPS AND HOSPITAL SHIPS.

Despite the adverse shipping conditions existing throughout the year, it was possible up to the Armistice to regularly despatch our Reinforcements overseas and at the same time maintain return of invalids requiring repatriation. Since the Armistice the Dominion has been fortunate in securing a large number of ships, and repatriation has been carried out smoothly and expeditiously.

The numbers carried overseas during the year ended 31st May, 1919, are: Reinforcements to the United Kingdom, 5,718; Reinforcements to Egypt, 893; returned to New Zealand per troopships and liners, 32,340. In addition to the foregoing numbers of the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces there have also been carried some 980 women and 287 children, comprising the wives and families of returned or deceased New Zealand soldiers, and a small number of New Zealand women war workers (V.A.D.s, &c.). Further, small numbers of New-Zealanders ex Imperial Naval and Military Services have also been repatriated during the year by the Imperial Government per many of the vessels concerned.

The number returned to New Zealand per New Zealand hospital ships was 2,299. In addition to this the New Zealand hospital ships "Maheno" and "Marama" have been of great assistance to the Imperial authorities in the carriage of their invalided troops from the East to the United Kingdom during the outward voyage to New Zealand.

DISTRICT ORDNANCE DEPOTS.

During the year the work of the four District Ordnance Officers has been considerably increased. The acceleration of the return of troops subsequent to the cessation of hostilities, the opening and equipping of hospitals, and the educational scheme have all opened up new and important work to be handled in addition to the usual routine. The epidemic caused great dislocation and further hampered our work. The District Ordnance Officers and their respective staffs have risen to the occasion, and are carrying on well.

EXPEDITIONARY FORCE CAMPS.

Featherston.—The control of the greater part of the administrative work of this camp came under the jurisdiction of the Ordnance Branch subsequent to demobilization on the cessation of hostilities. Since that date the demobilization of Home Service details has proceeded automatically with the decrease of work.

The subsidiary camps have been closed, and the buildings at Canvas Camp are being dismantled and removed to Trentham.

Encroachments are now under this branch, and steps are being taken by the Ordnance Officer to collect outstanding accounts and place matters on a sound commercial basis. Certain rented areas have been cleared and rendered fit for return to the lessors. Several properties have been returned to the lessors, and the clearance of the remaining areas is in progress.

Stores on issue to the Machine-gun School have been transferred in part to Machine-gun School of Instruction at Trentham, the balance being distributed between the four districts.

Trentham.—The administrative control of certain portions of this camp was placed under the jurisdiction of the Ordnance Branch. General cleaning up on similar lines as that carried out at Featherston is being proceeded with.

A large staff of artisans is employed on the construction of hospital buildings and general alterations to existing buildings.

In both camps the demobilization of troops and the subsequent cleaning up, stocktaking, and balancing of ledgers have been proceeded with.

Ordnance Workshops, Trentham.—These workshops have been working at full capacity the whole of the period under review, as will be realized by the fact that 16,000 articles were manufactured or repaired during that time, such articles ranging from coffins to tables. This work was carried out in addition to that in connection with new hospitals, and entailed the use of 344,207 super. feet of timber and 25,278 super. feet of three-ply.

A large quantity of musketry equipment and office furniture is manufactured here, thus saving the need to go to the outside market and purchase at inflated prices.

Machinery for a second-class Ordnance workshop has been ordered through the High Commissioner, London.

Hospital-construction.—On the 9th January, 1919, the Ordnance Branch took over from the Railways and Works Department, Trentham. With the taking-over from that Department was included the maintenance of Trentham Camp and alterations to several hutments into hospital accommodation. The hospital alterations were as follows: Ten hutments, 22 ft. by 140 ft., lined and converted into hospital wards, with necessary kitchen, Duty Sister's room, and lavatory accommodation; four and a half hutments into cubicle accommodation for Sisters, Nurses, and V.A.D.s; dining and sitting rooms for Sisters and V.A.D.s; also self-contained kitchen for the female staff employed in Trentham Military Hospital. In addition to the above, provision has been made for X-ray plant and plaster-room. Alterations have also been effected in the operating-theatre.

A new septic tank has been constructed capable of dealing with the sewerage of 1,000 persons.

Owing to the difficulty of obtaining skilled carpenters and plumbers the progress of the work has been somewhat slow.

Further works have been carried out for educational and vocational training. Huts 114, 115, 116, 117, 143, and 144 have been fitted out for training in carpentry, tailoring, bootmaking, commercial training, book-keeping, basketmaking, leather-work, surgical boots and splint making; while, in addition, provision is made for teaching acetone welding. Provision is also being made to install a hot-water system for the new hospital quarters.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING IN CAMPS.

Trentham.—The lighting at this camp is supplied from a steam-driven engine and 100 kw. generator. This lighting-set is in good condition, but the boiler has outlived its usefulness and requires