

PART V.—NURSING.

I have the honour to submit my annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1938.

During the year I had the privilege of being granted study leave to take advantage of a travelling fellowship granted to me by the Rockefeller Foundation. While I was absent from New Zealand Miss J. Moore acted as Director of the Division of Nursing, and I have to acknowledge the efficient manner in which she carried out these duties, particularly as the notice of my leave was very short and the necessary adjustments of staff had to take place suddenly. Miss E. R. Bridges, who returned from abroad in January, 1937, relieved Miss Moore from some of her duties in connection with the post-graduate course, and with the help of Miss H. Comrie, Nurse Inspector in the Wellington District Office, the usual course was covered. I am very grateful to these officers for the additional duties they carried out so well.

STAFF CHANGES.

Various changes have been made during the year amongst the senior officers. Owing to the opening of the Palmerston North District Office, Miss H. Comrie was transferred from Wellington to this new district as Nurse Inspector, leaving the Wellington District Office with one Nurse Inspector instead of two. With the extension of the district nursing services which is taking place in the near future consideration will have to be given to appointing additional supervising nursing officers in each of the main centres whose work will be perhaps concentrated on the public-health aspect.

On 28th December, 1937, the tragic death occurred in London of Miss N. Arnold, who was at that time on special leave having just completed a study tour of obstetrical hospitals in Scandinavia and Holland. Miss Arnold was a particularly able officer of the Department with a very pleasing personality who had won much affection and admiration. It is to be deeply regretted that her career ended while still a comparatively young woman.

Owing to Miss Arnold's death changes in the matronships of St. Helens Hospital have taken place. Miss M. Boyce has been transferred to Wellington; Miss E. Sparkes to Christchurch; Miss R. Paterson to Invercargill; and, as Miss Oppenheim is having extended leave as from 1st March, Miss A. Joyce—who relieved as Matron at St. Helens Hospital, Wellington, during Miss Arnold's absence—is now relieving at St. Helens Hospital, Auckland.

Miss Mirams, Miss Jewiss, Miss Small, and Miss Williams have resumed duty after special leave to visit abroad, during which they took advantage of the opportunity to observe public-health nursing developments in Great Britain and, in the case of Miss Jewiss, on the Continent, and, Miss Small in Canada. Miss Jewiss has been stationed in Auckland to assist with the co-ordination of the district nursing duties and Miss Small in Wellington to develop a more intensive programme in a special area.

Ten additional district nurses have been appointed in the North Island during the year, and an agreement has been reached with the Wellington Hospital Board by which the district nurses in the rural areas controlled by the Board undertake departmental duties. During the coming year it is planned to extend the work being carried out in the South Island.

TRAINING OF NURSES.

During my prolonged absence from New Zealand the Nurses and Midwives Registration Board only met twice—in November and again in March.

The term of appointment of Miss Tennent and Miss Morgan, representatives of the nurses and midwives on the Registration Board ceased in October. It was with great regret to the Board, and to the midwives whom she represented, that Miss Morgan's decision that she could not stand for renomination was learned; but it was with pleasure that Miss Tennent's intimation that she was prepared to stand again was received.

The Hon. the Minister of Health, therefore, on the nomination of the New Zealand Registered Nurses' Association reappointed Miss Tennent for a further term of three years, and appointed Miss Trotter in place of Miss Morgan.

The business of the Board has fallen into two distinct categories:—

(a) *New Business*—

- (1) With the permission of the Hon. the Minister of Health, the regulations governing the institution of the proposed Preliminary State Examination have been passed, and this examination will take place in November, 1938, for the first time.
- (2) The syllabus for the teaching of nutrition and dietetics has been revised to include more of the preventive aspect of this subject.
- (3) Consideration has been given to a scheme which might be submitted to the Government for training a "Nursing Aid" with the double object of bridging the gap for those girls who leave school early and who must earn until they enter hospital and of preparing a woman who would undertake the care of a home and the nursing of the chronic sick in the home.

The training which is proposed would be of two years' duration and would include a thorough training in domestic work and the daily hygiene of a patient.