

Twin Births.

There were 284 cases of twin births (568 children) and 2 cases of triplets registered in 1908. The number of children born was 25,940; the number of mothers was 25,652: thus, on an average, one mother in every 90 gave birth to twins, against 102 in 1907, 114 in 1906, 97 in 1905, and 93 in 1904. The proportion of plural births per 1,000 of all births during the past five years, was,—

Year.					All Births.	Plural Births.	Plural Births per 1,000 of all Births.
1904	..	..	..	..	22,766	242	10·63
1905	..	..	..	..	23,682	245	10·35
1906	..	..	..	..	24,252	215	8·87
1907	..	..	..	..	25,094	244	9·72
1908	..	..	..	..	25,940	286	11·03

Illegitimacy.

The births of 1,105 children were illegitimate: thus 43 in every 1,000 children born were born out of wedlock, against 46 in 1907.

The rates of illegitimacy in Australasia are quoted. That for 1907 in New Zealand was less than in any of the Australian States except South Australia and Western Australia.

Proportion of Illegitimate Births in every 100 Births.

Year.	Queensland.	New South Wales.	Victoria.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	New Zealand.
1898	6·04	6·93	5·29	3·62	4·99	5·09	4·23
1899	5·97	7·15	5·49	3·95	4·91	6·08	4·40
1900	6·40	7·01	5·91	4·24	4·82	5·43	4·63
1901	5·93	7·16	5·58	3·98	3·88	5·94	4·57
1902	6·04	6·60	5·51	4·36	3·96	5·36	4·46
1903	6·76	6·71	5·73	4·18	4·69	5·61	4·55
1904	6·89	7·12	5·74	4·01	4·36	5·82	4·52
1905	7·00	7·37	5·61	4·37	4·19	5·52	4·57
1906	7·68	7·04	5·58	4·00	4·78	5·78	4·67
1907	7·31	7·04	5·62	4·10	3·89	5·86	4·61

These figures show the proportion of illegitimate births to every 100 births for New Zealand to be fairly steady during the period 1898–1907; the difference amounts only to 0·38 per cent. on a comparison of the first and last years.

Births and Birth-rates in the Four Chief Cities.

The total number of births registered as occurring in the four chief centres and suburbs in 1908 was 7,276, as against 7,018 for the previous year. The birth-rates last year were,—

				Birth-rates per 1,000 of Mean Population.
Auckland City	...	...	...	30·56
"	and seven suburban boroughs	...	...	28·48
Wellington City	...	...	...	27·60
"	and three suburban boroughs	...	...	27·76
Christchurch City	...	...	...	28·43
"	and three suburban boroughs	...	...	27·39
Dunedin City	...	...	...	25·48
"	and six suburban boroughs	...	...	24·66

By the inclusion of the suburbs the rate is raised at Wellington, but lowered at Auckland, Christchurch, and Dunedin. It will be observed that, excluding suburbs, Auckland has the highest rate Christchurch next highest, Wellington and Dunedin following. The birth-rate for the Dominion last year was 27·45 per thousand. Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch are thus over the average, and Dunedin below it.

The birth-rates for two of the central boroughs last year show a fall when compared with 1907. In Christchurch the rate fell from 30·47 to 28·43, in Dunedin from 25·69 to 25·48, but rose in Auckland from 29·63 to 30·56, in Wellington from 27·53 to 27·60. The rates for five years, 1904 to 1908, are,—

		Births per 1,000 of Population.				
		1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Auckland (without suburbs)	...	31·08	30·06	29·96	29·63	30·56
Wellington	"	26·77	29·72	27·85	27·53	27·60
Christchurch	"	27·53	29·70	28·19	30·47	28·43
Dunedin	"	22·40	23·90	28·96	25·69	25·48