

MILITARY CONVALESCENT HOSPITALS.

Under your auspices hospitals for our sick and wounded have been erected at Rotorua, and more recently at Hanmer. Very excellent results have been reported from the former place, which amply justify your decision to take over the thermal springs and sanatoria for the benefit of our sick and wounded.

Features of the new hospitals referred to are the facilities for treating the patients in the open air, and the octagon-shaped wards which have been erected for the more effectual carrying-out of this principle have given the greatest satisfaction to the medical officers at Trentham and Featherston Camps, where, owing to the generosity of certain residents of the Wairarapa, I was first able to experiment in this direction. It was on the experience derived from the "Wairarapa Ward" at Trentham that I felt justified in recommending that wards on similar lines should be erected at Rotorua and Hanmer.

PUBLIC HOSPITALS.

During the year the public hospitals at Blenheim and New Plymouth have been completed. These institutions have been constructed on the lines of those of our newer hospitals, which have gained warm encomiums from hospital authorities from other lands.

By the acquirement by the Government of the Townley Memorial Hospital at Gisborne that somewhat isolated district is provided with an excellent little maternity hospital, which will be administered on the lines of the St. Helens hospitals.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

May I be permitted to record my congratulations at your determination to introduce at an early date the legislation that is urgently needed to limit the spread of venereal diseases in these Islands. Though the prevalence of these diseases in this country is much exaggerated, there is no doubt that the time is most opportune for putting into force many, if not all, of the recommendations of the Royal Commission which has just issued a most valuable report in this respect.

CANCER.

Of the two primary causes of death in this country cancer now leads the list with a record of 900 deaths, as against 693 deaths from tubercular diseases. As regards the former, you will welcome the assistance of the British Medical Association, whose members have signified their willingness to accede to your request and to operate with the medical officers of this Department in any manner that may be considered necessary and in the drawing-up of literature that may be distributed amongst the public with regard to this most terrible disease.

TUBERCULOSIS.

As regards tubercular diseases, the Hospital Boards of the Dominion have responded favourably to the circular which was issued by your instructions, and it is hoped thereby that the campaign initiated against these diseases in 1912 will not be allowed to languish.

NATIVE HEALTH SERVICE.

Less prominent, yet still a question of great importance as regards the public health of this country, is the health of the Native race, and your determination to place this matter on a more satisfactory basis should gain the hearty support of all concerned.

NURSES REGISTRATION AND MIDWIVES ACTS.

I would particularly draw your attention to the report by the Assistant Inspector, Miss Maclean, on the Nurses Registration and Midwives Acts, and on other matters relating to the nursing profession, of which by no means the least interesting is the portion devoted to the work of our nurses in Egypt and in other portions of the Empire.

ROTORUA SANATORIUM.

The Rotorua Sanatorium has ever been regarded by the Public Health Department as one which should be under its control, and the recent decision of the Ministers concerned to vest this Department with its control was hailed with the greatest satisfaction by those who, though recognizing its potentialities, were nevertheless convinced that it was scarcely likely to develop and take its proper place among the institutions of the Dominion while under the control of a non-medical Department. It is to be hoped that this statement will not be misunderstood. Every credit should be given, and is certainly due, to those who were responsible for the initiation and development of the Rotorua Sanatorium; but it must be admitted that owing to its association with a Department very rightly ambitious to make the most of the scenic attractions with which the Dominion is so richly endowed, but which even yet require vast sums for their development, the sanatorium and its immediate necessities were somewhat put on one side for the sake of those developments which, to the casual observer, afforded better evidence of money well spent than could be gathered from even a close scrutiny of the investments in equipping a thermal resort in competition with the most celebrated spas of Europe and the Americas. Nor was the Minister of Public Health slow to make full use of the institution when handed over to his control. Plans were immediately prepared for increasing the accommodation of the sanatorium proper by adding to and making full use of the verandas. The kitchen and dining-room were enlarged, and a recreation-room for the patients also added. Here, under Dr. Herbert's care, is now a daily average of sixty-three military and some civil patients. For female patients special arrangements have been made in a boardinghouse adjoining the sanatorium, and these arrangements will stand until the end of the war.