

SECTION 6.—GENERAL.

During the year arrangements have been made to establish a new health district for Taranaki Province formerly administered from Wellington. Dr. Mecredy will there carry out the duties of Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer, and endeavour to co-ordinate the work of school and other nurses with that of Health and local-authority Inspectors.

In the Auckland District Dr. Hughes, one of the Department's most experienced and valued officers has, owing to illness, been compelled to relinquish duty for six months. Dr. Chesson has assumed control, and Dr. Turbott has been appointed to that district to complete establishment.

An important duty has been the preparation of data regarding the water-supplies of Auckland Province as evidence for the Commission appointed on the recommendation of the Board of Health to investigate this question. Dr. Mercer has been transferred from Wellington to Auckland.

The Wellington District complement of Medical Officers of Health has been reduced from three to two, owing to the separation of Taranaki Province. Dr. Shore, late of Dunedin, has assumed duty in Wellington.

Extracts from the reports of the various Medical Officers of Health, which appear in another part of this report, show a progressive improvement in the sanitary conditions generally throughout the Dominion, and an ever-growing appreciation on the part of local authorities of their responsibilities and duties under the Health Act.

A cause for some concern is the tendency on the part of some smaller local authorities to appoint Sanitary Inspectors without consideration of the needs of adjoining local authorities or of the Department of Health. Medical Officers of Health have been advised to confer with the local authorities regarding this, and to endeavour to ensure that the distribution of Inspectors in districts is such as will ensure cheap, as well as efficient, performance of their duties.

Food and Drugs.—As regards the administration of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act during the year, thanks are due to the Comptroller of Customs and the Dominion Analyst and their officers for valued assistance and advice. The average amount of sampling has been well maintained, including that of spirits and beers. In the matter of bread-weighing and checking the weight of all packed food-stuffs, the Department will shortly be relieved of this work by the Department of Labour. During the year regulations were gazetted designed to control the manufacture and sale of soaps for human use. Other regulations include one which limits the amount of arsenic in apples and pears to $\frac{1}{100}$ grain per pound. After a lengthy investigation by the Dominion Analyst it was found that, save in isolated cases, any fruit marketed from New Zealand orchards would come well within the limits of such a standard, but it was deemed wise to establish this standard as a guarantee to oversea buyers.

Cemeteries.—By the 1926 amendment of the Cemeteries Act the administration of this Act was placed under the Minister of Health, and during the year Medical Officers of Health and their Inspectors have been in touch with trustees and local authorities in a survey of cemetery-control. The even distribution of Health Inspectors throughout the health districts renders supervision by them practicable, and already there are signs that marked improvement will follow their assumption of this duty.

The health of the workers in factories and workshops is a matter in which officers of the Departments of Labour and of Health join forces, and I wish to express my appreciation of the valued advice given during the year by officers of the Department of Labour.

Finally, I desire to place on record my appreciation of the continued loyal and able co-operation of the Medical Officers of Health and their staffs.

T. McKIBBIN,
Director, Division of Public Hygiene.

PART III.—SCHOOL HYGIENE.

SECTION 1.—ADMINISTRATION AND MEDICAL INSPECTION.

I have the honour to report upon the work of the Division of School Hygiene for the year ending 31st March, 1927 :—

STAFF.

The permanent staff consists at present of a Director, twelve School Medical Officers, and thirty-one school nurses. The appointment of Dr. Muriel Morgan as junior School Medical Officer in a temporary capacity has been extended for the current year. Dr. Bakewell, School Medical Officer, Wellington, was absent on leave during the whole year, which she spent in England and America studying important aspects of health work. Her place was filled by Dr. Mary Champtaloup, who has now been appointed to the permanent staff. There have been during the year several resignations and fresh appointments to the school nursing service.