

Table No. 9.—Showing the Percentage Distribution of Female Population of New Zealand from 1881 to 1945

Census.	Ante-reproductive Ages (under 15).	Reproductive Ages (15 and under 45).	Post-reproductive Ages. (45 and over).
1881	46·83	43·71	9·46
1891	42·20	44·72	13·08
1896	38·02	47·70	14·28
1901	34·66	50·03	15·31
1906	32·98	50·94	16·08
1911	32·58	50·56	16·86
1916	32·70	48·86	18·44
1921	31·57	48·47	19·96
1926	29·94	47·73	22·33
1936	25·32	46·85	27·83
1945	24·44	45·47	35·09

The most significant feature of this table is the very great relative fall in the female population of ante-reproductive ages from 46·83 per cent. in 1881 to 24·44 per cent. in 1945, and the increase in the post-reproductive ages from 9·46 per cent. to 35·09 per cent. The fall over a long period from 1881 to 1945 in the ante-reproductive ages is so great that we are definitely on a lower child-producing level. The causes are in the past. The alarming feature is that the steep fall in the numbers in the ante-reproductive ages between 1881 and 1911 has not been reversed but a moderate fall has continued. We are now reaping the results of the early fall in greatly increased percentages in the post-reproductive ages. The stage is now set for a fall in the proportion in the reproductive ages and an increase in the birth-rate will have little effect in the short run since the damage is done. While there will be and must be a lessened relative inflow into the reproductive age-groups the ante-reproductive group could be increased fairly rapidly if women of reproductive ages decided to have larger families.

The crude birth-rates as shown in Table No. 5 do not give an adequate picture of the real potentialities of the community, which, as stated earlier, is related rather to the number of women of child-bearing age. In the following table details are given both of legitimate births and of total births.

Since the principal source of population increase is from married women, the number of births per 1,000 married women is shown, as well as total births per 1,000 of all women of child-bearing age.

Table No. 10.—Table showing Legitimate and Total Births from 1878 to 1945

Year.	Number of Births.		Birth-rate of Legitimate Children per 1,000 Married Women.	Birth-rate per 1,000 Women 15 and under 45.
	Legitimate.	Total.		
1878	17,341	17,770	340·0	221·3
1881	18,198	18,732	315·0	194·8
1886	18,697	19,299	298·2	163·7
1891	17,635	18,273	279·2	139·2
1896	17,778	18,612	254·6	117·6
1901	19,554	20,491	246·2	111·7
1906	23,120	24,252	235·3	114·1
1911	25,276	26,354	211·7	109·5
1916	27,363	28,509	193·6	106·7
1921	27,309	28,567	181·6	99·0
1926	27,000	28,473	166·9	90·9
1936	23,711	24,837	136·6	72·2
1941	*	35,100	*	96·7
1942	*	33,574	*	92·0
1943	*	30,311	*	82·6
1944	*	33,599	*	91·2
1945	*	37,007	*	*

* Not available.