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Physical Restoration of Our War Heroes

**Methods Employed by the Invalided Soldiers' Commission,
Whereby Patients are Led to Cure Themselves**

THE nation will ultimately win in this great struggle which is best able to use her men again. Authorities throughout the fighting world have concurred in this prediction, and in preparation for the reconstruction period with its fight for trade and industrial supremacy. The belligerent countries are already engaged in the great work of rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation is a many-sided problem, but the phase which dwarfs all others and demands primary consideration is the physical restoration of the war cripples. Disabilities must be reduced to minimum. Surgery and medical skill have done their best for many soldiers and left them still sadly incapacitated, facing a lifelong dependence upon relatives or the uncertain lot of a public charge. To meet the needs of these men, medical experts and psychologists have evolved a new science, functional re-education, which even in its infancy has achieved results which have aroused the "doubting Thomases" to controversy.

Hart House, turned over to Dr. Edward A. Bott of University of Toronto by the Massey estate for the development of this work, has become the "House of Hope" to scores of war-wrecked soldiers suffering from paralysis and other functional difficulties attendant upon wounds which destroyed muscles or nerves. Here lethargy and despair are routed and the elixir of new life injected. From the discards upon whom surgeons have exhausted their skill and other practitioners puzzled in vain, the Hart House workers are raising new men.

Some men come from the hospitals in Toronto to be given special treatment prescribed by the Medical Officer in charge, others are sent to see what one of these new phases of post-operative treatment may be able to do for them. It is a recognized fact that many men who under the usual course of treatment would be invalids for many months following operations, and in some cases might never fully recover, are being restored in a few weeks.

Departments of mechano-therapy, electro-therapy, hydro-therapy, remedial gymnastics, games and massage have been organized, each contributing to the success of the institution in treating the multitude of injuries peculiar to war wounds. Every man is a problem in himself. He may have received a gunshot wound which did exactly the same damage as in a previous case, but affecting him nervously in such a different way, that a whole new process must be evolved to restore him.

The work at Hart House, inaugurated last year to invent and perfect mechanical devices which would give the proper movement to particular muscles, has reached the point where the devices answer the needs of most cases; but to supplement the curative effect of the machines, men usually must be mentally renovated as well. This becomes an individual problem.

All the mechano-therapy apparatus at Hart House by which exercise is directly applied to any muscle or set of muscles in the body, is fitted with metrical devices which record the daily improvement and stimulate the patient to greater endeavor and continued interest. The most simple devices, such as finger treadmills, rolling-pins and pulley weights have been employed in the arm room, and in the department for leg treatments, bicycles, bed springs, and little hurdles are just as effective as the complicated Zandar machines.

The ability of a firmly established belief in the impotence of an arm to cause complete paralysis of the member when there is no physical reason why it should not function properly is proven in several cases, and the work of the Hart House experts in such instances is to discover the basis of the belief and convince the patient of his error. Long months of convalescence from bad wounds have imbedded the idea in the minds of some patients that they cannot use the members properly, and to meet this need games have been found very efficacious. In the heat of competition a man filled with a



Top—(left) one armed typist with great speed record. (centre) Testing a mechano-therapy apparatus.

Below—Sliding pedals, whereby a good leg forces movements of weaker one.

A special department under Capt. Smith is devoted to the treatment of amputation cases and games the like of which the beautiful quarters designed to house the 'Varsity sports and student activities will never see again, are played by men minus arms and legs.

Men who lose arms or legs overseas are fitted with artificial limbs by the Invalided Soldiers' Commission, free of cost, and supplied with new limbs as they are needed for the duration of their lives, but to wear any artificial limb successfully requires preparation. One big difficulty is the problem of retaining "the stump," or remaining portion of the amputated limb, in its natural strength until it is ready to be fitted with an artificial limb. Inaction causes the stump to waste and lose its strength, and so the muscles are unable to control the artificial member when it is attached. Special appliances have been devised at Hart House by which a man may play tennis, billiards, squash racquets, and tether tennis by means of a harness arrangement and clamp, which fastens the tennis racquet or specially constructed billiard cue to the patient's stump. Leg amputations play ten pins by another device with which the patient swings the ball. Through such treatment a man is ready to master his new leg in a fraction of the time usually required, and with no discomfort.

Extensions of the work of Hart House are to be made this spring, and the big sun-lighted swimming-pool which has just been completed will be the centre of the hydro-therapy department. Electro-therapy and massage, which are important agents in the treatment of orthopaedic cases, will also be extended.

That the work carried on at Hart House under Dr. Bott may be introduced into all the hospitals for military convalescents, apparatus is being manufactured at the industries, run by the Invalided Soldiers' Commission at Guelph, sufficient to supply the equipment necessary.

A corps of young women volunteer workers, under the direction of a matron specially trained in the work, has been a big factor in the success of the treatment. It is their duty to work with the patient in his treatment, watch his development, and keep his courage up. Much of the work is tedious for the men, and a second person's interest is often the turning point between success and failure. Functional education is primarily a method by which a patient is led to cure himself.

Spirit of the Maimed

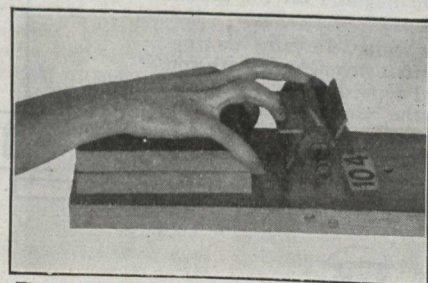
THE sight of so many missing arms and legs and the early efforts at manipulating the substitute ones, is distressing, to say the least. The cheerfulness of these men is simply unbelievable. Sympathy is the unkindest thing you have to offer them.

"Aw, we don't want sympathy," one young chap struggling bravely with the job of "breaking in" his new leg, remarked to a visitor recently—"My Peggy" (the nickname given their artificial legs) "is coming along fine, and she'll soon be as good as the one I left overseas."

"Why, I might have been blinded or shell-shocked, or got tuberculosis. Bill, here," pointing to his Highland companion with an empty sleeve which he was twirling and an upturned trouser leg, "he tried to hog the whole bloomin' shell."

"Come on over and look at our 'corks.'" (another pet name for the artificial legs) one hollered across the hall to a chum.

A suggestion of humor hangs with the sign at the entrance to each ward: "Ladies will kindly arrange to stay out after 9 p.m."



Finger treadmill for impaired muscular action

sium is one of the most interesting departments of the institution, and one which appeals particularly to the men.

Here, the old parallel bars, horizontals, the punching bag, the "horses" and other familiar gymnasium apparatus, are sharing the honors with newly invented pieces of equipment in the work of restoration. The wands, dumb-bells, and Indian clubs are swung to gramophone music, and

the patients are given folk dancing—all to a purpose, even though the gay good humor of the men under treatment might belie the altogether scientific basis for every movement. This treatment, as simple as health itself, is working miracles.

There are a series of game rooms in which shuttle-cock, badminton, squash racquets, basket ball, hand ball, and tether tennis provide the proper natural exercise demanded for various cases, and stimulate the interest of the men in their treatment. Here they use the added strength gained day by day, and lost initiative is restored by the competition. Men of similar disability are pitted against each other, and each is stimulated by the accomplishments of the other.