

approximately the number of teeth preserved for useful service, the number of teeth removed as unsaveable (or in some cases to relieve over-crowding) was 68,663, a ratio of 6.3 extractions to every 100 fillings.

### HEALTH EDUCATION

A very gratifying amount of dental health education work has been performed by school dental nurses, the total number of activities amounting to 7,593.

A specialist officer from the divisional staff has made a start on an intensive programme entailing the visiting of every school dental clinic and providing direction to the school dental nurses' efforts. The production of still further new film-strips, posters, and pamphlets has been undertaken, and the field staff make good use of the material that is available, including sound films and a wide variety of display material. Radio talks on dental subjects, integrated with talks on other aspects of health, have continued to be a feature of the educational work.

### DENTAL RESEARCH

During the year arrangements have been put in hand for the resumption of research work under the Dental Research Committee of the Medical Research Council.

This work was commenced in 1939, but was interrupted by the war. The plans have been revised, and the work will now be undertaken on a wider and more comprehensive scale.

Of special significance in this connection is the appointment of Dr. R. E. T. Hewat, D.D.S. (N.Z.), as Field Research Officer attached to the Division of Dental Hygiene. It is expected that Dr. Hewat will take up his new duties in June, 1947.

### DENTAL BURSARIES

Health Department bursaries to the number of 23 were granted to dental students at the beginning of 1947. Of the bursaries granted in previous years, 65 were renewed and 5 were suspended temporarily. The total number of bursaries held as at the 31st March, 1947 (including those temporarily suspended), was 93. Of 4 holders of bursaries who graduated in 1946, 2 are now on the staff of the Dental Division and 1 was granted permission to accept a Demonstratorship at the Otago University Dental School for one year. The fourth failed to undertake the service prescribed in the bursary agreement, and the penalties provided for in the agreement were duly imposed in this case.

### SHORTAGE OF STAFF

The work of the Dental Division has suffered during the year from shortage of staff at all levels. Numerically the staff has remained almost static during recent years. Any slight upward trend in numbers has been negligible as compared with the rapidly expanding school rolls. As a result, not only has extension of dental services in the schools been restricted, but there has been increasing difficulty in maintaining existing commitments. An interesting point arises in this connection, in that it has become evident that the public have developed a very keen appreciation of the value of regular half-yearly dental care for children, and become concerned when the interval between inspections extends beyond the customary six months. This is most gratifying as evidence of an awakened interest in the importance of good dental health, even if it tends to be embarrassing under present conditions. The outlook, however, is bright as far as the staffing of school dental clinics is concerned. The Dominion Training School for Dental Nurses and its annexe are full to capacity, and when once the field staff is adequately reinforced it will be possible to commence on the task of overtaking the accumulated arrears of treatment.