

The main functions of the Institute will be—

- (a) To assist the Department in its work by stimulating an interest in preventive medicine.
- (b) To assist public health and hospital laboratories to work more efficiently and uniformly.
- (c) The analysis and interpretation of vital statistics to give the necessary knowledge on which to base policies for the prevention and control of disease.
- (d) To undertake chest radiography, tuberculin testing, and to control the B.C.G. vaccine immunization training unit.
- (e) The inspection and testing of x-ray equipment.

Arrangements were also finalized during the year for the transfer of the Census and Statistics Department's Vital Statistics Branch from that Department to this Department. This unit now becomes the Medical Statistics Branch of the Department, and it will ultimately form part of the National Health Institute.

NEW ZEALAND REPRESENTATION ABROAD

During the year New Zealand was represented at the following overseas gatherings connected with health matters:—

- (1) Fourth International Congress on Tropical Medicine and Malaria, held at Washington, U.S.A., in May, 1948, by Dr. J. C. Lopdell, Chief Medical Officer, Samoa.
- (2) First International Poliomyelitis Conference, held at New York, U.S.A., in July, 1948, by Dr. Duncan Cook, Director of Health Benefits, Department of Health.

Reference is made above to New Zealand's representation at the First World Health Assembly.

VISITORS FROM OVERSEAS

During the past year distinguished visitors to New Zealand from the health point of view have included Professor J. C. Spence, Professor of Child Health of the University of Durham, England; the Hon. Tuam Haji Mahomed Eusoff, the Malayan delegate to the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East; and Dr. Charles N. Leach, of the International Health Division, Rockefeller Foundation. In addition, an Australian dental delegation, consisting of ten members representative of the Commonwealth Department of Health and the Australian Dental Association, visited New Zealand to inspect the dental services in Wellington and to observe the operation of the School Dental Service in the field.

STAFF

The following changes have occurred among the senior staff of the Department during the past year:—

Dr. I. S. Davis (formerly Medical Officer of Health, Auckland) has been appointed Director, Division of Child Hygiene.

Dr. Doris Gordon resigned from the appointment of Director, Division of Maternal and Infant Welfare.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation of the willing co-operation the Department has continued to receive during the past year from the bodies and organizations with which it is associated. I would also express my thanks to all members of the staff of the Department for their work during the year and for the way in which they have done everything possible to cope with the hindrances caused by shortage of staff and inadequate accommodation.

T. R. RITCHIE, Director-General of Health.