

"The interests of the British Rheumatic Association are, of course, national in scope, and I understand that the Association is exploring the possibility of similar hostels in other areas. I can only say that the Ministry welcomes such experiments and will watch keenly and be ready to learn from the results.

"In the public services, including the National Health Service for which my Ministry is responsible, we would all admit that there are *some* gaps that need bridging and in connection with this very wide problem of medical industrial rehabilitation I am confident that the Piercy Committee, which has been set up by the Minister of Labour, will consider most carefully the memoranda and suggestions submitted by the various voluntary organisations interested in the disabled—and not least the carefully prepared evidence submitted by the British Rheumatic Association."

### Goat's Milk as a Medicinal Cure.

ARRANGEMENTS WHICH HAVE JUST BEEN completed between the National Milk Testing Service and the Sussex County Goat Club for samples of goat's milk to be tested for cleanliness and keeping quality, is a new forward step in the rapidly expanding use of this food in the successful treatment of one of the most stubborn and unpleasant physical ailments—eczema—affecting all types, but particularly children.

Infantile eczema, especially, a trying and distressing complaint, is widespread, as doctors and nurses and parents are well aware. For years, with divided expert opinions as to causes and treatment, there has never been any common method of attempting cures.

Some time ago, however, some doctors formed the view that the skin eruptions were due to an allergy to various foods. At a large Midlands hospital, where experiments were being made and applied, a children's specialist, Dr. Williams, felt that cow's milk might be the cause. Having a child eight months old, who responded to no type of treatment prescribed, in his charge, the specialist, who had apparently heard of cases in which goat's milk had proved successful, arranged with Mr. Gilbert Harris, M.R.S. (G.B.), of Rugby, a recognised authority, to be supplied with goat's milk daily as a new method of treatment. Dr. Williams and Mr. Harris reported subsequently that within three days, the inflammation around the eczema patches had almost disappeared, that irritation was rapidly subsiding, and that at the end of 33 days the child had no sign of eczema remaining.

#### Two Years' Treatments.

It was realised that nothing could be deduced from a single case. In consequence, arrangements were made with recognised and qualified practitioners and nurses on the one hand, and members of established goat clubs on the other, to make available further milk supplies for a wider variety of cases. This has now been used in treatment for more than two years, and the British Goat Society and its various member-clubs are now in possession of an accumulation of impressive data from nearly every part of the country indicating the curative effects of goat's milk not only in the treatment of eczema, but also under given conditions in asthma and in tuberculosis. In some instances, hospital authorities are now contracting with goatkeepers for the supply of the necessary quantities of milk for such patients, and it is largely for the reason that this new step towards testing for cleanliness and keeping quality has been taken.

For all those, whether they be medical practitioners or nurses or members of the general public, who desire it, further information, advice and names and addresses of those who can supply goat's milk will be made available either through local clubs and societies, or by contact with the British Goat Society, whose headquarters are at Diss, Norfolk.

### Women as Emergency Reservists.

THE WAR OFFICE announces that the recruiting of Emergency Reservists in Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps will begin on Thursday, 1st July. 1,500 officers and other ranks are needed for service in General Hospitals and Casualty Clearing Stations at home and abroad in the event of a national emergency.

Volunteers will receive pay and allowances for the completion of a 15-day training period annually, and in most cases will be eligible for an annual bounty. Commissions may be granted to State Registered Nurses under the age of 40, and to ex-officers of the Army Nursing Services up to 52 years of age. Enlistment as other ranks is open to ex-service women of Q.A.R.A.N.C., W.R.A.C., A.T.S., and V.A.D., who have qualifications in one of the following occupations: Clerk (R.A.M.C.), Dispenser, Laboratory technician, Nursing orderly, operating theatre technician, Physiotherapist, Radiographer, Transfusion orderly.

The Army Emergency Reserve is made up of highly trained men and women in specialised occupations who are on call to fill key positions in the Army in the event of a national emergency. In most cases they undertake 15 days' training every year with an Army formation.

### Use of Ambulance Service.

A REVIEW OF THE WORKING of the Ambulance Service has been called for by the Minister of Health, Mr. Iain MacLeod. Because of the continued rise in its cost, local health authorities, who operate the service, have been asked to study the operational side, and hospital authorities have been asked to look at their arrangements for making calls on ambulances.

In a circular to local health authorities the Minister states that it is clear that, in spite of the suggestions made in 1951 for restricting calls on the service, demands on ambulances have continued to rise. Believing they would welcome any advice which might reduce the cost without prejudice to an adequate service, the Minister says that he has decided to conduct a limited series of local surveys covering both the organisation of the service, and hospital demands. An ambulance adviser and a medical officer of the Ministry will visit local health authorities and the hospitals they serve, and any conclusions drawn from their enquiries, together with any recommendations, will be conveyed to both sides.

While it is hoped that these surveys will help in the areas in which they are undertaken, it is pointed out that they can, of course, only supplement the authorities' own efforts to keep down costs.

The Minister commends a number of suggestions. A major factor of rising costs in the increasing demand from hospital out-patients' departments; so in replacing vehicles there appeared to be advantages, other things being equal, in ordering types designed primarily for sitting patients provided they could also be used to take a stretcher case when needed.

Rail transport, while being more economical, was often, the Minister was advised, more suitable for patients (both sitting and stretcher) travelling long distances. Subject to 24 hours' notice, the railway authorities were prepared to provide special accommodation on most main lines.

The hospital authorities, for their part, have been asked to pay particular attention to such points as making one officer responsible for all calls made on the Ambulance Service by a hospital or group of hospitals; and to prevent a waste of time and of vehicles by neglecting to inform the ambulance control or the patients of unexpected changes in regular out-patient appointments.

It is also mentioned that sometimes patients are discharged from different wards at different times of the same day although going to the same area, thus resulting in unnecessary ambulance journeys.

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