

*Artificial Limbs.*—Advantage has been taken of the organization set up for the manufacture and supply of artificial limbs for Service patients to make provision for the needs of civilian amputees. Civilians, by application to the Hospital Board for the district in which they reside, can obtain the same facilities for fitting and supply as can war amputees. Eighty per cent. of the cost of limbs supplied to civilians is borne by the Social Security Fund.

#### EXPENDITURE

As in previous years, a table showing the expenditure on the various classes of benefits since their inception is appended.

#### MATERNITY BENEFITS

This benefit continues satisfactorily. An increase in the benefit payable in respect of hospital services during the maternity period from a maximum of £11 to a maximum of £15 is reflected in the expenditure.

#### MEDICAL BENEFITS

It is to be noted that the expenditure on general medical practitioners' services has again risen considerably. A proportion of this increase is due to additions to the number of medical practitioners, both New Zealand graduates and overseas arrivals, now on the register.

#### HOSPITAL BENEFITS

Expenditure on this benefit has more or less stabilized, and the shortage of beds in both public and private hospitals operates against any substantial increase in this item.

#### PHARMACEUTICAL BENEFITS

The increase in expenditure on this item has continued, but at a lesser rate, due, it is believed, to more active co-operation on the part of the medical profession.

Considerable improvement in this direction is, however, still possible. A formulary is at present in the course of preparation. This, it is expected, will lead to a further decrease in the expenditure on this item.

#### RADIOLOGICAL SERVICES

These are entirely diagnostic in nature, and more and more use is being made of these facilities in conjunction with the general-practitioner services.

#### LABORATORY SERVICES

These are also entirely diagnostic in character, and now that they have become free and can be used without fear of cost to the patient, medical men are taking full advantage of laboratory examinations in order to give a correct diagnosis.

#### MASSAGE BENEFIT

These services are available free of cost at public hospitals and at approximately half-cost to the patient when the services of private masseurs are employed. Expenditure on this item has become more or less stabilized.

#### DISTRICT NURSING SERVICES

A very useful service is being rendered by Hospital Board and departmental nurses in bringing nursing services into the patient's own home and avoiding the unnecessary hospitalization of patients. These home visits, too, afford the nurses the opportunity of giving helpful instruction in measures for the promotion of health and of giving parents and relatives practical guidance in caring for minor sicknesses in the home.