

There is a slight improvement in nutrition, the subnormal nutrition for the last three years being 9.53 per cent. in 1944, 9.49 per cent. in 1945, and 8.07 per cent. in 1946. The Maori figures for the same period are : 1944, 6.33 per cent. ; 1945, 7.94 per cent. ; 1946, 7.38 per cent.

The posture of our school-children is poor, 36.91 per cent. failing to carry themselves well. The Maori figures are better than the European, but still 23.48 showed poor posture. This amount of postural defect has some relation, undoubtedly, to the insufficient rest and sleep common to a considerable proportion of our children. In some cases unbalanced dietaries will be helping the bodies to droop.

It is pleasing to see more perfect sets of teeth being recorded in European children—4.12 per cent. this year, against 2.99 per cent. last year. The Maori figure, 6.73 per cent., against 6.43 per cent. in 1945, steadily maintains the racial superiority here. In spite of all the work of District Nurses, there is much educational work yet to do.

Goitre in European children is at a very satisfactory level, 7.24 per cent., when one remembers that three or four times this amount was being recorded less than ten years ago. As the use of iodized salt has increased in the same period, it would seem that making good the iodine deficiency has reduced simple goitre incidence in our land.

The Medical State of Secondary-school Children

Our medical staff do not visit secondary schools as a routine. However, for one reason or another a few schools did have a medical inspection, 902 children being seen. Of these, approximately two out of three had medical or dental defects. Eliminating dental defects, approximately one out of three had some physical defect. The total of children seen was so small that detailed figures and percentages are not being given. The picture in this small group is one of unsatisfactory nutrition, prevalent skin troubles, poor posture, and unhealthy throats. It is planned to do more medical inspection in this adolescent group as staff becomes available, a commencement as a routine next year being a possibility in a limited way. Our medical staff is still at half the necessary strength.

THE MEDICAL STATE OF THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

Number of children seen	7,352
Number of defects found—	
Anæmia	93
Uncleanliness	15
Subnormal nutrition	647
Protuberant abdomen	264
Posture defective	347
Deformities—	
Chest	187
Legs	279
Feet	581
	1,047
Skin-diseases	373
Heart: Organic defects	75
Lungs	77
Dental—	
Gums and soft tissues	20
Dental caries	503
Nose and throat—	
Adenoids	229
Tonsils	722
Enlarged glands	282
Goitre	38
Eyes—	
External eye-disease	87
Defective vision	51
	14.23
	5.07
	1.02
	1.04
	0.27
	6.84
	3.11
	9.82
	3.83
	0.51
	1.18
	0.69