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The DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH to the Hon. the MINISTER OF HEALTH, Wellington.  
I HAVE the honour to submit my annual report for the year 1922-23.

### PART I.—GENERAL SURVEY.

#### SECTION I.—GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

##### PUBLIC HEALTH.

The public health, as shown by the death-rate, may be generally regarded as satisfactory, especially so when viewed in relation to certain of the more serious notifiable diseases. The report of Dr. Watt, Director of the Division of Public Hygiene, shows that the standardized death-rate has fallen from 10.93 per thousand to 10.70. These rates are markedly low, as is the infantile-mortality rate of 41.9 per thousand births. The death-rate of infants in the first month shows little change, and is still a matter for much concern.

It may be said here that the population of New Zealand has the greatest expectation of life of any of the leading countries of the world; and, apart from social and economic factors, it is not unreasonable to assume that this is in some measure due to the many activities of this Department.

*Notifiable Diseases.*—During the past year the Dominion was practically free from any of the outstanding outbreaks of disease. An outbreak of enteric fever at Mount Albert, Auckland, however, occasioned the Department much concern. A full report of this outbreak, by Dr. Makgill, is duly reported in an appendix. This unfortunate outbreak led to the death of some thirty persons, and should bring home to all local-governing bodies the grave responsibility which rests with them in providing and maintaining a supply of pure water and an efficient sewerage system. However, such outbreaks should be rare indeed when it is taken into consideration that at present there are few towns of over a thousand inhabitants that are not provided with an adequate supply of pure water and modern systems of drainage.