

* PART IX.—GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS AND SANATORIA: EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENTS.

SECTION I.—QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL, HANMER.

Dr. P. CHISHOLM, Medical Superintendent; Dr. W. SOWERBY; Miss THURSTON, C.B.E., Matron.

Male Patients.—The number of service patients has steadily decreased, but there has been an equally steady increase in the ordinary paying patients. The majority of the paying patients are of the neurasthenic type, though there are a fair number of so-called "border-line" cases. The results obtained compare favourably with those obtained in similar institutions in England. This Hospital has very material advantages in the swimming-pools and the ample pleasure and playing grounds, which enable us to keep the patients employed in either some light work or in playing games. It is my opinion that institutional regime carefully supervised, exercise, and employment are of far greater curative value than some of the so-called modern treatments recently before the profession. Such modern treatments are no doubt of value, but without question they require backing up by the ordered life, the disciplinary regime of an institution, the encouragement of employment, and enforcement of games and exercise.

The service patients are particularly unsatisfactory to treat. Very little real success is achieved, and it appears impossible to get a service patient to admit any improvement. Physically they often are perfectly well, but continue to complain of various ills. Their psychology is very evident; they are quite aware the moment they state they are better they will cease receiving pension and be thrown on their own resources. This attitude is exactly similar to that found in England amongst pensioner patients of the same type. T. A. Ross, one of the senior members of the Neurological Pension Board in England, recently stated that in the years that he had been employed in treating service neurological patients he did not consider he had achieved any real success at all.

Women's Section.—The women's section has not had an empty bed since it was opened in November, 1922. There is a long waiting-list, and the greatest anxiety is experienced in trying to avoid irritating those who vainly demand admission. Treatment on the whole has been very successful. The women are treated under more advantageous conditions than the male patients.

The greatest fault in the male hospital is overcrowding in the wards, and this cannot occur in the women's section. The Women's Hospital has been under the control and administration of Sister Trott, and, as usual in dealing with such patients, the success achieved has depended on the personality of those in control of the patients.

Bathhouses.—Baths and swimming-pools have been used to a very large extent, and appear to be more popular with the public than in the past. Painting and repairs have been attended to. The bathhouses, however, are in such a state that it is only possible to carry out repairs to make them fit to carry on with for perhaps another year or two, and their condition does not warrant more than temporary patching. I consider that in the very near future a good bathhouse should be erected in Hanmer. What is required is a useful, serviceable, and plain building.

Massage Department.—This department has been hard-worked. A small staff has been employed, consisting of three masseuses and one masseur: some eighty to ninety patients pass through the hands of the department each day, and each masseuse deals with some twenty patients. A fair number of out-patients are dealt with; the staff are mostly employed in dealing with hospital patients.

Water Services.—The water services have been the greatest source of anxiety. Heavy floods caused considerable damage at the reservoir, and the river changed its course. Considerable amount of work had to be done, and the Hospital staff for some months spent a great deal of time and labour endeavouring to rectify the damage. Eventually the grant of £200 was applied for and spent under the direction of Mr. Allan, Technical Inspector. Since then the water-supply has been constant and satisfactory, excepting for breaks in the pipe-line. The wooden-stave pipe-line is practically useless, and at present one man is to be employed constantly mending breaks in the main line or in the village reticulation. A new pipe-line has been authorized, and I understand will be put down in the course of a few months. During the past week seventeen breaks in the pipe-line have been repaired in the Hospital grounds and village.

Tea-kiosk.—This building has been painted and redecorated. The best that can be said is that the receipts for the year are higher than in the past and the expenses are no greater. There is no doubt that the kiosk serves a useful purpose in respect to the public who visit Hanmer, and I should regret to see it closed at present.

Garden.—This has been fairly well cared for by the gardener. There is no doubt that the gardening staff are handicapped by the extremes of weather met with in Hanmer. In spite of the very dry summer the institution has been well supplied with fruit and vegetables. One new grass tennis-court has been laid down for the use of the public, and during the coming autumn and winter I intend, if possible, to lay down one more asphalt court.

Recreation-room.—The Red Cross Society has taken over the activities of the Y.M.C.A. in this direction. Without doubt the recreation-rooms run by the Red Cross are of great value and service to the male patients.

Outside Patients.—There has been the average amount of outside practice—at times it is heavy and at other times very light.

Administration.—Having reviewed the work of the year, I wish to record my appreciation of the work done by the staff who have been under my direction. In a Hospital such as this, with its

*As an appendix to this report full particulars in reference to hospitals administered by Hospital Boards are published as soon as the data is available.