

## "The New Year and the Disabled Man" Discussed by Writer in Legion Weekly

Says: "Prospects for 1921 Forecast Improved But Still Inadequate Treatment for America's War Cripples."

If you desire to know just what is being done for the disabled ex-service men of the World War, the following article by J. W. Rixey Smith, published in the December issue of The American Legion Weekly, official publication of the American Legion, will provide that information in plain and simple language, presented by one who knows the conditions as they really are. The Winnetka Legion Post's proposed Cabaret Ball, January 28, 1921, is to be given for the express purpose of securing funds to further this most urgent and obviously deserving service to the sick and disabled veterans of the World War. The article in full, reads as follows:

By J. W. Rixey Smith

It would be small comfort to a man lost deep in a dismal swamp to reflect that just on its outskirts there ran a fine macadam boulevard. For the moment he would trade all the broad stone highways in the world for a single dry, safe path out of the marshes.

So it is with the disabled veteran of the World War. Entwined in a thousand legislative difficulties, surrounded on all sides by administrative red tape and inefficiency, confused and dazed by the multiplicity and duplicity of sign posts in his wilderness of suffering, he has little ear for the sweet music of promises that some day everything will clear up and be all right. For one thing, he may die in the meantime.

He takes little stock in the announcement that Congress is to be asked for many millions of dollars with which to build hospitals for him that will be ready in 1925. He sees Tucson, Ariz., where the tubercular ex-service men, pre-possessed of the idea that there in the arid Southwest is the way out to health and happiness, in the meantime crowd for what medical care and attention can be given them in tents, shacks and shanties.

He sees state institutions for the insane, sometimes for the criminally insane, in which mentally disabled ex-service men are crowded into left-over spaces, farmed out to be given such treatment as the local authorities care to provide for \$2.50 or \$3 a day.

He sees the 8,267 tubercular ex-service men in hospitals and wonders how many of the other 38,033 discharged from the service with the disease are, wandering the streets, shifting for themselves as best they may.

He sees the 5,351 nervous and mental casualties in hospitals and insane asylums and asks himself what is happening to the 71,237 others similarly afflicted who are not in hospital.

He sees the 6,297 general and surgical cases under treatment and remembers the hundreds of thousands of others discharged with general disabilities and ponders on what may be coming to them. Hospitals in 1925, yes, but what of the heart-burning days ahead of 1925?

Neither does there appear as a lamp to his weary, stumbling feet the promise that there are to be new laws in his behalf, laws that will consolidate into one piece of effective machinery the different government agencies charged with his care, laws that will cut away some of the underbrush that clogs his way to compensation and vocational training, laws that will remove many of the cumbersome technicalities that cling to his feet when he tries to move forward.

"All very fine," he says, "and I hope they will help the man who comes next, but what about me? I am the problem. I am Tom Jones who has waited three months, six months, nine months, a year, written a hundred letters and filled in a hundred forms, but am still penniless and helpless. I am Sam Browne who has dragged himself to the Government door dozens of times seeking a way out through vocational training and now am 'turned down' or 'pending.' I am John Smith who has been sick since last June, who has begged a bed from the Government and have it not. What about me?"

The problem of the disabled ex-service man for 1921 is an immediate emergency. When the National Commander and the Committee on Hospitalization and Vocational Training of the American Legion met in Washington last month with representatives of the Government bureaus handling the disabled man's affairs, they appreciated this. Though they worked hard on an ultimate program of bureau consolidation and law revision, they served notice that Government officials involved should and would be held to the strictest accountability for a liberal construction and effective administration of such laws as existed or might be immediately passed for the disabled man.

"With the house on fire," the Le-

gion's representative said, "we are perfectly willing to help design a new fire engine, but we most assuredly expect and demand that the firemen on the job shall utilize the one they now have to the limit during this emergency."

The three government agencies charged with the welfare of the disabled ex-service men are asking Congress to appropriate at this session \$323,000,000 for their work for the next fiscal year. The Bureau of War Risk Insurance is asking \$160,000,000 with which to pay compensation claims, the Federal Board for Vocational Education is asking \$78,000,000 for its task of rehabilitation, and the Public Health Service \$50,000,000 for rehospitalization and \$35,000,000 for the erection of new hospitals. The bureaus, will, of course, work on June 30, 1921.

