

Boards associated with the Department.—The Board of Health, Medical Council, Medical Research Council, Dental Council, Nurses and Midwives Registration Board, Opticians Board, Masseurs Registration Board, and the Plumbers Board continued their work during the year.

Medical Research Council.—A brief outline of the activities of the special Committees set up under the Council is embodied below:—

(1) Nutrition Committee: The research activities have been numerous, and the following may be mentioned—

- “Testing of Wheat Germ as a Goitrogenic Agent” (McLaughlin).
- “Estimation of Thyroids of Rats on Wheat-germ and Wholemeal Diets” (Purves).
- “Ascorbic Acid Determinations by the Spekker Photo-Electric Absorptiometer” (Johns).
- “Preliminary Report of Dietary Survey among the Maoris” (McLaughlin and Wilson).
- “Studies on the Availability of the Calcium of certain Vegetables” (Johns).
- “Report on the Examination of Samples of Vegetables from a Military Camp” (Johns).
- “Estimations of Vitamin B₁ in Foodstuffs” (Allen).
- “Effect of Baking-powder on the Vitamin B₁ Content of Wholemeal” (McLaughlin).
- “Construction of a Curve of Response to Varying Doses of Vitamin B₁” (McLaughlin).
- “Vitamin B₁ in Breads made from 70 per cent. and 80 per cent. Extraction Flours” (McLaughlin).
- “Experiment Sara Cohen Open Air School, Kew, Caversham, Dunedin, upon the Feeding of School-children with the Health Dinner” (Stevenson).

(2) Committee for Study of the Physiology and Pathology of the Thyroid Gland: The research has followed closely the direction indicated in the previous report. The reports of last year's work have now been published in the *British Journal of Experimental Pathology*. The following reports on work undertaken during the year under review were submitted—

- “Investigation of an Epidemic of Congenital Goitre in Lambs” (Hercus and Purves).
- “Goitrogenic Principle of Rape-seed” (Kennedy).
- “Thyrotropin Content of the Serum and the Thyrotropin Sensitivity of the Thyroid of Rats on Brassica Diets” (Griesbach and Purves).
- “Effect of Iodide, Di-iodotyrosine, and Thyroxine on the Goitrogenic Action of Brassica Seeds” (Purves).
- “Studies on Experimental Goitre: The Effect of Goitrogenic Diet on the Thyrotropic Hormone in the Pituitary of the Albino Rat” (Griesbach, Kennedy, and Purves).
- “Thyroid Adenomas in Rats on Brassica-seed Diet” (Kennedy, Griesbach, and Purves).

(3) Hydatid Committee: This Committee is closely associated with the Department of Hydatid Disease Research and Prevention, Medical School, Otago University. A comprehensive programme has been drawn up for the Research Officer, Miss E. J. Batham, M.Sc., who was appointed in October, 1941. Her attention has been mainly directed to the anatomy of the hydatid parasite with a view to filling in some of the gaps that exist in current morphological descriptions and also to correct some of the traditional errors reproduced in hydatid literature. Mr. E. W. Bennett, D.Sc., presented a report on “Arecoline Hydrobromide as a Vermifuge for Dogs.” He found altogether six cases during nearly two years and a half in which the death may have been connected with the arecoline treatment. This represents one fatality per seventy-five thousand registered dogs. The deaths among dogs from arecoline are numerically small compared with human deaths from hydatids.

(4) Tuberculosis Committee: The work of this Committee was restricted by the demands of war. However, two important investigations were commenced—namely, a group survey to determine the incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis in certain occupations to which attention has already been drawn, and the typing of tubercle bacilli at the Auckland Hospital under Dr. Gilmour's direction. It is proposed to continue these investigations.

(5) Obstetrical Research Committee: Dr. F. O. Bennett, Research Officer, continued his survey of ante-natal records and the occurrence of toxæmia of pregnancy, and efforts have been made to maintain and augment the investigation into recurrent toxæmia and familial toxæmia. Suggestions for further lines of research have been considered, and efforts are being made to investigate the causes of death in infants born of toxæmic mothers and also the treatment of eclampsia. The latter is in the hands of Dr. Plunkett.

STAFF.

I regret to record the death of Major B. T. Wyn Irwin, who joined the Department as a Medical Officer of Health in 1936 and was stationed in various districts in the North Island.

Dr. Irwin enlisted in the New Zealand Medical Corps in 1939 and served in the campaigns in Greece and Crete. Major Irwin was an officer of much promise and would have gone far in the career he had chosen.

In the death of Mr. H. W. Johnson the Department lost a highly-esteemed officer. He was Secretary and Treasurer of the Board of Examiners of the Royal Sanitary Institute for seventeen years and Chairman of the Plumbers Board of New Zealand since 1920.

In conclusion, I wish to express my thanks for the support rendered me by officers during the year.

M. H. WATT,
Director-General of Health.

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