

During the year I have received every assistance from Messrs. Dore and Rollett of the Laboratory staff.

Some few weeks ago I had a request from the New South Wales Department of Health for a supply of vaccine lymph. This has been supplied, and I have asked them to advise me as to its potency.

#### SECTION 6.—GENERAL.

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.

The policy of the local authorities as regards the installation of sanitary works, such as water-supplies and drainage, continues active. The occasions upon which requisitions from the Board of Health were sought to enforce such installations were few.

There are now three Medical Officers of Health stationed at Auckland, three in Wellington, two at Christchurch, two at Dunedin; and the newly-formed Health District of Taranaki, in which Dr. McCreedy combines the duties of Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer, is now firmly and satisfactorily established. Consideration is being given to repeating this experiment in the northern east-coast districts of the North Island, with the intention of effecting better health-control in that remote district difficult of access from both Wellington and Auckland.

During the year Dr. Hughes was granted leave of absence to attend a League of Nations exchange course in India, and during his absence Dr. Chesson ably performed the senior duties of the Auckland Health Districts.

*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 valuable assistance and advice. The sampling of foodstuffs has been well maintained. The weighing of foodstuffs was taken over in the early part of the year by the Department of Labour as part of its duties under the Weights and Measures Act.

*Food-preservatives.*—Following a recent decision of the Ministry of Health, England, to further prohibit the use of chemical preservatives in foodstuffs, steps have been taken during the year to enforce the regulations already extant prohibiting the use of boric acid in the preservation of bacon and ham. In consonance with recent American practice provision has been made by regulation for the adoption of the "nitrite" cure for meats, including bacon, as an alternative to the older but less accurate saltpetre method. Again following recent practice, the New Zealand regulations controlling the preparation and sale of butter have been amended to prohibit the use of boric acid as a butter-preservative.

*Dangerous Drugs.*—To comply with the provisions of the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1927, appropriate regulations controlling the importation, sale, and use of specified dangerous drugs have been prepared, and will shortly be submitted to the Hon. the Minister.

*Scarlet Fever.*—It will be seen from the statistical tables and comments thereon that, generally speaking, the incidence and death-rates from infectious diseases were low. Scarlet fever, however, fortunately of mild type, was prevalent, and measures to combat its spread entailed additional work and expense in some health districts, particularly Wellington and Christchurch. During the year 2,185 cases were notified, and there were sixteen deaths, a very low case mortality. The prevalence has continued since December, 1927—still with a very low case mortality—and now the notifications are reducing in number.

I desire to 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.

I have the honour to report on the work of the Division of School Hygiene for the year ended 31st March, 1928.

#### STAFF.

The permanent staff consists at present of a Director, twelve School Medical Officers, and thirty-one school nurses. In addition to this staff, Dr. Helen Dougall has been appointed as a junior School Medical Officer for the term of one year.

During the year, Dr. Phillipps, School Medical Officer, Canterbury, obtained eight months' leave for the purpose of visiting Great Britain, where he took the opportunity to observe various phases of school medical work. Dr. Clark, School Medical Officer, Hawke's Bay, resigned after several years of good service, his place being filled by Dr. Elaine Gurr. There have been during the year several resignations and fresh appointments in the School Nursing Service.

During the year a separate health unit was created in Taranaki, in charge of Dr. McCreedy, who acts as both Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer. A special arrangement was made with the local Red Cross organization by which the Department of Health pays half the salaries of two Red Cross nurses in Taranaki and obtains half-time control of their services. Miss Inglis, school