

1932.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH.

Presented in pursuance of Section 100 of the Hospitals and Charitable Institutions Act, 1926.

HON. J. A. YOUNG, MINISTER OF HEALTH.

CONTENTS.

Reports of—	PAGE
Director-General of Health	1-5
Director, Division of Public Hygiene	6-18
Director, Division of School Hygiene	18-25
Director, Division of Hospitals	25-30
Director, Division of Dental Hygiene	30-33
Director, Division of Nursing	33-36
Inspector of Private and Maternity Hospitals	36-44
APPENDIX.—Undulant Fever in New Zealand; The Sanitary Reconstruction in Hawke's Bay District.	45-48

REPORTS.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH to the Hon. the MINISTER OF HEALTH, Wellington.
I HAVE the honour to lay before you the annual report of the Department for the year 1931-32.

PART I.—GENERAL SURVEY.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Death-rate.—Despite the tragic earthquake in Hawke's Bay last year, which caused 260 deaths, the crude death rate fell to 8·34 per 1,000 of mean population, a figure which is beaten only by the record low rates in 1924 and 1925.

Birth-rate.—Perhaps one of the least satisfactory features of the statistics is the decline in the birth-rate. This is a progressive and continuing tendency, the rate having declined from 20·29 per 1,000 of mean population in 1927 to 18·42 in 1931. This downward tendency is not peculiar to New Zealand. It is seen in an even more marked extent in Great Britain, where the birth-rate has reached 16·3. Undoubtedly this phenomenon is in part a reflex of the present economic position, and the indications are that the rate will continue to fall still further in New Zealand as the marriage rate for 1931 was lower than at any time for the past quinquennium.

Infant Mortality.—One of the outstanding features of the year was the exceptionally low infant-mortality rate, 32·15 per 1,000 live births. This constitutes a new record. A particularly gratifying