

Attention had also been drawn by Dr. Mason, the Principal Medical Officer of Health, to the necessity for medical inspection of school-children and their care, but it was 1912 before the service was established and—probably owing to the war—1917 before any nurses were appointed by the Education Department to assist in this important field of preventive medicine.

One of the first impressions gained by Miss Maclean when she began her visits of inspection was the difficulty of conveying her own ideas to these scattered communities and the necessity for bringing together nurses if the best ideals were to be maintained. In Wellington as early as 1905 nurses who were engaged in private nursing had formed a small association with the object of protecting their interests. Another small group the following year came into being in Dunedin. In her travels Miss Maclean met these women and discussed with them the formation of a New Zealand Nurses' Association. The result was that a conference was called in Wellington in 1908, and the New Zealand Trained Nurses' Association came into being from 1909, the first president being Mrs. Kendall, of Wellington, and the first secretary Miss J. Bicknell, of the Health Department. The result of this was from the beginning a very close relationship between the nursing staff of the Health Department and the nurses' association, a relationship which has made for harmonious working and mutual benefit to an extraordinary degree. During the same period Miss Maclean decided that it was only by means of a nursing journal for New Zealand nurses that the profession could be kept informed of problems of mutual interest and of new developments both at home and abroad. As there appeared no one ready to assume this task she decided to publish and edit the journal as her own property, and thus came into being *Kai Tiaki* (the watcher; the guardian), the New Zealand nurses' journal. Miss Maclean owned this paper from 1908 to 1923, when she sold it to the New Zealand Registered Nurses' Association and remained its editor until the year before her death in 1932.

Looking back it can be seen how much these two steps—the formation of the New Zealand Trained Nurses' Association and the establishment of a nursing journal—meant in the moulding of nursing opinion and of developing a unity of thought and purpose. Many eminent nurses gave much time and thought to the future of these two new ventures, and in the process left their influence on the future of the profession they loved.

In 1912 Lord Kitchener was invited to visit New Zealand to advise the Government concerning matters of defence, and in making his recommendations concerning the medical services of the army he drew attention to the necessity for some form of army nursing service to care for the soldiers. The result was a small division was formed in August, 1913, as a branch of the Queen Alexandra Nursing Service. When war was declared in 1914, one year after, it was only after representations were made to the Minister of Defence that it was decided to send six Sisters with the first troops leaving New Zealand, who were sent to take over the German colony in Western Samoa.

Although permission was given for various New Zealand Sisters who were in England to join up with the Queen Alexandra Nursing Service (two had actually been with the first contingent to land in Belgium at Amsterdam in August, 1914), no steps were taken to form a New Zealand Nursing Service, in spite of the fact that troops were being trained and sent to Egypt. It was only after the representations of the New Zealand Nurses' Association to the Government that a body of nurses should be sent to care for their own men that finally, at the end of 1914, the New Zealand Government offered a contingent of New Zealand nurses to the English Government. The Secretary of State cabled back asking for fifty carefully selected nurses to be sent under a recognized Matron, and in February, 1915, the New Zealand Army Nursing-Service came into being with an establishment of 110, fifty of whom would be sent abroad and sixty remain at home. The first fifty were selected and set forth for England under Miss Maclean. The time to prepare was very short, orders for uniforms were given without being very certain what uniform should be chosen, and the badge consisting of the N.Z.A.N.S., which afterwards carried so much love and esteem, was introduced. Thus left our shores the first fifty of that band of five hundred nurses who so ably served their country during the period of the Great War. They saw service in the early days of the war in Egypt, the middle East, and on hospital ships and later in New Zealand hospitals in England at Walton-on-Thames, Brockenhurst, Codford, and Hornchurch, besides which many gave distinguished service in France.

The work of these women brought great distinction to New Zealand. They proved themselves very adaptable, confident, intelligent, and ready to expend themselves to the utmost in the care of their patients. Several gave their lives in the service of their country—a group of fourteen lost their lives when the troop ship "*Marquette*" was torpedoed in the Aegean Sea while *en route* to Salonika from Alexandria; two others were lost in the dreadful influenza epidemic which ravaged the troopship "*Tahiti*" off Las Palmas; while others died from the effect of their services. To many a "*Digger*" in Blighty the grey uniform, with its scarlet cape and snowy cap, meant relief and peace after torture and pain. The services of many of these outstanding women were recognized at the conclusion of the war by His Majesty the King with the decoration of the Royal Red Cross or the Assistant Royal Red Cross. The best record of their work, however, lay in the excellent reputation they left in England concerning the value of the New Zealand nurses' ability. This made an excellent contact for others following in their footsteps overseas.

Just at the termination of the war, in November, 1918, this country suffered its turn of the disastrous influenza epidemic which swept over the greater part of the world. The nursing service of the country, severely taxed already by the demands of the war, was quite inadequate to deal with the calamity and it was greatly to the credit of the St. John Ambulance Brigade and to the Red Cross Society that large numbers of volunteers who had received some training during the war years rallied to the help of their professional sisters.

This epidemic made plain that a new stage had been reached in New Zealand medical services, when there was need for a better co-ordinated service and a definite allocation of responsibilities. A Royal Commission of Inquiry was appointed in 1919, and as a result a new Health Act was passed in 1920 which reorganized the work of the Health Department.