

INSPECTION OF HOSPITALS.

During the past year inspection of hospitals has been continued. Both on the technical side and the house-management side detailed investigations into several institutions have been carried out, but owing to the smallness of the staff available and the amount of time taken up by routine work and our own institutions, this work is not so continuous or extensive as is desirable. With the valuable co-operation of the Nursing Division our inspections are now more thorough and comprehensive.

There remains, nevertheless, a big hiatus—namely, the inspection and valuation of the clinical work done. It is quite impossible for one medical man to cope with this aspect of hospital activities. All that can be done in the meantime is to look into such questions as methods of admissions, case records, number of days' stay, &c. It appears to me that a plan of clinical inspection should be evolved by the honorary staff of the hospital, and where no honorary staff is available by the appointment of an outside clinician of undoubted merit, to periodically inspect the clinical records and methods.

DEPARTMENTAL INSTITUTIONS.

Below are extracts from the annual reports of the Medical Superintendents of our various institutions :—

Queen Mary Hospital, Hanmer. (Medical Superintendent, Dr. C. Chisholm.)

“The chief characteristic of the work of the year has been an endeavour to carry out economies in every section of the institution. In the year 1930–31 considerable reduction of staff was carried out, and further reduction has been carried out during the present year, resulting in a reduction of fifteen during the past twelve months, and still further effort is being made to reduce staff. Owing to the outside activities, such as electric-light, water-supply, grounds, tea-kiosk, and bath-houses, the total number of staff employed would appear to be greater than would possibly be required for the hospital if these activities were not attached to it.

“Women's Hospital: This section of the hospital has remained full during the year, and has, at times, been overcrowded.

“Male Hospital: There has been a considerable lessening in the number of patients presenting for admission, this being partly due to the decrease in the number of ‘service’ patients, and probably due to the economic state of the country, as far as the civilian patients are concerned. We have closed down part of the hospital in an endeavour to economize in this direction.

“Nursing Staff: There has been very little change in the nursing staff during the year, excepting that there has been a general reduction in both the trained staff and the hospital aids.

“Massage Department: The work in this Department has been carried out satisfactorily, and the massage department has been kept comparatively well. There has also been a reduction in the staff of this department.

“Electric Light: There has been considerable extension of power in the village, and the water-driven machines are now loaded to capacity. Any further extension will entail the use of the stand-by plant.

“Farm: The farm appears to be well managed, and the supply of milk is satisfactory; the general produce of the farm is profitable to the institution. A fair amount of work is done by the patients. The staff is being kept at a minimum.

“Dental Service: Mr. Arthur Suckling, honorary dental surgeon to the hospital, has continued to pay frequent visits to the institution, and his service to the patients has been most valuable and appreciated by the medical staff.

“Red Cross: The Red Cross continues to maintain the recreation-rooms. The service of the Red Cross is appreciated by the patients, and is a great help to the institution.

“During the year I have received every help from the senior members of the staff, and they have cheerfully faced the difficulties which the state of the country has demanded. They have endeavoured to assist in every way to reduce the cost of running the institution, and in many cases have cheerfully undertaken the extra work, which of necessity has been involved.”

King George V Hospital, Rotorua. (Medical Superintendent, Dr. Lewis.)

“I have the honour to present the report on this institution for the past year. It will be noted from the statistical information appended that the numbers of general in-patients and out-patients treated during the year under review approximate very closely to those treated in the several preceding years. This work has been carried out with a greatly reduced staff and has therefore involved additional duties and increased responsibilities on every member, who have in all cases loyally responded to these increased demands.

“The numbers of Maoris admitted to Hospital comprise approximately 30 per cent. of the total admissions. Members of the Maori race are showing every year a greater confidence in the methods of western medicine, and place less reliance on their own *tohungas* than has been their practice in the past. This has been shown by the large numbers of these patients who come from the Urewera Country, from which part previously very few could be induced to come to hospital for treatment.

“The incidence of infectious disease remains very low, no epidemics having occurred, and the only admissions being occasional sporadic cases. The restricted accommodation available, however, barely suffices for our present needs and would be entirely inadequate in case of an epidemic.

“A considerably increased use has been made of the accommodation available for maternity cases. The provision of the new labour ward has facilitated the work in this section.”