

14. MERCURY BAY.

This small hospital, situated twenty-two miles from Coromandel, was not visited by the Committee, but the local doctor was interviewed. The hospital is not under the control of any Board, and is supported by local efforts, subsidized pound for pound by the Government. It appears to be sufficient for the needs of the district, about twelve cases a year being attended.

15. TAURANGA HOSPITAL BOARD DISTRICT.

This district occupies a strip of coast-line sixty miles long between the Bay of Plenty and Waihi boundaries, the strip being some ten miles wide at its eastern and twenty at its northern extremity. The district also includes the islands of Motiti and Matakana, each having a population of some two hundred persons, Tauranga, the principal town (3,387 inhabitants), is in the main a popular residential and health resort, and boasts but little in the way of commercial and industrial interests. Its increase in population during the 1926-36 intercensal period was 32·88 per cent. The total rural population is 9,571, and showed an increase of 24·84 per cent. for the same period. The main industry is dairy-farming. Though roading is, on the whole, satisfactory, transport difficulties arise on account of the long distances of some localities from the hospital centre. The difficulty regarding the provision of home help is being admirably met by the efforts of the Women's Division of the Farmers' Union, who have so far been able to supply a housekeeper to every woman applying for help. Some leading women, however, are of the opinion that a residential nursery in Tauranga would be of great assistance in some cases.

TAURANGA AND TE PUKE.

Hospital Facilities.—There is no maternity annexe at the general hospital. The facilities in the town consist of one private hospital with four beds and two midwives' homes with one bed each. According to the statement of one medical practitioner, at least twice this number of beds is required.

Patients who cannot afford the private hospital fees of £4 4s. and £5 5s. must go to the ten-bed hospital at Te Puke, eighteen miles away. Cases from Katikati, twenty-two miles north of Tauranga, are also obliged to go to Te Puke, passing through Tauranga *en route*.

Patients residing at Oropi, ten miles from Tauranga, can reach Te Puke direct, but the road is so bad that a detour through Tauranga, making a journey of twenty-two miles, is often preferred. Objections are sometimes raised by European patients regarding the large number of Maoris admitted to Te Puke Hospital. While accommodation at Te Puke is adequate for the number of cases applying, the difficulties arising from the transport situation are evident.

Provision for Abnormal Cases.—Except for any cases which may be admitted as emergencies to the general hospital, Te Puke hospital affords the only provision for abnormal cases.

Provision for Unmarried Mothers.—Unmarried mothers are admitted to Te Puke Hospital, and in a few cases have been admitted to a private hospital with the financial help of women's organizations.

Maori Conditions.—No provision for Maoris exist in Tauranga, the private hospital refusing to take them. A considerable number are confined at Te Puke, and the difficulty of isolating them from the white patients is a source of trouble there. The district nurse gives ante-natal supervision, but finds it impossible to do this adequately among a Maori population of 2,883 scattered over an area eighty miles in length by fifteen in width, and including two islands. Apart from the area in the immediate vicinity of Te Puke, the tendency is still for Maori confinements to take place at home. Many Maoris receive no ante-natal care whatever, as the district nurse cannot visit them all.

Summary and Recommendations.

It is evident from the foregoing that maternity facilities in the Town of Tauranga are inadequate, and the necessity for poorer patients to go to Te Puke for confinement involves undue travelling-expenses and consequent lack of proper ante-natal attention. The Committee favours the erection of a maternity annexe in Tauranga, which would also serve the outlying districts of Katikati and Oropi. It is thought that an annexe of six or eight beds would suffice for this purpose.

It is recommended that separate ward accommodation be made for Europeans and Maoris, both in this annexe and at Te Puke.

In the interests of Maori maternal welfare, the Committee favours the appointment of a second district nurse for Maoris.

16. BAY OF PLENTY HOSPITAL BOARD.

This district occupies the same area as the County of Whakatane. In shape it is roughly rectangular, occupying some twenty miles of coast-line on the Bay of Plenty,