

PRIVATE HOSPITALS.

Nurse Inspector Beswick pays regular visits to all the maternity, medical, and surgical hospitals, cottage maternity hospitals, and training-schools. It is pleasing to report that the equipment of private hospitals continues to show a steady improvement.

Investigations have been made regarding the means of egress from private hospitals in the event of fire. As a result of the Department's representations improved facilities have been provided where necessary.

GENERAL.

By-laws.—The counties of Bruce, Tuapeka, and Clutha have adopted a joint set of by-laws. During the year the Queenstown Borough Council adopted a new set of building and sanitary by-laws. A number of the smaller boroughs in the district whose by-laws are inadequate or non-existent are being assisted to prepare a combined set similar to those adopted by a number of counties. The County of Stewart Island is likewise engaged in drawing up building and sanitary by-laws.

Plumbing and Drainage Regulations.—A number of the smaller boroughs have agreed to adopt these regulations, either as they stand or with certain modifications.

Cemeteries.—The control of cemeteries has been efficiently maintained without undue trouble. Some of the smaller country cemeteries are being hampered through lack of funds, and in some instances have obtained grants from their respective counties.

Offensive Trades.—The managements of the various factories where these trades are carried on are alive to the necessity of conducting them so as to prevent as far as practicable any nuisance arising. Messrs. Kempthorne, Prosser, and Co., Ltd., are at present rebuilding part of their works at Burnside, and propose installing a new and up-to-date plant for the manufacture of artificial manure.

Invercargill Abattoirs.—The offal is now being disposed of in a satisfactory manner at the Southland Butchers' By-products Works.

Flock-mills.—It has been necessary to enforce more strictly the proper washing of second-hand clothing and rags before their conversion into flock.

Motorists' Camps.—The establishment of camping-places for motorists is now considered a duty by many Borough Councils, who have provided suitable sites and equipped them with water-supplies and necessary sanitary arrangements. In a number of cases a caretaker is appointed to see that a high standard of cleanliness is maintained. The need for similar provision in some country districts is becoming very apparent, and some camping-grounds are in danger of being spoiled by the careless habits of certain motorists. In some cases the number of people using a particular locality is large enough to pollute it seriously, but not sufficiently large to warrant the expense of installing sanitary equipment and maintaining a caretaker. This is especially noticeable in the neighbourhood of some of the lakes.

Public Works Camp, Hydro-electric Works, Awakino.—The Public Works Department have established a camp at Awakino for the workmen engaged in harnessing the Waitaki River. Between two hundred and three hundred men are now engaged on the work. The camp-site is satisfactory, and the water-supply is ample and of good quality.

Dangerous Drugs Act.—This Act came into force during the year, and circulars were sent to all medical practitioners explaining its purport and the working of the regulations.

Dunedin Flood.—On the 19th March, 1929, considerable damage was done to properties in the northern portion of the city by the Leith Stream overflowing its banks after a period of heavy rain. The southern portion of Dunedin was also affected to a considerable extent. A thorough inspection has since been made of the affected areas, and as a result a number of dwellings have been condemned and structural alterations have been asked for with regard to others. The flood caused breakages in two 12 in. water-mains from Sullivan's Dam, and resulted in a water-famine in part of the city. Until repairs were carried out the Dunedin City Corporation arranged supplies to householders by means of motor-lorries. The flood waters carried large quantities of clay in a condition of very fine suspension into Ross Creek Reservoir, rendering the water unfit for culinary purposes and necessitating the continuance of the supply by means of lorries. Efforts are being made to clear the water in the reservoir by means of precipitants, but so far with only partial success.

Swimming-baths.—The tepid swimming-baths at Invercargill were formerly considerably affected with algæ growth, necessitating frequent changing of water. This difficulty has been overcome by a regular dosing of the water with chloride of lime, after copper sulphate had been tried and found ineffective. The water has now remained unchanged for five months, and a recent bacteriological test showed that *B. coli* were absent in 25 c.c.