

SECTION VII.—INSPECTION OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS.

Co-operation between the licensees and the inspecting officers of the Department has been most helpful in maintaining a reasonably high standard of efficiency. Without the co-operative spirit on both parts the benefit of the inter-change of ideas between the licensee and Inspector is impossible. I am pleased to say that in most cases the relations between Inspectors and inspected is excellent. The main difficulty has been the introduction of the hours of work regulations for the nursing staff, a most necessary provision to prevent the overworking of nurses, both registered and unregistered, which in some cases varied from sixty to seventy hours per week, with no days off. The average forty-eight-hour week with one day off has required an increase of staff by 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. in the larger hospitals. In the smaller hospitals of under ten beds, in country districts, in which an increase in the permanent staff is economically impracticable, and where relief nurses are not available, the difficulty of providing for regulation hours and the day off per week has been considerable, and I wish to record my appreciation of the attempts made by licensees to overcome them. It is pleasing to put on record the statement of a licensee who had some difficulty in giving effect to the regulations that the staff were much happier and more contented since they had been made effective.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

I again wish to acknowledge the very helpful co-operation of the New Zealand Obstetrical Society and its very cordial relations with the Department. Without its help and that of the practising medical obstetricians and obstetrical nurses, particularly the licensees of hospitals, but little could be accomplished towards promoting maternal welfare. To those mentioned above and to my fellow-officers in the Nursing Division and the Medical Officers of Health and other staff who have so ably seconded my efforts, I extend my sincere thanks.

T. L. PAGET,
Director of Maternal Welfare.