

SUMMARY

Although the steady fall in the mortality from tuberculosis over the last five years in both races gives a sense of satisfaction, it should be realized that the death-rate for tuberculosis in the Maori, when compared with that of Native races in other countries, is unduly high.

Although the registered incidence of known cases shows an accretion at the end of 1948 of only 176 cases, compared with 540 cases in 1946 and 204 in 1947, it should be obvious that shortages of hospital and sanatorium accommodation must be overcome if the control of the disease is to be maintained. More assiduous case-finding has and will find a greater number of active cases which, during the next ten years at least, will require accommodation and treatment.

The present apparent favourable position cannot be expected to continue unless this accommodation is provided. The early provision of additional planned hospital and sanatorium accommodation, together with adequate staffing of these institutions, is necessary to help bring about a further reduction in the incidence and mortality of the disease.

The general measures authorized by the Tuberculosis Act, 1948, should materially help many active patients to regain their full health and thus become rehabilitated into full employment.

DIVISION OF MATERNAL WELFARE

BIRTHS

The number of births recorded for 1948 showed a decline in both European and Maori races.

A comparison between 1947 and 1948, showing the number of births and the birth-rates, Maori and European, is set out hereunder :—

	1947.		1948.	
	European.	Maori.	European.	Maori.
Total births	44,816	4,988	44,193	4,956
Birth-rate per 1,000 mean population ..	26·42	46·86	25·52	45·08
Combined rate	27·63		26·69	

ACCOMMODATION

The total number of available beds for the Dominion has increased over the past year by 124 to 2,327.

The private hospital bed accommodation has decreased by 55 with the loss of twelve hospitals, but this has been offset by an increase of 179 beds in public hospitals or annexes. In ten cases Hospital Boards have taken over private hospitals and are now running them as Hospital Board institutions.

The total number of available beds represents a ratio of 5·84 beds per 1,000 mean population of the female population in the 15-44 age group. This is an increase of 0·29 beds per 1,000 population over 1947.