

N.C.O.'s BLINDNESS CURED BY SUGGESTIONAssam-Burma Front, March 2nd

On the Tiddim battlefield in the Chin hills, writes an observer with 14th Army, a British N.C.O. was blinded by the flash of a bursting bomb. Now he is back with his battalion. He can see. This is just one example of the work being carried out by the psychiatrists attached to the forward troops on both the Arakan and Assam/Burma fronts.

"There are two teams of us working up here", said the scientist, who is acting as psychiatrist to the troops in the Tiddim area "For it has been proved over and over again that dealing with cases on the spot gives the highest percentage of cures. It is one of the lessons from the Middle East."

When the authorities saw this British N.C.O. it appeared that he would be blind for the remainder of his life. The doctor decided to try suggestion. He gave the N.C.O. an injection of pentothal - an anaesthetic drug which in small doses induces a hypnotic sleep. With the N.C.O. in a light sleep the psychiatrist was able to suggest to him that he was not really blind at all.

"The patient could understand what I was saying, and if I shook him, answer my question. He was in a state of suspense between consciousness and unconsciousness," the doctor told me. "When he came round he could at first only distinguish my hand but gradually he was able to see things in the room. The next day he returned to his unit quite fit."

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This is not the only remarkable case of suggestion under hypnosis performed by this psychiatrist, for by the same method he cured a Gurkha of deafness and by normal hypnosis another Gurkha of deafness and dumbness.

In the first instance the Gurkha came round and could hear perfectly well with one ear but only partially with the other. This Gurkha was so impressed that he asked the doctor if he could have another injection. He was given one the next day and can now hear with both ears.

While these are the more spectacular examples of a front-line psychiatrists work there are many cases which require longer and more patient treatment. Not only do these psychiatrists cure officers and men of psycho-neurosis but they are able to recommend men for jobs which would be most suitable to their temperaments.

Of all such cases handled in the last three months 95 percent have returned to their units graded A1 while the remainder have been found employment elsewhere.

#### SAPPERS' WAY WITH BUNKERS

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March 2

Sapper units of the 14th Army in the Chin hills, writes a 14th Army observer, were recently able to put into practice a procedure for blowing the "lids" off Japanese bunkers which they had previously perfected on captured Japanese positions.

Following up the Gurkhas on to the strong bunkered peak 8,000 feet above sea level on the Tiddim - Kalembo road they demolished a Japanese bunker which was holding up the infantry.

An eye-witness said, "fire coming from this bunker was causing the Gurkhas some trouble, a sapper detachment came up and placed their charges on the bunker roof. So casual were they that the officer carefully put a stone beneath one end of the charge to keep it level. The detachment ran for cover and the N.C.O. detonated the charge. The bunker disintegrated and with it the Japs inside."

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