

Dr. Phyllis Moir, who spent some months in the North Auckland district, states—

“Amongst the Maoris a never-ending battle against scabies and head lice is carried on with results varying according to the time and energy spent. Dental caries is an almost untouched problem in North Auckland. Maoris suffer less from dental caries than white children, but a very large percentage were affected by spongy gums, exuding blood and pus. Conjunctivitis occurs frequently amongst the Maoris. The diet of both white and Maori children in North Auckland is deficient in many respects. Excess of starchy food is a common fault. Fresh vegetables in winter are scarce and very difficult to obtain. The staple food of the Maoris appears to be bread, tea, and kumeras.”

EXAMINATION OF CHATHAM ISLANDS SCHOOLS.

It is interesting to record the results of the examination of five schools in the Chatham Islands. These schools were examined last year by Dr. Knight, Medical Officer of the Chatham Islands, and it is noteworthy that out of 142 children examined 70 had perfect sets of teeth. Fifty-two children were notified as being defective, the greatest incidence being enlarged tonsils, 33; nasal obstruction, 26; dental caries, 23; enlarged glands, 11; and impetigo, 9. Three children suffered from subnormal nutrition. The following extract from Dr. Knight's report sets out the general state of health of the children at Chatham :—

“On the whole, Chatham Islands children are surprisingly healthy—surprisingly because there is nothing like the variety of diet obtainable by children on the mainland, particularly in regard to fruit and vegetables. From my own experience I expected the fruit question to be a difficult one, and was not surprised to find that probably 50 per cent. of the children never see fresh fruit. In the matter of vegetables the position is not quite so bad, but there are, nevertheless, some children who get little enough, and I found one Native family whose diet was meat and potatoes, bread and dripping, and a little milk for all, including an infant of eighteen months. There are many children who cannot be classified under any of the given headings but who would be improved with an occasional course of, say, malt and cod-liver oil. The children showed no evidence of lack of cleanliness, and all were warmly clad. It will be seen that the chief defects are the teeth and nasopharynx.”

MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF ENTRANTS TO TEACHING PROFESSION.

The following is a summary of the examination of 1,133 applicants for entrance to training college :—

Number of applicants examined	..	..	..	..	..	1,133
Number with any defects of vision	..	..	..	..	..	172
Number wearing glasses	..	..	..	..	..	129
Number with defective hearing	..	..	..	..	..	6
Number with any past or present aural disease	..	..	..	..	..	6
Number with nose defect	..	..	..	..	..	26
Number with throat defect	..	..	..	..	..	76
Number with enlarged thyroid	..	..	..	..	..	170
Teeth—						
Number with any caries when seen	..	..	..	..	..	156
Number with one artificial plate	..	..	..	..	..	92
Number with upper and lower plates	..	..	..	..	..	37
Number with malocclusion	..	..	..	..	..	15
Number with any heart or lung condition	..	..	..	..	..	15
Number deferred for immediate treatment	..	..	..	..	..	164
Number considered as excellent	..	..	..	..	..	228
Number considered as average	..	..	..	..	..	751
Number considered as fair	..	..	..	..	..	119
Number accepted	..	..	..	..	..	1,107
Number deferred for further examination	..	..	..	..	..	15
Number rejected	..	..	..	..	..	11

The preliminary examination of prospective entrants to the teaching profession is carried out by most School Medical Officers early in the year, and although one realizes it is impossible for all candidates to be so examined the number with defects requiring attention before their medical certificates can be completed (164) is too great. Many of these require dental treatment; some Education Boards notify candidates that they must present a dental certificate of fitness at the time of their medical examination, and it would appear that this practice should be followed by all Boards. If candidates are not examined until December and dental caries is found, the completion of their medical certificate is sometimes held over for many weeks and their entry into college delayed until they are dentally fit. While speaking of dental fitness it is to be noticed that on examination 129 candidates were recorded as being fitted with artificial plates, 37 of them with both upper and lower plates.