Since hospitalization and beds for disabled ex-service men are the most dire need in the emergency, what the Public Health Service is doing and planning to do in the matter of opening up and running Government hospitals in the present and the immediate future is of transcending interest and importance. It has already placed nearly nine thousand men in fifty-two of its own hospitals.

There are in addition, 5,658 new Public Health Service beds in immediate or future prospect, 2,375 of which are for tubercular ex-service patients, 100 for mental ex-service patients and 3,183 for general ex-service patients.

There are fifteen Public Health Service hospitals taken over or about to be taken over to be run for the disabled ex-service men. They are No. 51, at Tucson, Ariz., now being enlarged for 200 tubercular patients; No. 54, at Arrowhead Springs, Cal., being enlarged for 118 tubercular patients; Camp Kearney hospital, Linda Vista, Cal., taken over for 987 tubercular patients; Army Hospital, Oteen, N. C., taken over for 1,100 tubercular patients; Lenwood Hotel Hospital, Augusta, Ga., to be opened January 1 for 100 mental patients; Carville, la., hospital for lepers (only two ex-service leper cases have so far been discovered); Lake City, Fla., Hospital, opened November for 200 general patients; Boise, Idaho, Hospital,

being enlarged for 200 general patients; Speedway Hospital, Chicago, to be ready in five months for 843 general patients; Altamont Hospital, Newport, Ky., to be ready in January for 200 patients; Aberdeen Hospital, St. Paul, Minn., to be ready January 1 for 300 general patients; Fort William Harrison Hospital, Helena, Mont., opened November for 100 general patients; Fox Hills Army Hospital, Staten Island, N. Y., taken over November for 1,000 general patients; Corpus Christi Hospital, Corpus Christi, Tex., to be ready in six months for 200 general patients. These hospital beds provided will bring the total number of Public Health Service beds available for disabled ex-service men up to approximately 15,000. Where will the rest of the 30,000 disabled ex-service men estimated as needing beds during the year be put?

There is the rub. Several thousands of them may be able to get government hospital beds in National Soldier's Homes or in Army and Navy hospitals and the remainder will be put in contract beds wherever they may be had in private and state institutions and hospitals. It is promised that the 600 beds now available in Soldier's Homes at Johnson City, Tenn., Dayton, Ohio, and Marion, Ind., will be increased to 2,000. There is little promise, however, that the 2,300 Government beds now available in Army and Navy hospitals can be increased in number.

New York state has appropriated \$3,000,000 to build a 1,000 bed hospital for neuro-psychiatric patients on Long Island, but even though the work is carried on night and day, as it is promised, the hospital cannot be depended on as available for 1921. The state of Oklahoma may follow New York's example, but that hospital is even more in the future than New York's. It looks, then, very much as if ten thousand or more sick and disabled veterans will continue during the months to come to be tucked away by the district supervisors of the Public Health Service here and there and everywhere in any old beds that can be rigged up for \$.50 or 25¢ a day.

The only way out of it, so far as hospital beds for the disabled is concerned, is for the Public Health Service to take over more hospitals and run them. It may not be able to build them, but there is nothing to stop the service from leasing as many as it can lay its hands on. If hotels could be found at Augusta, Ga., Newport, Ky., and New York City that could be turned into hospitals, why cannot they be found elsewhere? If Doctors and nurses can

be found for these men in private institutions, why cannot they be found for them in Government hospitals? Since the Army has hospitals in which there are 5,000 beds that would be available if it could employ additional personnel and make alterations, why not take them over?

Perhaps next in importance after hospital beds for disabled is the matter of Government compensation. One Hundred and ninety thousand claims turned down and eighty thousand pending!

The Bureau of War Risk Insurance says that the average length of time it takes for a compensation claim to be put through from the first paper to the first check is about two months, and that only two weeks intervenes in the regular course of events between the time the papers in the case are completed and the check goes out. They say that they hope to shorten these periods of time; that, in fact, they are doing it all the time. They admit, however, that many of what they term "tough" cases remain unsettled after three, six, nine and twelve months.

They assert that they will have cleared their slates of all pending and unsettled cases by January 1, and that they will then be in a position to handle claims submitted day by day. But this is all Greek to the man in Wayside, Minnesota (who has been flat on his back for nine months and whose papers have flitted merrily back and forth without bringing him a cent.

