

REPORTS OF DIVISIONAL DIRECTORS

DIVISION OF PUBLIC HYGIENE

QUARANTINE

At the end of the war the various emergency regulations governing medical inspection of overseas ships were revoked, and the procedure in force before the war has now been resumed. Ships are again sending wireless information concerning the state of health of those on board, and, if free from disease, the ship is berthed before being boarded by the Port Health Officer.

During the year the New Zealand Government ratified its adherence to the International Sanitary Convention 1944 and the International Sanitary Convention for Aerial Navigation 1944. These Conventions, which are the work of the Health Division of UNRRA amend the corresponding Conventions of 1926 and 1933 and are of limited duration only.

DAINGEROUS DRUGS AND POISONS

The Dangerous Drugs Regulations have been amended to include pethidine as a dangerous drug.

The Poisons (General) Regulations were amended, with particular reference to prescription poisons. In addition, the new insecticide DDT was made a First Schedule poison, but by a later amendment the control of DDT was relaxed so as to permit its sale subject to the necessary requirements as to the method of packing and labelling.

CEMETERIES ACT

Several municipalities have interested themselves in the establishment of crematoria. During the year crematoria at Hastings and Wanganui were built and are now in operation.

FOOD AND DRUGS

Milk-supplies.—With the coming into force of the Milk Act, 1945, and the consequent setting-up of Milk Authorities throughout the Dominion, there has been a further change in Government policy with respect to the supervision of milk-supplies. Under the new arrangement the Department of Agriculture will assume responsibility for the supervision of all milk-treating establishments, and the Department of Health is now responsible only for the sampling of milk as it is finally sold to the public. Each Medical Officer of Health or his deputy has been appointed to represent the Minister on each Milk Authority in his district. Regulations were enacted for the better control of milk-pasteurizing plants, and the high-temperature short-time method of pasteurization is now an approved method of pasteurization.

Nitrite Poisoning.—Owing to several cases of accidental poisoning with sodium nitrite, used by butchers for the curing of meat, it has been found necessary to enact regulations providing for the special labelling of all meat-pickling preparations containing nitrites.

Penicillin.—Regulations have been gazetted controlling the quality of penicillin and restricting its use to *bona fide* preparations containing a stated quantity of the substance. It is now an offence to sell any penicillin preparation that contains less penicillin than the quantity stated on the label. This is designed to prevent its commercial exploitation by manufacturers of patent medicines and toilet preparations.