

A two- or three-bed hospital at Foxton would be a decided asset to this centre. Encouragement of private enterprise by the payment of an adequate subsidy, or the leasing of a hospital to a private licensee, would be a more satisfactory and economical scheme for this area than an annexe under direct control of the Board.

The needs of the southern portion of the district are well served by the Otaki Hospital. Work here is hampered by old and inconvenient buildings, but it is understood that the Board contemplates making alterations in the near future which will, at least in part, remedy the present defects.

32. WELLINGTON HOSPITAL BOARD DISTRICT.

The district covered by this Board includes the Wellington urban area, the Upper Hutt Borough, and two small counties, Hutt and Makara, which extend northwards to Paraparaumu, some thirty-five miles up the west coast and eastwards some fifteen miles to the Rimutaka Ranges.

The district is a very hilly one, but well roaded, with two main highways leading out of Wellington, one to the north through Johnsonville and over the Paekakariki Hill to the Manawatu, and the other north-eastwards through the Hutt Valley and over the Rimutaka Hill to the Wairarapa.

It is along these two main highways that the extra-urban centres of population are mostly situated; the chief of these are Upper Hutt (3,863), Porirua (2,257), Paekakariki (612), and Paraparaumu (1,069).

The population served and the rate of development in the different areas during the ten-year intercensal period, 1926–36, are indicated in the following table:—

Wellington Urban Area.					Population.	Increase in Ten-year Period.
						Per Cent.
Wellington City	..	..	..	..	115,368	17·00
Petone Borough	..	..	..	..	10,864	17·45
Lower Hutt Borough	..	..	..	..	15,848	100·45
Eastbourne Borough	..	..	..	..	2,255	23·52
Johnsonville Town District	..	..	..	..	1,726	33·13
Upper Hutt Borough	..	..	..	..	3,863	35·54
Hutt County	..	..	..	..	8,705	29·12
Makara County	..	..	..	..	4,305	15·76

The striking feature of the development of Wellington and its environs has been the increase in population in the Hutt Valley, particularly in the Lower Hutt Borough.

Wellington, as the seat of Government and a busy commercial and shipping centre, has a population representative of these various interests; Petone is essentially an industrial area; Lower Hutt owes its phenomenal increase partly to the fact that large industries are developing within its bounds, and partly to the fact that, more and more, it is becoming a residential suburb for Wellington.

Johnsonville and Upper Hutt are centres of small farming communities; there are a number of residential areas in the counties of Hutt and Makara, otherwise the residents are mainly engaged in small farming, mostly dairying.

WELLINGTON CITY.

In Wellington City the trend towards hospitalization of all maternity cases is particularly evident, 90 per cent. to 95 per cent. of all confinements being conducted in maternity hospitals or maternity homes.

Public-hospital Facilities.—Public-hospital facilities for normal cases are provided mainly by the Government St. Helens Hospital Service. The Wellington St. Helens Hospital is administered on the usual lines as a “closed” hospital under the medical supervision of a part-time stipendiary Medical Superintendent, an Assistant Superintendent, and two clinical assistants.

The hospital is carrying out very efficiently its primary purpose as a training-school for midwives and maternity nurses, and is adequately staffed.

The building is not a modern one, but by extensive alterations and additions to equipment all reasonable requirements are met, and the records of the hospital bear witness to the fine service given.

The ante-natal service is organized on sound lines, and a post-natal clinic is being developed.

The use of anæsthetics in labour is subject to the limitations of a “no-doctor” system. Chloroform by the Murphy inhaler method has been used as a routine, but is being replaced by more satisfactory methods of anæsthesia, and other measures of pain-relief are being cautiously extended.