

GENERAL.

Dental Clinic Committees.—Dental Clinic Committees, and also the School Committees associated with them, have continued to co-operate whole-heartedly with the Department and to support its officers in their efforts to maintain the efficiency of the School Dental Service. It is pleasing to note that during the year a number of committees have acted on the suggestions put forward in my last annual report in regard to improving local administration, and the results have fully justified their action. The matter is considered to be one of sufficient importance to warrant repeating the suggestions referred to. The following is therefore quoted from the last annual report :—

“ Experience has shown that the most successful committees are those that decentralize, and work through School Committees. Under this system a Dental Clinic Committee estimates its financial requirements for the year, and then debits each School Committee in the dental group with a proportion of the sum required, according to the roll number. (Note.—Each School Committee in a group is entitled to representation on the Dental Clinic Committee.) The responsibility then devolves on the various School Committees to find the sum debited against them by the central body, the Dental Clinic Committee. Schools that fail to meet their obligations are liable to be excluded from the service, as also are individuals who fail to pay the charge that Committees are authorized to make. The only exception to the latter is in the case of children whose parents are genuinely unable to pay the charge. School Committees are usually in the best position to judge of such cases, but they mostly require applications for exemption to be made in writing. Generally speaking, those committees that have adopted a firm business-like attitude in their local administration have been the most successful. Although frequently the tightening-up process has been accompanied at first by a drop in the number of patients, this has invariably been made good later, with the added advantage that the local organization has been established on a sound basis.”

The amount paid to the Department by Dental Clinic Committees during the year under review was £4,946 12s. 1d. In addition the sum of £387 5s. was received from the Wellington Clinic, making a total of £5,333 17s. 1d., as compared with £5,208 3s. 1d. for the previous year.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

I would again take this opportunity of acknowledging the assistance and co-operation of Dental Clinic Committees, teachers, and Education Boards and their staffs. The officers of the Division are grateful for the invaluable support and help of head teachers and their staffs. The loyal service given by all officers of the Division calls for the warmest acknowledgment.

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