

The control of the society rests in a Central Committee of twenty members, of which the Chairman of the four main Hospital Boards and the Mayors of the four cities constitute eight. This committee controls the finances and expenditure in connection with the research work in cancer which is being carried out at the Medical School in Dunedin. There is, in addition, a Medical and Research Committee which deals only with technical matters; it consists of representatives from all four centres and from the Medical School, and is the advisory body for the Central Committee.

The society has also the fullest co-operation of the Department of Health, and in matters relating to cancer and its treatment and control the Department relies largely on its advice and assistance. The society is affiliated to the British Empire Cancer Campaign Society and works in the closest co-operation with that body, and belongs also to the International Union against Cancer.

The incidence of cancer among members of the Native race has been the subject of inquiry by the society, and it is hoped that a statistical study will enable it to get information on this point. The Government Statistician has been generous with assistance on this and allied matters.

It was a source of satisfaction to the society that the late King, when offered a Jubilee gift by the people of New Zealand, expressed the wish that the occasion should be used to assist the work of cancer-control in New Zealand. This proposal was given the cordial support of the Government and people of New Zealand, and as a result the funds of the society benefited by over £15,000.

*Veneral Diseases.*—The tables appearing in the public hygiene part of this report summarize the returns of treatment for venereal diseases at the four main centres. The Health Organization of the League of Nations published a report on the treatment of syphilis, and this has been brought under the notice of the public hospital authorities and should help to make the treatment of syphilis more uniform.

*Occupational Diseases.*—Five cases of chronic lead poisoning were notified (1 in 1934). In the course of new manufacturing processes involving the use of lead there is always the possibility of fresh hazards arising. The growth of industries and the consequent increasing importance of occupational disease in New Zealand is a problem that will call for increased consideration in the future.

*Food Poisoning.*—Fifty-eight cases of food poisoning were notified. Dr. Maclean, Medical Officer of Health, Wellington, reports as follows on such an outbreak:—

“In April there was an outbreak of food poisoning involving nine persons. They were members of a party of seventeen which assembled for a meeting and lunched together at a private house, afterwards dispersing to their homes. The persons affected became ill in from eight to twelve hours and were seen by five different doctors, which fact prevented recognition of the size of the outbreak. In no case was the statutory notification made, and when the details were discovered and pieced together, it was too late to carry out satisfactory bacteriological investigation. The origin of infection was almost certainly traced to a “Spanish cream” which had been eaten by all those affected, and had been passed over by most of those who escaped. It had been made forty-two hours before being eaten, and the ingredients were milk, gelatine, and preserved eggs, while the method of cooking did not ensure thorough heating of the whites of the eggs. If the eggs had been infected, there was ample opportunity for multiplication of bacteria. All the patients recovered, but the attack was a sharp one with fever, pain, vomiting, and green watery stools. One patient was ill for a week.”

Two cases of food poisoning were admitted to the Auckland Hospital from the same house subsequent to eating some fungoid growth mistaken for mushrooms.

*Deaths from Motor Traffic Accidents.*—A depressing feature of modern life is the number of motor accidents which occur, causing death, suffering, decreased efficiency, and economic loss. Eight hundred and sixty-four persons were killed in motor accidents during the five years ended 31st March, 1935. Of these 32 were under 5 years of age, 43 between 5 and 10 years of age, 26 were between 10 and 15 years, 592 were between 50 and 55 years, and 171 were 55 years or over. These striking figures should stimulate the campaign being undertaken to stem the tide of mortality in such accidents. This country cannot afford to lose so many valuable lives. On the economic side an increased burden is also being thrown on our hospital system for provision of facilities and staff for treatment of such cases.

#### REPORTS OF DIVISIONAL DIRECTORS.

*Public Hygiene.*—Dr. Ritchie in his presentation of statistics relating to some of the important diseases draws attention particularly to the trend of heart disease, cancer, and tuberculosis in New Zealand.

The reports of Medical Officers of Health show a steady improvement in the sanitary conditions generally throughout the Dominion. Local authorities have been active as regards the installation of sanitary works such as water-supplies and drainage. A reference is made to the bored-holed latrine recommended by the Department for Maori districts and other areas where they are suitable.