

The prospects in regard to dental surgeons are less promising. The general shortage of dental surgeons in the Dominion is reflected in the service, and it is found to be increasingly difficult to secure or even to retain the services of such officers. The depletion of staff at this level is causing concern, and there is need for the strengthening of the senior ranks by the appointment of dental surgeons of senior standing and suitable qualifications and experience.

#### DENTAL TREATMENT OF RETURNED SERVICEMEN

With the return to New Zealand of the Forces overseas, the volume of work in connection with the Department's organization for providing dental treatment for returned personnel of the Armed Forces has steadily declined during the year. By the end of the year under review it was found possible for the duties of the dental supervisors (private dental practitioners who organized the examination and treatment of returning drafts) to be transferred to departmental officers, and it was arranged that this would be done as from the 15th April, 1947.

The purpose of the system was to ensure that Service personnel were returned to civilian life with a standard of dental fitness not lower than when they enlisted. On arrival in New Zealand all personnel were dentally examined as part of their medical boarding, and the necessary treatment was authorized by the dental supervisor in accordance with the policy laid down. The authority for treatment was posted direct to the dentist nominated by the serviceman, and the dentist later submitted his claim to the Department in accordance with the approved scale of fees. The system worked smoothly and effectively, and its operation over the period of the war years was notable for the entire absence of any serious complaint. The Department takes this opportunity of acknowledging the work of the dental supervisors and of the private dental practitioners, by whose sustained efforts this service for returned personnel was made possible.

### GENERAL

#### INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE

In Dr. Davidson's report published in the 1944 annual report he suggested "that consideration be given to the formation within the Department of Health of a Division of Industrial Hygiene to include the factory inspectorate, relieved of all other duties and to administer those parts of a new Factories Act and such other legislation as is concerned with the health, welfare, and safety of the industrial worker."

The principle of a Division of Industrial Hygiene is now accepted, and the Factories Act, 1946, section 78, gives to Medical Officers of Health or other authorized officers of the Department of Health the same powers and authorities as Inspectors of Factories under the provisions of the Act.

The first medical appointment to the new Division was made during 1946, and the appointee, Dr. Garland, arrived in the Dominion to take up his duties in January, 1947.

#### NUTRITION

Dr. Muriel Bell and the Nutrition Research Committee of the Medical Research Council continue to give considerable attention to matters relating to the nutrition of our people. In May, 1946, the rate of flour extraction in New Zealand mills was raised to 80 per cent. This was done in response to the request of the Emergency Food Council to all countries that they should save wheat by this method during the world wheat shortage. In New Zealand the 80-per-cent. extraction meant an extra 7 tons of flour per 100 tons of wheat, and it was calculated that New Zealand would thus be able to