

membership of the Branch has been considerably augmented and now numbers 204. The members of the Institute residing in Fiji have been linked up with the New Zealand Branch.

*Boards Associated with the Department.*—The various Boards associated with the Department—namely, the Board of Health, Medical Council, Plumbers Board, Opticians Board, Masseurs Board, Nurses and Midwives Registration Board—have continued their work during the year. Reference to the work of the last-mentioned Board will be found in the report of the Director, Division of Nursing. The Department acknowledges its indebtedness to the members of these Boards for their able service.

*Staff.*—I regret to record the death of Dr. W. F. Findlay, an officer who was held in high esteem, and who served the Department with conspicuous ability and loyalty for nearly twenty years.

*Additions to Staff.*—Dr. C. B. Gilberd and Dr. L. R. Davis were appointed as Medical Officers of Health. This much needed addition to the staff will enable the Department more adequately to carry out its complex and ever widening duties and responsibilities.

In conclusion, I wish to express my thanks for the support rendered me by officers during the year.

M. H. WATT, Director-General of Health.

## PART II.—PUBLIC HYGIENE.

I have the honour to submit my annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1935.

### SECTION 1: VITAL STATISTICS.

(Exclusive of Maori unless otherwise stated.)

#### POPULATION.

The mean population of the Dominion for 1935 was estimated to be 1,485,824. This total represents an increase over the corresponding figure for the previous year of 8,836, or a percentage increase of population of 0.60.

#### BIRTHS.

The births of 23,965 living children were registered in the Dominion during 1935, as against 24,322 in 1934. The birth-rate for the year was 16.13 per 1,000 of mean population. The general course of the birth-rate during the last five years is shown in the following table:—

*Births (Number and Rate) in New Zealand, 1931–35.*

Year.	Total Number of Births registered.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Mean Population.
1931 .. .. .	26,622	18.42
1932 .. .. .	24,884	17.09
1933 .. .. .	24,334	16.59
1934 .. .. .	24,322	16.47
1935 .. .. .	23,965	16.13

The birth-rate steadily declines. The natural increase (excess of births over deaths) was 11,748 persons, or only 0.80 per cent. of the total population.

Loss during the year in the migration balance accounts for the increase in population being only 0.60 per cent.

#### DEATHS.

The deaths registered during the year numbered 12,217, a decrease of 310 over the figure for 1934 (12,527).

*Crude Death-rates.*

Year.	Crude Death-rate per 1,000 Mean Population.	Year.	Crude Death-rate per 1,000 Mean Population.
1930 .. .. .	8.56	1933 .. .. .	7.98
1931 .. .. .	8.34	1934 .. .. .	8.48
1932 .. .. .	8.02	1935 .. .. .	8.22

#### *Deaths from All Causes.*

The total number of deaths was 12,217, the crude death-rate per 1,000 of mean population being 8.22. Standardized on the basis of the age and sex constitution of the population at the time of the census taken in 1911, the rate becomes 6.76.

The age and sex constitution of the population is constantly changing, and with an increase in the percentage of elderly people the crude death-rate naturally rises. The effects of this change are eliminated by standardization. When, however, the death-rates for most of the chief causes of death are being considered, another factor which cannot be accurately estimated comes into play—change in the cause of death as certified on the individual death certificates. This change has been very marked of recent years in the case of deaths at the age of 65 years of age and over. In Table A are shown four quinquennial periods from