It is essential that the practical nature of this training and the background in which the work will be carried out are made clear to the student before training commences and from this point of view the introductory talk must be presented vividly. If the imagination is captured in this early phase the task is made easier for both tutor and trainee, and if a field demonstration can be arranged during the second week of training the sense of realism is maintained to advantage.

It is also important to arrange training so that each recruit assists a medical officer in certain techniques such as the putting up of an intravenous drip. By this means the recruit learns to anticipate the medical officer’s wishes in such things as positioning the patient.

In teaching the procedures of support treatment reference to general nursing care is automatic and, in fact, when the syllabus is analysed the only items of the nursing orderly, class III syllabus which are not included are the preparation and serving of meals, the giving of steam inhalations and of hot and cold local applications. The course can therefore be an excellent method of preparation for or revision of nursing orderly, class III training.

The response so far has been most encouraging not only by virtue of the enthusiasm of the recruits but also by the way in which the average man acquires practical skill in carrying out even the more advanced procedures after one demonstration. This initial success has already fostered a further development as the recruit course at the Depot and Training Establishment will shortly be extended from ten to sixteen weeks, during which the present courses of basic training, nursing orderly, class III and support treatment will be integrated. This should make the task of instruction easier as the student will have a greater knowledge before approaching the practical procedures which, in turn, will be carried out at the most appropriate places within the whole syllabus. Training in support treatment does not end after the initial course; there must be constant revision of and practice in the procedures after leaving the Depot if proficiency is to be maintained.

R.A.M.C. APPRENTICES SCHOOL

BY

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Readers of this Journal are accustomed to look upon its pages as a source of information on military medical and allied subjects, coupled with reports on field exercises of the past, present and future trends. Never has the writer seen in its pages anything on one of the most important developments in the Corps, namely “The R.A.M.C. Apprentices School.” It is therefore considered to be a suitable topic for publication in this the Diamond Jubilee number.
R.A.M.C. Apprentices School

History

The R.A.M.C. Apprentices School was opened at the Depot in September, 1955, and placed under the command of the Commandant, The Depot and Training Establishment, as an integral part of the Corps, and is designed to train up to eighty boys. Much thought was given to the selection of its staff and the provision of suitable accommodation. It is now one of the most interesting and progressive schools of the Army.

Aim

The aim is to train boys to become the future senior N.C. Os., warrant officers, and non-medical officers of the Corps. The basis of training is the development of character, leadership, and educational attainment to enable these boys to be useful members of the R.A.M.C. and to follow a trade.

Conditions of entry

Boys are selected between the ages of 15 and 16\frac{1}{2} years of age from British subjects all over the world whether or not they have any military connections. They must be of good character, medically fit, and must pass the Army Apprentices Examination. Final selection is based on a headmaster’s report and the gradings given by a personnel selection officer.

Environment

The school is situated in the country within the Depot R.A.M.C. and is run on much the same lines as any good grammar school. Boys are allocated to Houses named after distinguished members of the Corps, for example Martin-Leake, Chavasse and Harden houses.

The boys are housed in huddled accommodation which is centrally heated, and is bright in colour. They have a lounge or common room, restaurant, library, games room and television room. Adjacent to this building are classrooms, model ward, laboratory and hobbies room, all of which are well equipped and furnished.

Curriculum

The aim is to enable a boy to obtain his Army First Class Certificate of Education or the General Certificate of Education, qualify as a nursing orderly, class III, and pass the Corporals Course for promotion. This is achieved by a well thought out syllabus and a boy can obtain these qualifications in about two years. In the syllabus for nursing orderly, class III, boys are trained in support treatment. By the time these boys leave they can be considered as suitable material for selection as laboratory technicians, hygiene assistants, index student nurses, radiographers, clerks, physiotherapists, storemen (technical) and operating theatre technicians. Their future progress is largely dependent on the interest taken by the medical units to which they are posted on leaving the school. Since its foundation 60 boys have taken up trades as follows:
Hygiene assistant 16, student nurse 15, clerk 15, physiotherapist 5, laboratory technician 4, storeman (technical) 1, radiographer 2 and operating theatre technician 2. It is interesting to note that eighteen of these boys had passed in addition to Class I Education from one up to eight subjects at G.C.E. level.

**Sporting activities**

All boys are encouraged to play games and to lead an active life. This year competing with other Apprentices Schools larger in numbers they have won the cup for the Minor Units section of the Army Boys’ Cross-country Championships and the Army Boys’ Rugby Championship. Since its formation they have also won the R.A.M.C. Depot Inter-Company Small Bore Shoot and were runners-up in the Young Soldiers’ Shoot of the Army Small Bore Championship.

**Outward Bound training**

Each week-end sees half of the school engaged in some form of Outward Bound training such as rock climbing, cliff rescue, canoeing, hiking, camping, map reading and initiative exercises designed to develop self-reliance and powers of leadership. The Duke of Edinburgh Award has recently been introduced into the school.

**Hobbies**

These are an essential and integral part of the boys’ training. Excellent facilities are provided for carpentry, model making, photography, art, amateur dramatics and musical appreciation.

**Speech day**

This is held during Corps Week and is equivalent to “Speech Day” at a civilian school. It is held in the evening and the next day is a day open to all parents to meet the staff, discuss their sons’ futures and visit the school. This year Speech Day was Saturday, 28th June, and on Sunday, 29th June, the school was open to the general public.

**Conclusion**

Although the school is essentially a military school, its aim is that of a first-class civilian boarding school where educational attainment, development of character, and leadership are given priority. We look upon these boys as the future backbone of the Corps and those of us who have seen them at work and play have no doubt in our minds that they will take their places as non-medical officers of the Corps via its senior N.C.O. and warrant officer ladder. Selection is based on quality rather than quantity, and because of the insistence on a good standard of entry the tone of the school is high.