

THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER: "In recent years no nation has shown greater energy than Canada in its efforts to defeat the deadly scourge of cancer," said the Minister of Health and Welfare, Mr. Paul Martin, at the official opening of the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation's Cobalt 60 Beam Therapy Clinic in Toronto on November 6.

As a result, he said, while cancer was still the second leading cause of death in Canada, there existed greater hope for the cancer sufferer today than ever before. In cancer research more has been accomplished in the last thirty years than in the preceding three centuries.

A notable milestone in Canada's cancer programme, he added, was the development by Canadian Government scientists of the Cobalt 60 Beam Therapy Unit. This apparatus, which provided a new and potent weapon to combat cancer, had received world-wide recognition and placed Canada among the leaders in the fight against cancer. At the present time the demand for these units, both here and abroad, was greater than could be met by the Crown Company -- Atomic Energy of Canada Limited -- which was still the world's only producer of this equipment.

FIVE INSTALLATIONS

The present Toronto installation brought to five the total number of units now in operation across Canada. Canadian-built equipment had also been purchased for hospitals in the United States at New York, Chicago and Minneapolis; for the Mount Vernon Hospital in London, England; and for a centre in Italy.

It was the Government's hope that Cobalt 60 Units would eventually be in operation in every province and particularly at university centres where trained physicists and medical consultants are continually available for advice and necessary supervision.

"At the present time," he said "Atomic Energy of Canada is building a new and more powerful reactor which will increase substantially the supply of cobalt available for this purpose. In consequence, it is expected that beginning in December of next year, it will be possible to step up production to two new units each month."

Mr. Martin announced that the federal Government had just approved financial assistance towards the purchase of two additional Cobalt 60 Beam Therapy Units, to be installed at Hamilton and Windsor, Ontario. The Province's two remaining University centres, Ottawa and Kingston, might be expected to complete construction arrangements for the receipt of Cobalt 60 Units soon thereafter.

* * * *

Net earnings from patient services account for 73% of the total revenue of Canadian public hospitals, provincial and municipal grants for 13%, and other sources for 14%.

CANADIAN MEDICINE AT WAR: The official account of the professional and clinical aspects of Canadian service and civilian medicine in the Second World War becomes available on November 14 with the publication of the volume of the "Official History of the Canadian Medical Services 1939-1945", dealing with Clinical Subjects. It is issued under the authority of the Minister of National Defence and edited by Dr. W.R. Feasby, a wartime lieutenant-colonel in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps and now a lecturer in physiology at the University of Toronto.

The Second World War produced a great advancement in medical knowledge. The advent of modern techniques in surgery, made possible by the use of antibiotics and improved methods in anaesthesia, the introduction of early ambulation after surgery combined with proper rehabilitation measures, the application of improved immunization practices, these and many other developments find places in this volume. The application of scientific research to the medical problems of warfare is discussed. Statistical tables covering all three services, which form an important part of the book, will assist in solving future manpower problems.

* * * *

FARM LABOUR DECLINE: In a recent report on farm labour, the National Advisory Council on Manpower was told that, with mechanization, technological advances and improved utilization of manpower, the working force in agriculture had been declining each year without any falling off in production. At August, 1953, it was estimated that the agricultural labour force stood at 964,000, a reduction of 43,000 from August, 1952 and the lowest figure for the month in many years.

The report stated that we have been fortunate in Canada, since our expanding industrial economy had been able to absorb the surplus workers, but the rate of movement from agriculture to other industries had caused very real shortages of farm labour, especially at certain seasons of the year.

* * * *

ARMY LIFE "PREVIEWS": The Canadian Army plans to throw open its camps and stations across the country to teen-aged youths who would like to "preview" Army life before considering a military career.

Groups of boys who express an interest in the Army will be taken on conducted tours of Army camps. The groups must be accompanied by a civilian teacher or guidance counsellor, and will be transported to and from their school or town in military vehicles.

* * * *

The cost of electricity for domestic service was lower in 1952 than in 1935-39 in all parts of Canada except British Columbia, the average for all Canada being down nearly 5%.