

ACCOMMODATION.

Initial difficulties have to a great extent been overcome as a result of personal interviews with local bodies, who have always been found willing to assist the Department when the position is clearly put before them; and their generous co-operation affords most encouraging evidence of the public's desire to materially aid in the campaign against dental disease among our school-children.

At Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch, for a small expenditure for fittings, we have good though small surgeries. At Warkworth and Dunedin there is no expense. At Wanganui we recently have had fitted up at small cost a very good surgery, and I hope to have at an early date a dental surgeon in charge at this clinic. All the above are rent-free to the Department. At Nelson the Department rents two rooms at a cost of 10s. per week.

EQUIPMENT.

Whilst acting as Director of Dental Services, New Zealand Forces, anticipating requirements for the above service I arranged that all Defence dental equipment both from abroad and in the Dominion should be collected in New Zealand, and none of it disposed of until my return from abroad. I am glad to be able to say that this has resulted in a considerable saving to the Government, as prices for such are at least 75 to 100 per cent. higher than before the war. I have inspected and selected from the above all that would be suitable for our Department, and arranged for such to be stored at Defence medical stores. Satisfactory prices have been fixed, our Department to be charged from time to time as goods are requisitioned for.

MOTOR AMBULANCES.

I regret to have to report that there have been many difficulties to overcome with regard to the placing on the road of the motor ambulances which were obtained for New Zealand after the armistice. However, I am now glad to state that we have one ambulance in commission in the Warkworth district, and thus a foundation is laid for this excellent and much-appreciated form of dental service for our country districts.

SECTION 2.—DENTAL NURSES.

TRAINING OF DENTAL NURSES.

A school for dental nurses has been housed by the Department in the old war-records building in Whitmore Street, and is now at work. The Supervisor, Mr. Dunn, expresses himself as more than pleased with the progress made. Thirty-five young women have been accepted as probationers, and in appointing them special care has been taken to select those of good education and general suitability for the work. An excellent lecture-room has been fitted up with the necessary appliances for teaching.

The work so far has been theoretical, and everything possible is being done to give the probationers a thorough grounding in those branches of science which will help to make them intelligent helpers instead of mere "hewers of wood and drawers of water." Realizing as it does the importance of the propaganda work that these ladies will be required to take their part in, the Department cannot emphasize too strongly the necessity for this teaching of fundamentals. The probationers so far have proved themselves keen to learn, anxious to get to the bottom of things, and willing to work; and they give every promise of becoming keen and efficient officers of the Department. The theoretical work will be varied in the coming months with practical work on real teeth set up in mechanical dummies, by which means skill in the use of the mouth-mirror and dental engine will be acquired. After this the large clinic-room, which is well lighted and admirably suited for the work, will be fitted up; and the nurses will first be utilized as oral hygienists for cleansing up the mouths of the children, and carrying out simple preventive measures, gradually leading up to more extensive operative treatment, all of which it is hoped will do much good in the way of saving work later both for the dentist and the doctor.

LIBRARY.

In addition to text-books purchased I have to acknowledge a very generous gift from Mr. Cecil Gray, who has donated a considerable number of dental journals, and has also placed his very fine dental library on loan to the Department. I have also to acknowledge a very handsome contribution in the way of chemical equipment, material, and books from Mr. Dunn, Supervisor, this latter donation especially saving the Department a considerable expenditure.

THOS. A. HUNTER,
Director, Division of Dental Hygiene.

PART VII.—MAORI HYGIENE.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit a brief annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1921.

SECTION 1.—NATIVE HEALTH.

NATIVE HEALTH COUNCILS.

In terms of the passing of the Public Health Act, 1920, the reorganization of the old Maori Councils which existed under the Maori Councils Act, 1900, has been undertaken, and some twenty districts created throughout the North Island, the personnel of these Councils determined and gazetted.