

NUTRITION.

The number of children suffering from subnormal nutrition noted as the result of routine examination is 6·3 per cent., and it is for this group that special health measures are indicated. Dr. Anderson, in Hawke's Bay, notes an increased number of children suffering from nervous disabilities (habit spasm, night terror, &c.) since the Napier earthquake.

Since improvement in nutrition can be secured only by enlisting the co-operation of the parents, it is satisfactory to note that the percentage of parents attending at the medical examination of their children is steadily increasing. The work of the school nurses in visiting homes is also of importance, resulting, as it does, in a wider recognition of the principles of correct nurture. Through the medium of the press, the distribution of health literature, and health exhibits at various industrial and agricultural shows, health education is steadily progressing. There still remains an enormous amount to be done before a large group of mothers are capable of utilizing to the best advantage what facilities they possess. Poor cookery and bad choice of foods are responsible for a great deal of preventable malnutrition. The importance of the organized school lunch is stressed by various School Medical Officers.

Dr. Stevenson reports encouraging results from the open-air school (Fendalton type), Kew, Dunedin, for dealing with debilitated children and tuberculosis contacts. Dr. Henderson forwards a comprehensive report on the open-air school, Nelson Street, Auckland (roll No. 29), held under the auspices of the Community Sunshine Association. The children attending this school are those suffering from malnutrition, nervous debility, organic defects (as to heart or respiratory system), minor physical deformities, &c. The modified curriculum includes extra feeding, long rest periods, sunbathing. This school is a valuable asset to Auckland children.

HEALTH CAMPS.

Health camps for debilitated children were held during the year as follows:—

(1) *Wanganui District*.—One hundred and twenty-eight children attended the health camp at Awapuni, Palmerston North, for one month, Dr. Elizabeth Gunn being the Medical Officer in Charge. Dr. Gunn's interesting report gives uncontrovertible evidence of the success and great value of this camp.

(2) *Motuihi Island*.—As the result of a proposal by the Hon. the Minister of Health, a highly successful health camp for Auckland children (seventy-eight in number) was held at Motuihi Island in the month of January, 1931, by the Auckland Sunshine Association in conjunction with the Health Department. The Quarantine Station, lent by the Health Department, proved to be admirable for the purpose of the camp. The children chosen were those suffering from debility or malnutrition and tuberculosis contacts. Consideration was also given to the home circumstances when the selection was made.

(3) *Health Camp, Waiheke Island*.—Various members of the school nursing staff assisted the Community Sunshine Association in the holding of a camp at Waiheke Island, Auckland Harbour. This camp was primarily for pupils of the Sunshine School, and these benefited greatly.

Space does not permit recognition of all who gave generous assistance in the holding of these camps. The work of training-college students (Auckland and Wellington) is especially valuable from both educational and social aspects.

The following account of an investigation is of interest:—

"THE NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF MILK.

"Experimental Evidence from Maori School-children.

(H. B. TURBOTT, Medical Officer of Health, East Cape Health District; A. F. ROLAND, Head Teacher, Hiruharama Native School.)

"In recent years experiments have been conducted in Britain to determine the influence of milk upon nutrition of school-children. Dr. Cory Mann (1926), Dr. Orr (1928), Dr. Leighton (1929), Miss Clark (1929), and co-workers have demonstrated from English, Scottish, and Irish children that milk is one of the most valuable foods of mankind. Early in 1930, following routine examination of a Native school, it occurred to one of us (H. B. T.), after noting the prevalence of scabies, septic sores, and poor nutrition in this particular school, that milk-feeding of these children along the lines of the English experiments could not fail to be of benefit. With the hearty co-operation of the head teacher (A. F. R.) the experiment was initiated along community lines, departmental help being unsolicited.

"The Maori pa and community around Hiruharama Native School has not shown themselves particularly enterprising in the past, and this was an additional reason for undertaking extra work among them. The homes and meeting-houses were dilapidated, the community thriftless and poor. After much patient propaganda the Marae Komiti promised, if improvement of the children's health could be demonstrated, to undertake pa improvements thereafter. The Maori School Committee was co-opted, and the two Native committees undertook to supply cows and to pasture them. Initial difficulties over grazing, the intervention of Saturday and Sunday, trouble from cows jumping fences and returning home, were patiently overcome. The senior pupils in turn milked the cows twice daily, built a sledge at school, and a further boy was detailed to bring the milk to school. The Maori School Committee found the money for grazing rights; Mr. Keelan allowed the use of his shed and implements and supervised milking operations; Mr. Ngarimu provided one cow, also supplying horse and harness for daily use; Mr. H. T. Reedy gave ready help, while Mr. Eru Moeke supplied three cows. To all these Maori helpers, and especially Mr. Moeke, are we heavily indebted. The cows were healthy, tested animals.

"The milk was stored in a cool spot at school, covered with butter-muslin, until use. At 11 a.m. (play-time), and again at 12 a.m. (lunch-time), pupils were assembled and given their milk ration by individual cups. The primer classes were given 1 pint, and the standard classes $\frac{1}{2}$ pint daily, throughout the whole thirteen weeks of spring term, 1930. Physical measurements were recorded before milk feeding began, half-way through the term, and finally at the end of the thirteenth week. Height