

*Private Hospitals.*—There are four private hospitals in Invercargill, providing nineteen beds. Ante-natal care is provided to a varying extent by St. Helens, the Plunket Society, and medical practitioners.

*Unmarried Mothers.*—The Victoria Home, which is controlled by a Ladies Committee, meets the needs of unmarried mothers. The institution was commenced forty-two years ago, and since 1906 has provided a maternity ward. The institution is hampered by want of funds. Experience in other centres shows that benefits are conferred on both the unmarried mothers and the controlling organization by combining the functions of an ordinary maternity hospital for married women with the maternity facilities for unmarried mothers. The rescue work, of course, is of necessity kept separate. Victoria Home might well be maintained as a rescue-home, admitting the patients to St. Helens or other hospital for their actual maternity service.

### Recommendations.

(1) The present St. Helens Hospital building at Invercargill is regarded as inadequate and it is recommended that a new St. Helens Hospital be erected at the earliest opportunity.

(2) It is recommended that public provision for abnormal cases be made, either in a new St. Helens Hospital or in a ward of the Hospital Board institution.

The need for intermediate hospital services is discussed.

### 48. WALLACE AND FIORD DISTRICT.

Since the visit of the Committee this large sparsely scattered Hospital Board district has been amalgamated with the Southland Hospital Board area. The population of 12,166 is engaged in mixed farming, timber-milling, and farming, and includes about one hundred Maoris. The Fiord County, which has a population of nineteen, has decreased by 13·64 per cent. in the last ten years, while that of Wallace has increased by 7·68 per cent. in the same period.

The centres of community interest are :—

Riverton, population 908 ; increase 4·13 per cent.

Otautau, population 592 ; decrease 10·17 per cent.

Nightcaps, population 612 ; decrease 5·41 per cent.

Tuatapere, population 550.

*Public Facilities.*—At Riverton there is a six-bedded Board hospital leased to a nurse. The average number of occupied beds was 1·29 last year, and the number of patients confined therein was forty-one.

No provision is made for indigent cases to receive medical attention, and in the event of abnormal labour these patients are dependent upon the generosity of medical practitioners.

#### NIGHTCAPS.

At Nightcaps there is another Board hospital leased to a nurse with a small subsidy. The Board's provision of maternity facilities at Nightcaps has been most unsatisfactory, and steps will need to be taken to ensure adequate provision under the new Board. The hospital has three beds and admits twenty-five to thirty cases a year. This hospital serves the needs of the mining township of Ohai, which has a population of 847.

#### TUATAPERE.

At Tuatapere is another Board-owned hospital, leased to a nurse. The Board's management here has been as unsatisfactory as at Nightcaps, and improved provision must be ensured under the new Board. No provision has been made for indigent cases, nor has the lessee been paid a subsidy sufficient to enable her to earn a living wage. The hospital has four beds, and thirty-six patients are confined therein per annum.

*Private Facilities.*—There is a four-bedded private hospital at Riverton.

#### OTAUTAU.

At Otautau there are two residences in which maternity services are provided. One is a licensed maternity hospital of four beds.

*District Nurse.*—There is a district nurse stationed at Otautau. She is an employee of the Riverton Board. She attends the thirty to forty Maori families, which are resident in the district, for general conditions, but she has attended no maternity cases amongst the Maoris.

### Recommendations.

(1) That adequate provision should be made for the payment of the medical and nursing services rendered to indigent patients.

(2) That the subsidies to the lessees of the maternity hospitals at Nightcaps, Riverton, and Tuatapere should be increased, and that the equipment in those hospitals should be brought up to accepted standards.