

*School Hygiene.*

Measures for the promotion of the health of children (kindergarten, primary, and secondary) are reviewed in Dr. Elizabeth Gunn's report. More Native school children were medically examined, and extensive diphtheria-immunization campaigns were carried out by School Medical Officers.

*Hospitals.*

The maintenance estimates of all Boards provided for a net expenditure of £1,964,604 3s. 1d., of which £953,998 10s. 6d. was required to be contributed by levy on local authorities and £1,010,605 12s. 7d. by subsidy from the Consolidated Fund, a total increase of £278,691 13s. compared with the estimates of the previous year. This was accounted for mainly by an increase in hospital-maintenance expenditure.

It is gratifying to record a further decrease in requirements for charitable-aid expenditure, the estimate for the year being £33,486 less than that for 1938-39.

The maintenance funds of Boards have, however, benefited considerably during the year by the introduction of hospital benefits and maternity benefits under Part III of the Social Security Act, 1938. The rates of payments in respect of these benefits had not been decided when Boards were required to furnish their estimates in April, 1939, and income from these sources was not, therefore, included in estimated receipts. It is apparent from a preliminary examination of estimates from 1940-41 that the total surpluses in the maintenance accounts of all Boards as at 31st March, 1940, due to these payments reached a substantial amount. The surpluses will, however, reduce the amount to be provided by levy and subsidy for maintenance requirements in 1940-41.

The continuation of building activities of Boards is reflected in the increase of £38,208 11s. 8d. in requirements from levy and subsidy for capital purposes and provision of expenditure of £1,346,281 12s. 10d. from loan-moneys. It is to be noted, however, that the estimated expenditure from loans included provision made in previous years and not proceeded with when the estimates were prepared. In this connection £605,036 15s. 10d. of the amount provided above is in respect of loan-moneys provided for and actually raised prior to 1st April, 1939.

The usual statistical and financial information will be published in a special Appendix to this report when the final accounts of Boards are available.

*Nursing.*

A Nursing Council and a Voluntary Aid Council were set up for the organization of registered nurses and the training and organization of voluntary aids in time of national emergency. Miss Lambie, in her report, outlines, among other important matters, steps taken to ensure an adequate nursing service to meet the military and civil needs of New Zealand. Forty additional district nurses and 4 new Nurse Inspectors were appointed. These appointments will considerably strengthen the attack against tuberculosis, particularly in country areas and among the Maori population.

The Nurses and Midwives Registration Amendment Act, 1939, provides for the registration and training as "nursing aids" of persons who, not being qualified to be registered as nurses, have sufficient training to undertake nursing duties. The Act also provides that nurses must obtain annual practising certificates and that registration of nurses may be suspended on the ground of misconduct.

*Maternal Welfare.*

The report of Dr. Paget shows what has been done in the interests of maternal welfare. It is satisfactory to find some improvement in the situation as shown in the fall in the maternal-mortality rate and in the number of deaths from septic abortion. During the year a beginning was made on research work by the Obstetrical Committee of the Medical Research Council.

*Dental Hygiene.*

The dental clinic and training-school in Wellington is now completed. This handsome, well-appointed building will serve as a treatment centre for the children of the Wellington Metropolitan area and at the same time be the training depot to supply the Dominion with dental nurses. The School Dental Service has developed to the extent that treatment centres number 321 and 101,701 children receive regular dental treatment and instruction in oral hygiene. There is now a staff of 21 dental officers, 10 trained nurses, and 232 school dental nurses, together with 156 student dental nurses undergoing training.

*Maori Hygiene.*

The Maori population for 1939 was 89,092. The death-rate for the year was 19.92 (24.31 in 1938); the infant-mortality rate was 114.92 per 1,000 live births (153.26 in 1938). The Maori birth-rate was 46.20 per 1,000 population, as against 42.37 for 1938. Excess of births over deaths gives the Maori race the satisfactory natural increase of 2.63 per cent. The death-rate from all forms of tuberculosis was 44.00 per 10,000 of population (pulmonary, 33.67; other forms, 10.33).

The usual conferences of Medical Officers of Health were held. Discussions centred mainly round the provision of additional hospital beds and hutments for treatment of tuberculosis and the provision of water-supplies for Maori settlements and privies for Maori houses. Steps were taken to apportion on an equitable basis amongst the different health districts moneys provided in the estimates for this purpose.