Vocational education and rehabilitation for disabled soldiers of the World War will, during the coming twelve months, be judged by its fruits. Up to the present time only 1,800 men have completed their training and 1,800 more been placed in positions as a result of training, so that one can hardly say whether the \$90,000,000 appropriated to the board for this year is getting hoped for results or not. There are now 60,000 men in training, however, thousands of whom are expected to complete their re-education and start out in life anew during the year. Eight thousand men are being trained while they are mending in hospitals. The board is maintaining 110 local branch offices throughout the country in addition to its 14 regional offices, and reports indicate that it is in much closer contact with the disabled men it serves than any other of the government agencies, for vocational training is now decided right in the field.

Immediate relief that is being sought from the present session of Congress as first-aid legislation to help the Bureau of War Risk Insurance, the Vocational Board and the Public Health Service do their work for the disabled men covers many of the unfortunate situations in which the world is now involved by reason of jokers, inconsistencies and deficiencies in the existing laws. The changes asked immediately are:

The power to give hospital treatment to all ex-service men with disabilities traceable to the service, regardless of the degree of disability.

The right of the Federal Board for Vocational Education to furnish medical care and treatment to all men in training, a right denied by a decision of the Comptroller of the Treasury.

Authority for the War and Navy Departments to spend the necessary amounts for additional personnel and equipment in army and naval hospitals for looking after ex-service patients, the departments to be reimbursed from the appropriation for hospitalization of ex-service men.

Provision for the payment of a flat \$100 monthly allowance, with the several sums allowed for dependents, to all men taking vocational training.

The privilege of vocational training for all disabled men drawing compensation from the Bureau of War Risk Insurance, regardless of the question of a vocational handicap.

In addition to these changes in the law to meet the present emergency situation, the consolidation of the three ex-soldier bureaus under one assistant secretary of one of the executive departments and an appropriation of \$25,000,000 for the erection of Public Health Service hospitals are the two outstanding objectives in the drive for better things for the disabled man.

### EASTERN STAR CHAPTER INSTALLS NEW OFFICERS

The Public Installation of officers of Wilmette Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, was held at Brown's Hall, Monday evening, January 3. The hall was crowded with members and their friends.

New officers installed were: Mrs. Harriet Hoshen, Worthy Matron.

Mrs. Anna Venton, Secretary. The retiring officers, Mrs. Helen J. Cook and Mrs. Richard D. Schuetzger, reported a very successful year with a membership of 230. Meetings of the chapter are held on the first and third Mondays of each month at Brown's Hall.

During the World War nearly 10,000 American Jews were commissioned officers in the United States army and 500 in the navy.

### Indian Film to Be Friday's Feature

James Fenimore Cooper's Famous, "The Last of the Mohicans," To Appear at Community House

"The Last of the Mohicans," the film success to be shown at the Community House next Friday evening, is one of the few film reproductions in which the principal events, featured in the book, have been included.

All book-lovers have read Cooper's best Leather Stocking tale in which Uncas, the last survivor of the once brave and proud tribe of Mohicans fights for the whites.

Maurice Tourneur directed the film. The beautiful scenery in which the forest scenes are laid is unsurpassed and the horrible massacre at Fort Henry is vividly portrayed.

Hawkeye, with his trusty rifle and quiet manner and the villain Mague with his stealthy moves are also true to Cooper's conception of the characters.

The picture is indeed worth a trip to the Community House. Superintendent of schools Washburne endorses the film.

The matinee will be at 4 o'clock to enable the school children to attend. The evening shows will be held at 7:15 and 8:35.

### ANNOUNCE LINEUPS FOR INDOOR BASEBALL LEAGUE

The Great Lakes Indoor Baseball league opened Wednesday evening at Community House. Wisconsin defeated Illinois in the only game of the evening. Harry Anderson out-pitched Bailey in a 10 to 6 victory.

The lineups for the season will be as follows:

#### Michigan

Lucchesi, Ulbrecht, Dehmow, Eckart, Ilg, Runnfeldt, Blasius, France, Benz.

#### Indiana

Kreger, Deily, Cazal, Siegle, Doherty, Anderson, Paulson, Dethloff.

#### Illinois

Bailey, Voltz, Moore, Carpenter, Kassner, Stordeur, Blow, Voltz, Carlson.

#### Wisconsin

Dehmow, Eckart, Anderson, Dietz, Wood, Eckart, Odh, Amendola, Bartz.

