

Plunket Building To Be Replaced By New Structure

New Plymouth's 80-year-old Plunket rooms in Courtenay Street are to be replaced with a new two-storeyed building. A permit for it has been issued, and detailed plans have been begun.

Bought by the Plunket Society in March, 1924, when it was already about 50 years old, the present Plunket building was divided into two, one half for the rooms and the other, let to the New Plymouth Borough Council, for rest rooms. When the new rest rooms were built in Gill Street in 1936 the rest rooms became a flat.

For some years the building has been regarded as an eyesore, although interior improvements have made it reasonably comfortable. A rebuilding scheme was checked by the war, and now, with 14,000 visits yearly from mothers, the society plans a new building on the present site. The upper storey will be of flats for the nurses and the lower for Plunket rooms.

To handle the scheme the society's advisory board has set up a special committee comprising Mesdames G. J. McNaught (president), R. F. Mainland and J. C. Swan (vice-presidents), Messrs. R. F. Mainland and E. White, and Dr. E. W. Kinsey, medical officer of health for Taranaki.

Needing possibly more than £5000, the society has in hand at the moment less than £4000, which is made up of the Truby King memorial fund and bequests and donations.

During the past year the three nurses handled 13,986 visits from mothers with babies and 771 from pre-school children between the ages of 18 months and five years. Of the babies, 851 were newcomers. On top of this the nurses made 3059 visits to homes and visits to the four sub-branches at Waitara, Inglewood, Okato and Urenui.

T. D. W.

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