

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

SECTION 1.—QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL, HANMER.

Dr. P. CHISHOLM, Medical Superintendent; Dr. LUMSDEN; Miss E. HODGES, A.R.R.C., Matron.

I beg to present to you the annual report of the Queen Mary Hospital, and a report on the other activities of the Department of Health in Hanmer Springs.

In general the year has been uneventful, and the work in the institution has been satisfactory. Of chief importance has been the opening of the new hospital for women. Every endeavour has been made to economize within the limits of the efficiency of the institution. The cost of the institution has increased, and this has been due to a general increase of the number of patients seeking admission. There has been a slight increase in the number of service patients, and a very marked increase in the number of civilian patients. The new block for accommodation of women was completed and opened in November. The year has been a somewhat busy one; the arrangements for the opening of the new hospital entailed a considerable amount of work and anxiety. Staff difficulties have been more marked, especially in regard to obtaining and retaining a trained nursing staff.

*Male Patients.*—The type of patient admitted during the past year was similar to that of other years, excepting there has been a tendency to send the more or less mild psychotic patient to Hanmer. This type of patient is not suitable for treatment here, nor would it be wise to allow such patients admission. A very considerable number of service patients are still presenting themselves for treatment, many of them having had some previous "war service illness" and have again broken down under the stress of civilian life. The general treatment employed is the same as heretofore, and we have relied chiefly on the institutional regime, exercise, occupation, and such medical therapy as may be indicated. There has been no trouble, and apparently the patients are well contented with their surroundings. During the past year I have not had any complaints from patients in regard to either their treatment or the general conditions appertaining in the hospital.

*Female Patients.*—The number of female patients steadily increased during the year. The old hospital, which was originally set up to carry seventeen beds, was at the time of closing carrying thirty-five beds. The new hospital was opened on the 27th October, 1926. Fifty beds are available, and since the end of the first week of opening there has been no vacant bed in the hospital. The treatment amongst the women is similar to that in the male hospital, excepting that in regard to the female patients more physiotherapy was carried out. As with the men, I consider that the chief value of treatment is the ordered life, the regime, and the encouragement and enforcement of exercise. As also with the male patients, there has been a tendency to send the mildly psychotic women for treatment, and I fear that a considerable amount of harm would undoubtedly accrue if the tendency to call this hospital a "borderland" hospital should persist.

*General.*—There has been a fair number of cases of ordinary illnesses admitted from the district, and undoubtedly the hospital serves a useful purpose apart from the special work which is done. There have been two deaths in hospital, both male patients, and in each case admitted from the surrounding district, suffering from pneumonia.

*Medical Staff.*—In August, 1926, Dr. Sowerby, for four years on the staff of this hospital, was appointed Medical Superintendent of the Thames General Hospital. His services to the institution have been much missed, and he was a valuable and conscientious Medical Officer.

*Nursing Staff.*—I have been greatly indebted to the work of the Matron and senior nursing staff of the hospital for their loyal and hearty assistance during the year.

*Massage Staff.*—This staff has been kept to a minimum: three masseuses and one masseur have been employed for some 140 patients in hospital. In addition to dealing with the hospital patients, the massage staff deal with out-patients, from whom a very considerable income is derived. The Department has been under the charge of Sister Wilson, who is an extremely competent and careful charge of this department.

*Male Staff.*—The senior male staff remains unchanged, but there has been the usual number of changes in the junior staff. Lack of accommodation for married men in Hanmer still remains a serious handicap. Every endeavour has been made to keep the staff at an absolute minimum, but owing to the fact that the institution maintains so many extra services—*i.e.*, bathhouses, tea-kiosk, water-service, electric light—and in addition our great isolation, tends to make the number of male employees greater than that of a general hospital in a town. The institution has been particularly well served by the office staff, and these employees have cheerfully faced the extra amount of work that has been entailed during the past year.

*Farm.*—The farm-manager has proved capable in overseeing the farm, and, as far as I can judge, the conduct of the farm is satisfactory. The demands of the institution have been well supplied by the farm, and we have been much indebted to Mr. Bruce, Agricultural Adviser to the Department, for his advice and assistance.

*Tea-kiosk.*—On the whole, the tea-kiosk has improved in regard to receipts; at the same time expenses have been kept down. The tea-kiosk serves a useful purpose to the public, and I think it is now approaching the stage of being self-supporting.

*Bathhouses.*—The bathhouses and swimming-pools are used by the public to a very great extent, and appear to be as popular as ever they have been in the past.

*General Maintenance.*—The general maintenance of the hospital has been carefully attended to, and the buildings are in an average good state of repair.