

impossible to secure suitable applicants. Later in the year applications were again called, and arrangements are now pending for the appointment of twelve school dentists, of additional Medical Inspectors and school nurses, and, in particular, of a Superintendent of Medical and Dental Inspection, whose duty it will be to organize and direct the rapidly increasing activities of this branch of work. Applications are also being dealt with for the position of Chief School Dental Officer, who, in association with the Medical Superintendent, will shortly have the direction of a large staff of school dentists. The latter will in some cases be stationed in towns, and in other cases will travel through the country districts by means of motor ambulances, in which simple treatment can be provided in a general and systematic manner. The ambulances are already in New Zealand, and as soon as the staff is organized the work will be commenced.

In the meantime a number of extra activities have been undertaken in various districts, owing, to a large extent, to the enthusiasm of the Medical Inspectors and school nurses concerned. For instance, in one centre the services of the local dentists were secured practically free of cost for one morning per week, until the children in the town who required dental treatment had all been attended to. The hospital authorities gladly co-operated, and the result is that in this centre there has been a complete treatment of the teeth of practically all the children. In several districts tooth-brush drill has been instituted with very satisfactory results, and there is no doubt that with the extension of this simple daily practice the need for dental treatment will be very greatly reduced.

In another district, where goitre is very prevalent, the Medical Inspectors made special investigations, as the result of which arrangements have been made for the systematic treatment of about fifty children suffering from this complaint. In this way it is hoped that in this district goitre will be cured in its very earliest stages and that the prevalence of the complaint will be very considerably diminished in the future.

During the recent influenza epidemic the services of the school Medical Inspectors, the school nurses and the physical instructors were placed at the disposal of the Department of Public Health, and on all sides high appreciation of their enthusiasm and efficiency was expressed.

During their visits to various centres the Medical Inspectors have delivered a large number of addresses and lectures to teachers, parents, and children concerning the various means by which disease may be prevented or checked, and by which the physique of the children might be improved. In addition to this, parents are invited to be present at the school while the medical inspection of their children is being carried on. This gives the doctor an opportunity of showing the parent directly anything requires attention, and of giving simple directions for the remedy of any defect pointed out. Numerous lectures have also been delivered to training college students on the methods, purpose, and importance of medical inspection, and on the part which the teacher may take in promoting the physical welfare of the children.

The Medical Inspectors have also been of great assistance to the Education Boards in supplying reports on the hygienic and sanitary condition of the schools, and in making suggestions which in their opinion would improve health conditions in the schools.

A large number of leaflets and circulars have been issued to parents giving guidance on matters such as the care of the teeth, suitable kinds of clothing, eyesight, treatment of skin troubles, and obstructed breathing.

The cost of medical inspection for the year 1918-19 was £6,206.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

The number of physical instructors has been increased during the year to fourteen, and the work of physical training in the schools is becoming more and more effective in promoting the physical welfare of the children. Unfortunately it has been impossible up to the present to place this work under expert guidance, but applications have been invited for the position of Superintendent of Medical Inspection and Physical Instruction, and with the appointment of this officer certain extensions and improvements in the system will no doubt be undertaken.

The cost of physical education for the year 1918-19 was £4,292.