

never hope to make more than a hand-to-mouth living. Nurses conducting private hospitals, in which, if successful, they can usually make a fair income and provide for the future, need not be considered, although, as more and more the public hospitals are used, these will be reduced in number.

The whole problem of private nursing hinges on the fact that in order to have anything at all approximating to the number of nurses required during times of much sickness or epidemic there must be numbers out of work in normal times.

#### NURSES IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

The number of these nurses is increasing. This Department has added to its Nurse Inspectors Miss Broad, late Matron of the Hawera Hospital, to be attached to the office of the Medical Officer of Health, Dunedin, and Miss Buckley, A.R.R.C., late Matron, N.Z. Expeditionary Force, to that of the Medical Officer of Health, Christchurch. The work of these officers is chiefly in connection with private hospitals, midwives, and district nurses.

Under the Education Department school nurses were appointed, who from the 1st March were transferred to this Department, and more are being appointed from time to time. In the Education Department also are boarding-out officers and district agents under the Infant-life Act, and these are now almost entirely recruited from the ranks of professional nurses. These positions, which command a regular salary with superannuation and no night-work—the bugbear of nursing—appeal to many nurses, and there is no lack of applicants. They require to be carefully selected with a view to the difficulty of dealing with parents, and the necessity of tactful and sympathetic treatment of children. Nurses of good education, some administrative ability, and sufficient experience are needed.

#### DISTRICT HEALTH NURSING.

Still the Department is not able to fill all the demands from country districts. As pointed out above, this is frequently because no proper arrangements are made, by the people who ask for her, for the accommodation and comfort of the nurse. The Department is reproached for delay in complying with the demands of the people, but it must be remembered that nurses generally are not under its control, and cannot, whether they will or no, be sent where they are asked for. It is for the people who want them to offer some attractions to call forth applicants for these positions.

The Department has been gradually adding to its staff of nurses for district work, either for Natives or Europeans, and of nurses who can be sent at short notice to relieve other Government nurses or midwives, or even to relieve the Matrons of country hospitals at the request of a Board. All these nurses are to be styled "Health nurses," and will be detailed to any duty required by the Health Department.

If sent to a Hospital Board district whose duty it is to supply the needs of the district the nurse is appointed a member of the Public Service, thus retaining the benefits of superannuation, and her salary, paid by the Department, should be refunded to the Public Account. Nurses being appointed to the Public Service by various Departments has led to certain anomalies and inequalities in salary which have caused some comment. A scale of pay for Government nurses in different positions has been submitted to the Public Service Commissioner, and now that the great majority of these nurses will be members of the different divisions of the Health Department a more equitable method of payment and allowances and increments may be arranged.

#### PLUNKET NURSING.

There are now fifty Plunket nurses scattered throughout the country, and the society desires to place a large number more.

Nurses have been sent over from Australia to be trained in this special work at Karitane. A supervisor of Plunket nursing is now appointed by the society in the person of Miss Pattrick, who has for years been associated with Dr. Truby King's work, and who assisted him in London in the establishment of the School of Mothercraft in London. This is a step long recommended by the Department, and should tend to greatly increase the efficiency of Plunket nurses.

#### DENTAL NURSES.

The creation of a new branch of nursing is due to the need of dental care for children during their school age. A division of the Department has charge of this work, and a course of instruction has been arranged on very favourable terms for young women who desire to take it up. Trained nurses are to have preference in appointments, but beyond the knowledge of asepsis there is not a great need for the full training of a qualified nurse. The course is to be for two years, with a possible reduction in the case of registered nurses, and during that time an intelligent woman should be able to master the technical details of the class of dental work she will have to undertake. Dentists' assistants would be very suitable for this further training.

#### SUPERANNUATION FOR NURSES.

The Bill prepared last year as an amendment to the National Provident Fund unfortunately was not brought forward last session. It is hoped that it will be passed this year. A clause in the amendment to the Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act, 1909, makes a partial provision for superannua-