

It has been very clearly laid down in regulations governing procedure in the wards that the medical officer is charged with the responsibility of investigating the daily food requirements of all patients under his care. For the convenience of other departments of the hospital, it has been pointed out that the prescription of the necessary diet should be, in so far as the daily time-table is concerned, a first charge upon the professional attention given by the medical officer to his patient. On the occasion of his early morning survey the medical officer is required to prescribe a definite diet which he wishes each patient to receive on the following day, either re-affirming or revising the instructions issued by him on the morning before. This is done by inserting any changes, obliterating all unnecessary blank spaces, and then affixing his initials to the patient's individual diet and extra sheet.

In one instance it was discovered that a medical officer had initialled a diet and extra sheet for thirteen days in advance, leaving the extra columns blank, to be filled in as desired by someone else. Many abuses of a less pronounced character have also been discovered. In a surgical ward it was found that large quantities of eggs, milk, and other extras were being ordered day after day on a ward extra sheet headed "T.B. Extras," whereas no patients even suspected of suffering from tuberculosis had been admitted to that particular ward for months. These "T.B. Extras" were in addition to extras ordered for individual patients on their own diet and extra sheets, and the use to which these excess issues had been put was neither satisfactorily recorded nor explained.

The necessity for issuing such special commodities as chickens, puddings, and stout is considered to merit the careful consideration of medical officers. Special diets are not to be considered as a reward, although some instances have been discovered where ordinary diets have been modified with this idea.

In cases where patients were not eating well, a bottle of stout has been ordered for daily issue in the ward prior to the midday meal. In a few days the patient becomes accustomed to hospital routine and manifests an increasing interest in the meal hour. Instances have been noted where this improvement has apparently been ignored and patients have been issued with a bottle of stout daily for week after week, and, in some cases, for month after month. As far as can be determined from records examined, there is no evidence that any patient has actually continued to draw stout after being discharged from the hospital, but individual diet sheets would tend to show that in some instances the last issue must have been made as the patient was going out through the hospital gate. These are a few of the practices which unnecessarily increase the expense of hospital administration, raising the cost without increasing the efficiency of feeding.

COST.

The cost of feeding patients in Canadian hospitals during the four months ending with the August period of this year are set out below:—

TABLE VII.

CANADIAN PATIENTS' FEEDING COST.

Average Daily Cost per Capita—May to August, 1918.

(Figures represent pence, computed to three places of decimals.)

SCALE A.

| | May | June | July | August |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Lenham ... | 45·822 | 42·597 | 51·596 | 51·206 |

SCALE B.

| | May | June | July | August |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Bromley ... | 24·070 | 20·751 | 24·091 | 24·782 |
| Bearwood ... | 20·859 | 20·644 | 21·247 | 21·239 |
| Matlock ... | 24·442 | 25·645 | 25·038 | 25·772 |
| Monks Horton ... | 18·030 | 17·144 | 16·995 | — * |
| Witley ... | 24·174 | 24·559 | 26·558 | 26·106 |
| Epsom ... | 15·250 | 15·752 | 16·017 | 16·500† |
| Bexhill ... | 15·216 | 15·720 | 16·239 | 16·500† |
| Total ... | 142·041 | 140·225 | 146·215 | 130·889 |
| Average ... | 20·292 | 20·032 | 20·888 | 21·817 |

*Closed July 31st, 1918.

†Full messing allowance subject to reduction.

SCALE C.

| | May | June | July | August |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Basingstoke ... | 18·789 | 19·173 | 24·036 | 26·905 |
| Kirkdale ... | 23·121 | 16·137 | 19·180 | 21·156 |
| Moore Barracks ... | 23·122 | 24·926 | 26·551 | 26·441 |
| Bramshott ... | 17·152 | 17·571 | 20·051 | 22·720 |
| Eastbourne ... | 17·905 | 18·437 | 20·430 | 23·153 |
| Taplow ... | 22·039 | 22·246 | 23·794 | 25·123 |
| Orpington ... | 19·110 | 22·829 | 21·645 | 23·140 |
| Bushey Park ... | 17·995 | 18·008 | 19·380 | 20·779 |
| Buxton G'ville ... | 17·221 | 19·639 | 21·226 | 24·043 |
| Buxton Red Cross ... | 18·269 | 21·679 | 23·867 | 25·348 |
| Westcliff ... | 20·644 | 22·334 | 23·795 | 23·333 |
| Etchinghill ... | 14·702 | 16·042 | 18·154 | 20·209 |
| Hastings ... | 21·497 | 22·185 | 26·054 | 26·494 |
| Total ... | 251·566 | 261·206 | 288·163 | 308·844 |
| Average ... | 19·351 | 20·093 | 22·166 | 23·757 |

The increase in the cost of July over June was due to the introduction of expanded scales of diets in the latter month. The increase in August over July was not due to this cause, nor was it due to any appreciable increase in market prices. An explanation must be looked for in the larger demands placed upon the hospitals concerned by the distributors. This is not a comparative table, hospitals being grouped according to the scale of diet issued.

DIETS OF PERSONNEL.

The problem of feeding both soldier personnel and women employed in hospitals has merited special attention. It is to be noted that a large number of the soldiers now comprising the staffs of hospitals, both non-commissioned and other ranks, are low category men who have been returned to this country after employment, and, in many cases, after experiencing disablement to some degree in the fighting zone. These men are subsisted on a scale of rations which approximates the allowance to British soldiers in home areas, and is slightly below Scale "B," authorized for convalescent patients undergoing physical training. This allowance is known as Scale "D," and has a gross value as follows:—

TABLE VIII.

GROSS VALUE OF PERSONNEL RATION.

| | Protein grms. | Fat grms. | Carbo-Hydr. grms. | Calories |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------|----------|
| Daily value per capita | 108·84 | 121·10 | 430·25 | 3,328 |

In the feeding of members of the Q.M.A.A.C., V.A.D., and other women's organizations, the daily per capita allowance has been based upon the scale of issues laid down by the British military authorities. This allowance has a daily fuel value as shown in the following table:—

TABLE IX.

GROSS VALUE OF WOMEN'S RATION.

| | Protein grms. | Fat grms. | Carbo-Hydr. grms. | Calories |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------|----------|
| Daily value per capita | 92·96 | 99·31 | 397·98 | 2,931 |

These ration allowances have been in operation for three months and are giving satisfaction.

CANADIAN AND OTHER DIETARIES COMPARED.

Compared with the training camp diet of the principal Allies, soldier personnel in Canadian hospitals in this country are, it is considered, receiving a sufficient ration.

TABLE X.

COMPARISON OF PERSONNEL RATIIONS.

| | Calories |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Canadian hospitals in England | 3,328 |
| American home training camps | 3,963 |
| British home areas | 3,400 |
| French home areas | 3,300 |
| Canadian troop ration in England | 3,200 |
| Italian home areas | 2,500 |

These values represent the estimated gross caloric value of foods as purchased, and are all considered subject to a reduction of 7 per cent. to 10 per cent. on account of unavoidable waste in preparation and cooking. The cost of feeding hospital personnel is approximately 1s. 6d. per capita per diem.

The computation of nutritive ratios and caloric values contained in the foregoing tables was based on figures