

Quantity Consumption.—Hospital administrators in all countries are now mainly agreed that by keeping records of quantities consumed in each ward or department, waste can be localized and checked. I should like to see this very excellent system extended as far as hospitals are concerned. The departmental institutions have been using quantity statistics for a number of years with most gratifying results in the elimination of waste.

Visitor from Abroad.—During the year Dr. M. T. MacEachern, Associate Director of the American College of Surgeons, visited New Zealand at the invitation of the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association. Facilities were readily placed at his disposal by the Department to enable him to study the hospital system of the Dominion.

Inspection of Hospitals.—With the return of Dr. Watt and owing to some extent to departmental reorganization, it may be possible for me to visit a larger number of hospitals and their controlling Boards than has been the case for the last few years. Nevertheless I hope the time is not far distant when it will be possible to appoint a Director of the Hospitals Division, so that such an officer will be able to assist the Department in the inspection of hospitals, the necessity for which is every year becoming more pressing.

SECTION 3.—DIVISIONAL, SECTIONAL, AND INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS.

Public Hygiene.—Dr. T. McKibbin has submitted an important report on the activities of this Division. Of special interest and value are his comprehensive comments on maternal-mortality rates. Attention is drawn to the beneficial results that will arise through the strengthening and reorganizing of the staff of the District Health Offices. The appointment of Public Health nurses by the large local authorities would be a step in the right direction. This class of nurse is an established and valuable feature of public-health administration in Great Britain and other leading countries.

School Hygiene.—Dr. Ada Paterson's report indicates the far-reaching and beneficial work that is being accomplished by the officers of this division on behalf of our school-children. I would specially direct your attention to the Director's comments on child labour. How can we expect to raise a healthy race when children of tender years are so commercialized and denied full mental and physical development—the just heritage of every child?

Excellent work has been achieved at the health camps for mentally and physically backward children. Of outstanding interest is the statement as to the prevention of goitre and diphtheria.

The result of the medical examination of the pupils of a girls' secondary school points to the necessity for wider medical supervision of the scholars attending these schools. The Board of Governors of this school are to be congratulated on interest shown in the health of the pupils. This report is one which should be read by all those interested and actively concerned in the welfare of our school-children.

Maternal Welfare.—I am glad to report that one of the outstanding features of the year has been the expansion and influence of the Department's maternal-welfare services. Dr. Jellett's report deals particularly with the training of nurses and medical students and the post-graduate instruction of medical practitioners in midwifery. His advocacy of a professorship of midwifery and gynaecology at the School of Medicine at Dunedin I trust will receive the careful consideration of the authorities concerned in the education of our medical students. I am in entire agreement with him in his weighty remarks on the unfortunate increasing tendency to perform the caesarean section for so many types of obstetrical complication.

Dr. Paget and Dr. Elaine Gurr must be again congratulated on the progress made in their special spheres of maternity and ante-natal work. The improvement in the methods and conduct of maternity hospitals as commented upon by Dr. Paget is extremely gratifying, while Dr. Elaine Gurr, in her report, presents an impressive picture of the wonderful growth of the work accomplished at the ante-natal clinics. In this respect I wish to pay a tribute to the members of the medical profession for their loyal support of the Department's aims in endeavouring to ensure safe motherhood for the women of New Zealand.

Dental Hygiene.—The report of the Acting-Director of this Division is a record of careful administration of this important branch of the Department's activities. That 220,311 operations have been performed by dental nurses in the field in thirty months afford a striking proof of the value of services rendered to the children of the Dominion. Good work is being achieved by the nurses in educating parents in dental and dietetic health matters affecting the children. Up to the present forty clinics have been established in various centres, which indicates a remarkable advance since the inception of the scheme.

Nursing.—One of the important advances referred to in the Director's report is the appointment of a nurse instructor to visit the nurse training-schools. This should be a means of raising the standard of nursing education in the Dominion. It is pleasing to note that the Hospital Boards are availing themselves of her services for this purpose. The St. Helens Hospitals continue to render splendid service to child-bearing mothers.

Maori Hygiene.—This Division continues to manifest an enthusiastic interest in all matters affecting the health of the Maori race. The substantial increase in the Maori population since the 1921 census offers proof of the success of what is being done towards the conservation of this fine race. The work of the Maori Councils exercises a most beneficial influence in raising the standard of sanitation in the villages. Attention is drawn to the undermining influences of the Ratana movement among these Councils, but the recent revelation as to the unsatisfactory sanitary conditions existing at the Ratana Village will strengthen the Director's hands in dealing with factors detrimental to the health of the Maoris.

King George V Hospital, Rotorua.—This institution records an increased development, and the Medical Superintendent and his staff have carried out good work in the treatment of the after-effects of the infantile-paralysis cases. As practically the base hospital for the district, it is performing an increasingly valuable function.