

by a wider section of the public and, in the North Island, by the Maoris. In one country hospital the number of Maori patients in comparison to non-Maori patients has increased from one sixteenth to one third in four years. This is no doubt due to the Maoris' increasing knowledge and respect for the health services of the country.

General Hospitals.

Hospital authorities have been most concerned by firstly, an apparent shortage of applicants and, secondly, a shortage of registered nurses. It is therefore necessary to focus attention on these two factors—

(a) *Shortage of Applicants.*—The following table shows that there are 929·54 more occupied hospital beds used for training-school purposes and 592 more pupil nurses in training than in 1932. There has been approximately an increase of 200 entrants a year. It might be pointed out that these returns cover a period of a falling birth-rate after the Great War, when fewer girls of the particular age-group which enter hospital for training were available and when there has been experienced in the last three years a great demand for female labour in every avenue of work arising from the Government's expansion policy:—

A. Daily Average Occupied Beds for all Training-Schools.

31st December, 1932	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,981·72
31st December, 1933	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,059·30
31st March, 1935*	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,220·05
31st March, 1936	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,467·41
31st March, 1937	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,734·85
31st March, 1938	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,911·26

B. Total Nursing Staff for all Training-Schools.

	1932.	1933.	1934.	1935.	1936.	1937.
Total nursing staff	1,769	1,967	2,116	2,264	2,442	2,534
Total pupil nurses on staff ..	1,257	1,412	1,502	1,640	1,803	1,849
Total registered nurses on staff ..	512	555	614	624	639	685

C. Total Number of Nurses Sitting and Passing State Examinations.

	1932.	1933.	1934.	1935.	1936.	1937.
Number sitting	385	448	403	354	380	478
Number passed	272	338	280	262	315	366

* Statistics changed from calendar to financial year.

While it is essential to have a well-organized and sufficient nursing service for the country's needs it should be obvious that the rapidly expanding hospital occupancy cannot depend on increased student labour for staffing purposes without considerably lowering the very excellent standard maintained by the majority of hospitals and without ultimately repeating the condition when the country was faced with a large supply of nurses it could not absorb.

All the suitable hospitals have already been approved as training-schools. It is probable that the proportion of nurses to patients (1 to 2 occupied beds) as at present will be increased slightly to carry out the work efficiently and to give shorter hours, but this increase should be largely with registered nursing staff, as the proportion of 685 registered staff to 1,849 pupil staff, or approximately 1 to 3, is too low.

(b) *Shortage of Registered Nurses.*—An analysis of the present position shows that, eliminating certain wastage throughout the year, there are 4,306 nurses on the active registers to date. As far as is known, the following figures give some idea as to how they are employed:—

Public hospitals which are training-schools	685
Public hospitals which are not training-schools	300 (approx.)
Obstetrical hospitals (public)	100 (approx.)
Private hospitals (general)	748
Public health nursing (Health Department, Child-welfare Division, Plunket Society, Hospital Boards, Voluntary Organizations)	325
Tropical nursing service	28
Private nursing	
Nurses attached to bureaux	420
Nurses not attached to bureaux	300 (approx.)
Overseas	300 (approx.)
Unaccounted for	1,100
Total	4,306

During the year this Office has known officially of 101 nurses leaving New Zealand for overseas, and only 12 have returned. Marriages, death, &c., have caused officially a wastage of 46, but this is by no means correct, and it would seem that there is a wastage of at least two hundred nurses a year.