

1953, in the number of student nurses. The position is most serious on the female side, where trained nurses represent only 37 per cent. of the overall nursing force, compared with 70 per cent. on the male side.

There was during the year again a reduction in the incidence of and death-rate from specific illnesses. The number of fresh cases of tuberculosis among patients was the lowest ever recorded, as was the death-rate from the same disease. Dysentery, "once the scourge of mental hospitals" also had the lowest recorded incidence.

The reduction in the incidence and death-rate of certain specific illnesses may be taken as a general indication of improvement all-round in the health of patients. "It is a matter for congratulation that in spite of the continuance of over-crowding the health returns continue to show improvement year by year."

Western European Union.

Recommendations of the Joint Committee on Rehabilitation and Resettlement of the Disabled.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE driving of motor vehicles by amputees and paraplegics and on the rehabilitation of the mentally disabled were agreed by the Western European Union Joint Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of the Disabled whose first meeting ended in London on Friday, 30th September.

The meeting of the Joint Committee, which was opened on 27th September by Sir Walter Monckton, Minister of Labour and National Service, was the first on which representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy had met together in any of the Committees on Social Affairs with those of the old Brussels Treaty Powers—Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Mr. Franco Bounous, the leader of the Italian Delegation, speaking on behalf of the two new member countries, said that they looked forward to fruitful co-operation in the Western European Union Committee.

Mr. P. H. St. John Wilson, Under Secretary, Ministry of Labour and National Service, and head of the United Kingdom Delegation, presided over the meeting.

Transport for Amputees and Paraplegics.

The Joint Committee recommended to the Government that special rules be established in the interest of disabled drivers as well as other road users. These included:

1. The further provision of two-wheel chairs, one for use indoors and the other outdoors, for severely disabled persons such as paraplegics if required by their physical condition; also the provision of a light carriage, with or without motor, according to the nature of the amputation for those who have double amputations of the lower limbs so as to enable them to obtain work or retain their employment;
2. the granting of a driving licence to amputees and paraplegics subject to the establishment of their ability to drive by practical tests in the operation of the vehicle;
3. because of the nature of the design and construction of the vehicles, the fixing of a speed limit for motorised light carriages driven by amputees and paraplegics.

The Committee also decided to encourage the setting up of an international movement for the exchange of suggestions and views concerning the nature of the motor vehicles provided for disabled persons and the methods for controlling them. These suggestions and views would be collated and would be sent to manufacturers of vehicles and to interested parties and organisations concerned with the disabled.

Rehabilitation of the Mentally Disabled.

The Joint Committee recommended four ways of helping, either by legislation or other means, those whose mental

handicap was such that they were unlikely to benefit fully from normal educational methods and might find difficulty in obtaining suitable work. These were:

1. A systematic identification of those suffering from mental disability as early as possible;
2. special instructional, educational and vocational training facilities provided for those who are in need of them;
3. every effort to be made to provide employment for them, preferably in ordinary conditions but, if necessary, in sheltered conditions;
4. moral and financial support in all cases as necessary.

Future Programme.

The Committee considered their future programme in the light of what had already been done and decided to deal at their next meeting with the following new subjects:

1. Rehabilitation of disabled children in relation to their subsequent resettlement;
2. rehabilitation of the neurotic;
3. rehabilitation of those suffering from brain injuries;
4. methods and practical problems of resettlement.

Visits to Rehabilitation Establishments.

Before the final meeting of the Joint Committee, visits were paid to establishments dealing with the rehabilitation and resettlement of the disabled. Some of the delegates saw the work of the Industrial Rehabilitation and Government Training Centre at Waddon, near Croydon. Others went to the Queen Mary's Hospital at Roehampton and to the Duchess of Gloucester House, Isleworth. The delegates showed great interest in the work being done at these establishments and had special praise for the work of the limb fitting section at Queen Mary's Hospital.

The Christmas Season.

ONCE AGAIN the Christmas season approaches, and with it the desire to find the best and most attractive cards with which to greet our friends.

Thus we welcome the charming Christmas cards issued by the Grenfell Association of Great Britain and Ireland, for which our friends have been so pleased. Our readers know of the wonderful work carried on by the Grenfell Mission in Labrador.

The Grenfell Mission carries on along a thousand-mile coastline, ice-bound for many months each year: four hospitals, one children's home, two boarding schools, one supply vessel, six nursing stations, one day school, two hospital ships and other smaller boats.

Clothing distribution, industrial and agricultural centres at all stations.

Further information about the work of the Grenfell Association may be obtained from the Secretary, Grenfell Association, 66 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

We give particulars of this year's new Christmas cards:—

(a) "The Nativity." Photograph in colour by Betty Fyfe, with greetings inside, price with envelope 9d. each.

(b) "Englee," a lovely Christmas scene in colour, price with envelope 1s.

(c) "Homeward Bound." Water-colour by Stephen Honneton, price with envelope 7d. each.

(d) "Save me one." A sketch in black, red and white of a little Eskimo child and a seal. Price with envelope 3d. each.

Orders for private printing are accepted: Name and address in black, 9s. 6d. first dozen, 2s. per extra dozen. If more than one style of card is required to be printed an additional charge of 2s. 6d. per design is made. Please state printing instructions separately.

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