

HOSPITALS.

New Zealand Hospital Boards' Association Conference: The annual Conference of the New Zealand Hospital Boards' Association was held in Palmerston North, and there was a large attendance of delegates representing forty-four Boards, with the addition of Boards' Secretaries, Medical Superintendents, and representatives of the Department. Many important matters affecting Hospital Board activities were discussed.

During the past year every endeavour has been made to ensure economy in hospital administration, and it is gratifying, taking the Boards as a whole, to report a lessening of the expenditure for the current year. The estimates for the current year show a reduction in the net estimated cost of capital expenditure of over £11,500 compared with last year. Still further reduction in this direction is anticipated in the coming year.

It is with extreme regret that I have to record the resignation, to fill the important position of Town Clerk, Timaru, of Mr. Killick, who has been connected with the Department since 1907, and for eleven years has held the responsible position of Secretary. Mr. Killick performed outstanding service in connection particularly with the financial side of the Department's activities, including the preparation of the Appendix to the Department's annual report relating to hospital and charitable-aid statistics. Mr. Allan, who has been responsible for many years past for the preparation and supervision of hospital plans, was another loyal and excellent officer who has resigned to fill an outside administrative appointment.

Information with regard to hospitals and institutions under the control of Boards will be given in the Appendix to this report to be issued after the Secretaries' returns come to hand.

HEALTH EDUCATION.

A considerable amount of health educational work has been carried out by the Department in respect to the population generally. Leaflets of advice and warning have been issued in times of epidemics. Weekly health articles on a variety of subjects, including cancer, sanitation, principles of preventive medicine, child welfare, nutrition, milk, infectious diseases, care of milk in the home, and so forth, have been supplied to the press. District and school nurses have by personal interviews and the circulation of health literature touched a wide field in their health educational work. A feature of many of the shows held throughout the Dominion has been the exhibits prepared by the Department. In conjunction with the New Zealand Trained Nurses' Association, a comprehensive exhibit was prepared of the nursing activities of New Zealand, to be shown at the International Council of Nurses being held in Montreal, Canada. Posters of cancer, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, &c., have been displayed at the railway-stations. A refresher course for sanitary inspectors was inaugurated. Those who attended included sanitary inspectors from local bodies, Government Health Inspectors, and Public Works building overseers. It is intended to make this an annual feature. Through the medium of the Department's library officers have been kept informed of the recent advances of clinical and preventive medicine.

BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE.

The inauguration of a Preventive Medicine Section at the last Conference of the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association proved most successful. Under this section papers were delivered by officers of the Department on various phases of preventive medicine.

SCHOOL HYGIENE.

The school medical service, under the direction of Dr. Ada Paterson, is a branch of the Department which is undoubtedly changing for the better the whole physical and mental outlook of thousands of children. I agree with a well-known authority, Sir George Newman, when he states, "It is manifest that a healthy childhood of sound physique is the genesis on which alone this new preventive medicine can be established. Every infant saved from death in infancy and every school-child equipped for useful citizenship is a living stone in this new building. The school doctor who makes possible the mending of an ailing child makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before. He is laying the only possible foundation of national health, and he builds for the future; for the routine work of the school medical service has a vastly wider purpose than the collection of medical statistics and even the individual amelioration of a particular child. It makes practicable a fuller education of the people as a whole, it adds to life 'the joy of those who are healed, it is the prelude of national efficiency.'" Dr. Paterson's report indicates the scope and importance of the work being achieved on behalf of our school-children.

DENTAL HYGIENE.

The report of Mr. T. A. Hunter shows the growth of the work under his direction. It will be seen that steady progress is being made in the matter of providing dental treatment among children, and there is no doubt that the service is being utilized to the best advantage and a great amount of good is being done. The high standard of training undergone by the dental nurses fully qualifies them for their responsible work. The service is being extended as fast as economic conditions will allow.