



FIRE BOMB

This German incendiary bomb was dropped on Liverpool but failed to go off. Minus its thermite charge, it was sent to this country for study at General Electric laboratories at Schenectady.

MEDICINE

Transfusions of Old Blood May Cause Reaction

TRANSFUSIONS with blood from "blood banks" may cause more or less serious reactions in patients, if the blood used has been "on deposit" too long, states a London surgeon, Dr. E. C. O. Jewesbury. As quoted in the *Journal of the American Medical Society* (Aug. 23). Dr. Jewesbury reports untoward symptoms ranging in severity from simple fever of 100 degrees to "fever with a definite rigor."

These symptoms sometimes occur also after transfusions of fresh blood, but are more frequent when stored blood more than ten days old is used. In a few cases, an outbreak of skin rash was noted, and there was one case of jaundice. Principal cause of the trouble seems to be the breakdown of old red blood cells. Proper preservatives at least partially offset this.

The London doctor points out that there is now less occasion to depend on stored blood, "as plasma or serum, which can be stored for months, can be given as an emergency measure when whole stored blood is not available."

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PSYCHIATRY

Men Who Break in Army Life Problem to Army Physicians

More Than Half the Beds in Military Hospitals Are Filled With Patients With Neuropsychiatric Ills

MEN UNFIT psychologically to stand up under the discipline and emotional strain of military life but who have gotten by the watchful eyes of selective service medical officers are now proving a burden to the medical service of the Army.

These men, many of them, are not "crazy." But they simply cannot make good in close association with other men, under strict discipline, and "roughing it." They break and go into a hospital bed.

More than half the beds in military hospitals in the United States are occupied by patients with nervous or mental diseases, according to Lieut. Col. William C. Porter, of the U. S. Army Medical Corps. These beds are often urgently needed for physically ill men.

The Army has no provision at present for any sort of limited service for these men after they have partially recovered. For this reason, they must be kept in the hospital until they are discharged from the service or until their recovery is complete enough so that they can return to full duty.

Col. Porter estimates that about one-fourth of all the beds in well established general hospitals in the Army are occupied continuously by such patients, keeping the space immobilized for any other purpose.

It is not easy to discharge a soldier of the United States Army for military disability. His rights must be protected. His claims to compensation considered. Often it may take as long as two or three months to get a man who has broken down completely out of the service and out of his hospital bed. Medical facilities, each month, are tied up to the extent of thousands of patient-days.

A remedy for the situation is seen by some psychiatrists in a provision for limited service for men convalescing from a nervous breakdown or for those who appear to be approaching the breaking point.

This plan is already being used successfully by the British and Canadian forces where there is a greater shortage

of man-power than we seem likely to face.

Victims of stomach ulcer also should have a period of light duty following a severe attack, it has been suggested. This illness is due, partly at least, to nervous strain. The stomach ulcer patient is not the sort of individual who tries to get out of doing his duty in the Army. Typically, they are intense, conscientious hard workers whose attacks may have been brought on by excesses of work and worry. A let-up may be their only hope of remaining useful in the Army. Yet it is not necessary for them to take up needed space in the hospital.

British and Canadian practice is to put the man with peptic ulcer on light duty. If he breaks again there, he is sent home.

This is a serious problem with the British, for stomach ulcers and other similar peptic disorders disable more men than any other medical cause. About one-fourth of all medical cases are peptic cases. Apparently, in this war, as in days of old, an Army marches on its stomach.

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ZOOLOGY

Arctic Reindeer Healthier Than Domestic Cattle

REINDEER in the Canadian Arctic, transplanted a few years ago from the Alaskan herds, are much healthier than stabled domestic cattle, and they are thriving and multiplying at a great rate, Dr. Seymour Hadwen of the Ontario Research Foundation told members of the American Veterinary Medical Association meeting at Indianapolis.

Tuberculosis and contagious abortion, twin plagues of cattle in civilized countries, do not trouble the reindeer, Dr. Hadwen stated. Average age at mating, for does, is two years, though some large and rapidly developing individuals mate when they are one year old. In a well-managed herd on a good range, a herd doubles in three years.

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