While there are only 401 persons in Iowa and Nebraska whose income exceeds \$25,000, there is an automobile for every six persons residing in those states.

### GYM CLASSES FOR MEN

Harry P. Clarke wishes to announce to the men of Winnetka that beginning today there will be volley and handball for men from 5 to 6 o'clock every Saturday afternoon. The Business Men's gym class meets every Monday evening. The classes are held at Community House gym.

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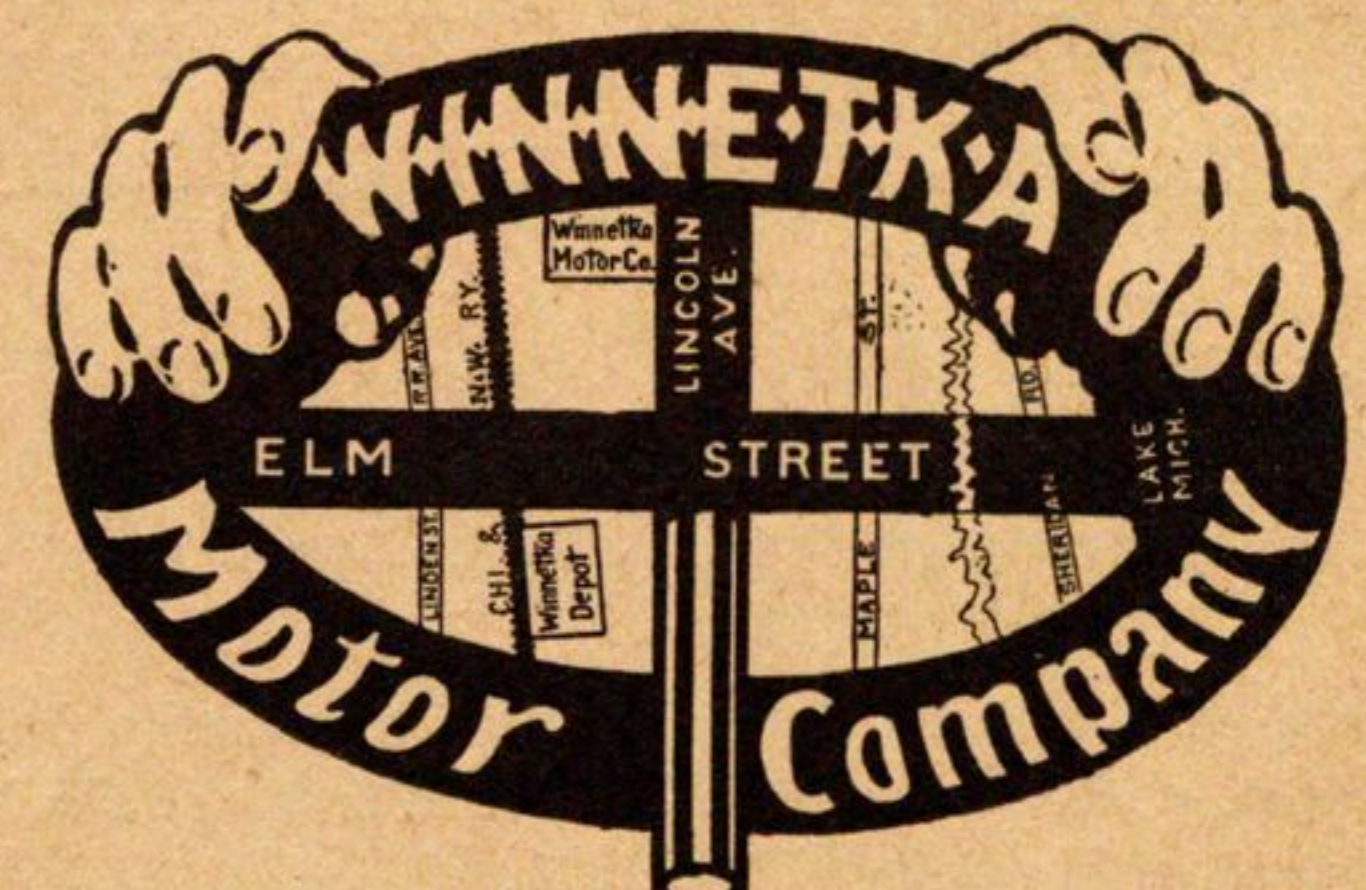
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