

Accommodation and Training.—As an essential adjunct to the satisfactory operation of a service of this nature the question of training and accommodation arises, and in this connection the Department is in the process of setting up accommodation hostels in Auckland and Wellington. These hostels, besides providing board and lodgings for Home Aids, will be used as training-grounds for inexperienced girls who will be under the supervision of a qualified Matron. It is also hoped to arrange for certain types of training to be given in technical colleges.

541. It has been impossible so far to meet all the demands made on the Service, and, unfortunately, a number of very deserving cases have had to be declined due to insufficient Aids being available, but with the continued expansion of the Service the Department hopes to be in a position in the near future to meet all demands.

542. The Service is attracting a very fine type of woman, no doubt due to the fact that the status aimed at is higher and the conditions of employment are better than those normally associated with domestic workers. Gratification has been expressed in innumerable cases by householders who have had the benefit of the Service, and it can be said without doubt that the Aids are fulfilling a very important and urgent need in the community.

543. On present indications, and judging from the demand already being made, it is estimated that there is scope for the expansion of the Service in the main centres and the secondary towns up to a total of about 120 to 150 Aids before the Department is in a position to meet all reasonably deserving cases. Expansion to this extent would probably enable the Department to give wider service to mothers with young children, &c., requiring part-time help in the home. It is the aim of the Department to build up the Service to this standard as soon as possible, and at the same time to do all possible by means of training and refresher courses to ensure the very highest quality of service.

544. The Service actually commenced operation early in December, 1945, when a start was made in Auckland and Wellington. Up to the end of March, 1946, the Service had been extended to the following additional centres: Christchurch, Dunedin, Rotorua, Napier, Hastings, Palmerston North, Nelson, Timaru, Oamaru, Ashburton, and Invercargill. At that time the total number of Aids employed was 35, but this number had been built up to 64 by the end of May, 1946.

The following table summarizes the activities of the Service from commencement up to 31st March, 1946 :—

ACTIVITIES OF THE HOME AID SERVICE DURING MONTHS OF DECEMBER, 1945, AND JANUARY, FEBRUARY, AND MARCH, 1946

—	December, 1945, and January, 1946.	February, 1946.	March, 1946.	Total, December, 1945, to March, 1946.
Number of Aids employed at end of period	20	30	35	35
Details of cases commenced during period—				
Maternity	46	34	54	134
Sickness	49	43	56	148
Other	4	6	8	18
Total	99	83	118	300
Approved applications for Aids pending at end of period	42	78	150	150
Details of applications for Aids declined during period—				
Unsatisfactory household ..	1	1	..	2
Insufficient merit	16	3	13	32
Insufficient aids	51	55	89	195
Total	68	59	102	229