

School Hygiene.—During the year Dr. Elizabeth Gunn was appointed Director of this Division. School Medical Officers continued to carry out examinations of pre-school children and children attending kindergarten and convent schools, the service being much appreciated. Other important matters coming under the attention of this Division were the Milk-in-schools Scheme and health camps. Health educational addresses on such subjects as diet, general health, &c., were given to parents, teachers, and school-children. Children in contact with pulmonary tuberculosis have been kept under close observation.

Hospitals.—Hospital Boards generally have shown considerable activity in building programmes to provide the necessary accommodation for patients and nurses. In this connection it is interesting to note that the estimated capital expenditure, excluding loan expenditure during the year, amounted to some £248,864, of which £97,719 was required to be met by current levy and a similar amount by subsidy. This represented an increase of £21,262 on each of these sources of revenue compared with the estimates for the previous year.

The estimates continue to show increase in maintenance-costs, but it is gratifying to note that the estimated receipts from patients' fees and charitable-aid recoveries provided for the substantial increase of £84,923.

A reduction of £51,497 was estimated in charitable-aid expenditure to recipients of outdoor relief due to the falling off in applications for assistance. The improved positions with patients' fees, charitable-aid recoveries, and outdoor relief is accounted for largely by the Government's pension legislation as well as by improved economic conditions.

During the year the amalgamation was effected, under the provisions of the Hospitals and Charitable Institutions Amendment Act, 1932, of the Thames and Waihi and Coromandel Boards, to be known as "the Thames Hospital Board," and of the Wallace and Fiord and the Southland Boards, to be known as "the Southland Hospital Board."

A Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into and report upon certain matters relative to the management and administration of the Napier Hospital. The personnel of the Commission was E. D. Mosley, Esq., Principal Stipendiary Magistrate (Chairman), Sir James S. Elliott, Kt., and Miss Cecilia McKenny, R.N. As a result of the Commission the administration of the hospital has been placed on a more satisfactory basis.

Full statistical and financial information in regard to hospitals is published in a special appendix to this report.

Nursing Division.—At the beginning of 1937 the Rockefeller Foundation granted Miss Lambie a travelling fellowship which enabled her to visit North America, Great Britain, and the Continent of Europe. In her report Miss Lambie deals with various matters for improving the nursing services in New Zealand and submits suggestions arising from her study of nursing administration in other countries. Among other matters to which attention is drawn are factors bearing on the shortage of nurses, improvement of the obstetrical nursing service, health of nurses, and the post-graduate course for nurses.

Maternal Welfare.—Measures for the promotion of maternal welfare are reviewed by Dr. Paget. The Queen Mary Maternity Hospital, Dunedin, which was opened during the year, will afford better facilities for the training of medical students in obstetrics. The Committee appointed to inquire into maternity services continued to take evidence throughout New Zealand, and their report can be expected to give a comprehensive review of the existing position and of necessary improvements.

The encouraging progress that has been made over the last eleven years in maternal welfare in New Zealand has been achieved by the combined effort of and close co-operation between general practitioners, medical officers of maternity hospitals and clinics, medical practitioners practising obstetrics, and the officers of the Department.

Dental Hygiene.—The Director reports that during the year 1,568 schools were under systematic treatment, 89,483 children received treatment, and 759,873 operations were performed. The programme for extending the School Dental Service to all primary schools within the next three years is proceeding according to plan. The new building in Wellington, which is in course of erection, will, when completed, provide adequate facilities for a modern clinic and training-school. The appointment of seventy-six student dental nurses and provision for twenty-two new clinics was authorized. Additional staff is to be appointed to extend the scope of fourteen of the existing clinics. An account is given of an emergency scheme of dental treatment of North Auckland Maoris carried out through the co-operation of the School of Dentistry, Otago University. In ten days 2,881 patients received attention, while 16,270 teeth were extracted.

Maori Hygiene.—The following table shows a comparison between Maori and European vital statistics :—

	Maori.	European.
Birth-rate per 1,000 of population	46·64	17·29
Infantile death-rate per 1,000 live births	92·17	31·21
Crude death-rate per 1,000 of population	18·29	9·08
Natural increase, per cent.	2·45	0·82
Crude death-rates per 10,000 of population—		
Tuberculosis, all forms	35·70	3·91
Pulmonary tuberculosis	27·72	3·28
Other forms of tuberculosis	7·99	0·63
Influenza	3·99	0·73
Typhoid fever	2·35	0·06