Dentists Register.—Number on Register, 1st January, 1921, 747, and at 31st December, 746.

Officiating Ministers.—On the 31st December last there were 1,735 names on the list of officiating ministers under the Marriage Act having authority to solemnize marriages in New Zealand, as follows: Church of the Province of New Zealand (commonly called the Church of England), 447; Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, 400; Roman Catholic Church, 276; Methodist Church of New Zealand, 254; Congregational Independents, 31; Baptists, 65; Church of Christ, 35; Salvation Army, 146; other denominations, 81.

Dominion Analyst.

During the year 4,804 samples for analysis were received from various sources, which number is 913 higher than that dealt with during the preceding year.

The Geological Survey forwarded twenty-five coals, three oil-shales, fourteen limestones, eight clays, twenty-eight rocks for superior analysis, four iron-ores, three ochres, several mineral specimens for identification and partial analysis, and twelve samples of natural gas. The latter came from Ihungia and Te Puia, in connection with a search for petroleum in those districts. The Head Office and inspection staff contributed fifteen coals, two oil-shales, two limestones, four clays, several ores of copper, iron, and mercury, six samples of coaldust from mines, thirty-six mine-airs, and thirty-six parcels for assay for gold and silver. The percentage of recoverable asbestos was determined in serpentine from Takaka, a full description being given the detailed report. Prospectors' samples included several varieties of useful clay, good copper-ore from D'Urville Island, and manganese-ore of marketable quality from Bombay. Quartz containing gold in payable amounts came from Wairau Valley, Marlborough; Poerua, Westland; The Reefs, Central Otago; and Waipori. Beach sand from between Lake Ellesmere and the mouth of the Rakaia River was found to contain in places a few grains of gold per ton.

A great variety of foodstuffs was submitted by the Department of Health. The list comprises aerated waters, baking-powder, bloater-paste, butter, "butterlac" "cakolene," canned fruit, cheese, chocolate liquers, cider, cocoa, coffee, coffee and chicory, coffee-and-chicory essence, container for preserved fish, cordials, cotton-seed oil, cream, cream-of-tartar, custard-powder, "cremonne," disinfectant, "egglite" colouring, egg-powder (so called), egg-yolk, Epsom salts, essence of lemon, food flavours, "foodlac," fruit-jelly, ginger, ground rice, herrings, honey, ice-cream, ices, jam, "kine," lard, lemonade, liquors, malt-extract, margarine, nut chocolate, oatmeal, pepper, pickles, pork and beans, prunes, sardines and silds, sausages, tea, "thomasine" tomato-sauce, vinegar, wheat, salts. Two of the baking-powders were below the required strength, and one contained a large amount of alum. Only two of the butter-samples did not comply with the regulations, both containing more than the 16 per cent. of water allowed. Eleven cream-of-tartars contained more than the permitted amount of lead, and one exceeded the limit for arsenic. Thirteen samples of ice-cream were deficient in butterfat, and six of these had been thickened with starch. Starch had been added to two others also. Cordials and aerated waters well repaid examination. Salicylic acid was found in twenty-four lemonades, and one each of lemon-squash, lime-juice, and raspberry. Saccharin was detected in lemonade purchased in Wellington, and subsequently in samples obtained from all parts of the Dominion. Approximately one-half of all examined contained saccharine, in contravention of the regulations, and the practice of using this sweetening substance in lieu of wholesome sugar received a necessary check. Considerable attention was paid by Health Inspectors during the year to canned goods, all blown tins being condemned, and doubtful tins submitted for examination. Decomposition was evident in three lots of fruit, three of fish, and one of cheese. The labelling of foodstuffs still requires attention; for example, custard-powders, coffee, and coffee-essence were frequently found to have misleading statements on the outside labels.

A total of 2,506 samples of milk, taken under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, was analysed during the year. Almost three-fourths of these came from Wellington City, and the balance from numerous towns in the central portions of the Dominion. Four check samples from other districts were analysed by direction of a Magistrate. The Wellington City Corporation inspector is credited with 1,660 out of 1,724 official samples taken in Wellington. Most of these represented milk sold under municipal control. The number of adulterated samples was very small. Four had been partly skimmed, five watered, four were decidedly stale, and one contained an excessive amount of dirt. Warnings were issued in sixteen other cases where the milk was rather stale, and in thirteen instances when it was slightly deficient in butterfat. Samples were occasionally taken at the railway-stations on arrival of trains conveying milk, to check supplies coming into the city. Adulteration of milk is more common in the country districts, and with a view of checking it the Inspectors have taken samples not only in the larger centres, but also in the smaller towns. The results are summarized as follows: Samples received, 609; seriously skimmed, 11; watered, 35; slightly below standard, 23.

The number of analyses made for Plunket nurses was 114, an increase of 61 over the previous year.

Research.

Clay.—The work on clay has been continued on the same lines as in previous years, and it has become apparent that New Zealand possesses a considerable variety of very useful clays.

Ochre.—Very little is known at the present time about our resources in ochres. A few samples forwarded during the year compared well with imported ochre for brightness of colour and tinting-power, and the methods of testing are being extended, with promising results.

Lignite.—With a view to the fuller utilization of New Zealand lignites, a few representative samples were submitted to low-temperature distillation. The yields of oil would be insufficient by themselves to repay the cost of the process, working on a commercial scale, but if the residues after distillation could be rendered marketable for example, by briquetting—a considerable industry might be built up. The work is in abeyance pending the purchase of a suitable experimental briquetting-press.