

Private-hospital Facilities.—There are two private hospitals in Hastings. They are efficiently run, and charge from £4 4s. to £6 6s. per week.

Provision for Abnormal Cases.—Facilities for those cases which cannot be dealt with otherwise are available at the Memorial Hospital in Hastings and at the Napier general hospital.

The Committee was informed that febrile cases are usually transferred from the Hastings annexe to the Napier general hospital, a practice which is not to be commended.

Ante-natal Care.—In Napier adequate private service is general, and the Medical Officer of the hospital attends once a week at the McHardy Home for the benefit of cases to be confined by the matron under the authority of the Board. The Plunket Society also runs an ante-natal clinic in the town, but a certain overlapping between its work and that of the doctors and of the McHardy Home tends to reduce its usefulness, and the consensus of medical opinion is against its continuance. In Hastings ante-natal services are admirably organized, patients who do not wish to book a doctor having access to the clinic at the Memorial annexe.

Provisions for Unmarried Mothers.—The unmarried mother is admitted to both the Soldiers' Memorial annexe and the McHardy Home on the same terms as the married. She is also cared for by St. Mary's Home, a Church of England institution. Only six cases were confined in the last-named home last year, and, as this small number makes it difficult to maintain an adequate standard of service, the Committee recommends that consideration be given to maintaining this home as a rescue home only, and transferring cases to the McHardy Home for confinement.

District Services.—A district nurse is stationed at Hastings and serves an area of some hundred square miles. Her attendance is confined to Maoris.

Maori Conditions.—Maoris in the Hawke's Bay district number over two thousand, and their needs are partially served by a district nurse, who does almost all the ante-natal work among them, as it is difficult to persuade them to attend the clinic. The nurse endeavours to persuade Maori patients to come to hospital for confinement, and they are showing more willingness to do so than was formerly the case. They are admitted without question, and in increasing numbers, to the Hastings annexe, and whenever possible a ward is set aside for them. About sixty were confined in the annexe last year. The nurse confines about two cases per month in their homes, the remainder being confined in Native fashion. Increasing confidence is leading the Maori midwives to summon the nurse when difficulties arise. Birth injuries do not appear to be specially common among the Maoris.

Summary and Recommendations.

Hospital accommodation is adequate in the Hawke's Bay district, and means of transport readily available. The needs of the Maori population are fairly well provided for, and the confidence of the Maoris in European methods is growing. An extension of the district nursing service for both Maoris and Europeans in order to develop domiciliary ante-natal care is commended.

The Committee recommends that abnormal cases occurring in the maternity annexe or private hospitals in Hastings and requiring transfer to general wards of the hospital should be admitted to the general wards of the Memorial Hospital instead of being transferred to Napier.

22. WAIPAWA HOSPITAL BOARD DISTRICT.

From Cape Turnagain for some forty miles north the coast forms the eastern boundary of this district, which is roughly fan-shaped, its western boundary extending for some five miles along the foot of the Ruahine Range. The district comprises the counties of Waipawa, Waipukurau, and Patanga. The principal towns are Waipukurau (with 2,050 inhabitants; population increase 16·28 per cent. during the ten years from 1926–36) and Waipawa (1,157 inhabitants; increase of population 0·52 per cent.). These two towns, and the settlements of Takapau on the southern and Otane on the northern border, are all connected by the railway. The total rural population of the three counties is 7,000 and in the ten-year intercensal period there was a general increase of population amounting to 0·99 per cent. in Waipawa, 12·19 per cent. in Waipukurau, and 23·23 per cent. in Patanga. Roads are good throughout the district, dairy-farming being the main industry.

WAIPUKURAU.

Public-hospital Facilities.—There is no maternity annexe at the general hospital, the Board's maternity hospital being situated at Waipawa, five miles distant. The licensee of the private hospital in Waipukurau is willing to take indigent cases on behalf of the Hospital Board should the need arise, but the Board has not hitherto made any such arrangement.

Private-hospital Facilities.—A private hospital of four beds provides satisfactory accommodation. The charges are £4 4s. to £5 5s. per week.