

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, 1936.

STAFF.

The personnel of the School Medical and Nursing staff consists of a Director, ten School Medical Officers, and twenty-three School Nurses. During the year the Director was absent for a period of eight and a half months, which time was spent in a visit to England and the Continent, opportunity being taken to gain an insight into advances made in school medical work. To an infrequent visitor the improvement noted during the last twenty-five years on the personal care, clothing, nutrition, and general vitality of the London elementary-school child affords striking testimony to the success of the comprehensive measures undertaken to ensure the removal of physical defect and to provide opportunity for healthy growth and development. Sincere appreciation is expressed of the kind reception and generous assistance given by the Health authorities in Great Britain and elsewhere. Dr. Helen Bakewell held the position of Acting Director of School Hygiene during Dr. Paterson's absence. Dr. Elizabeth Gunn attended the Conference of the British Medical Association in Melbourne last year, being also, when in Australia, New Zealand delegate to the Conference of School Medical Officers (Australian and New Zealand).

On the East Cape Dr. Wyn Irwin acted as Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer, taking Dr. Turbott's place while he was absent in Samoa, and carrying out the inspection of Native schools among other duties. Dr. Ellen Heycock was appointed to the School Medical Staff, and, after some work in Wellington and Canterbury Districts, is now stationed at Gisborne.

It was regretted that Miss Cherry, School Nurse, Christchurch, should after many years of good work be obliged to retire on account of ill-health. Miss Lorimer, School Nurse, Christchurch, retired on superannuation after many years of good service, Miss Taine being transferred from Nelson to take up duty at Christchurch. Miss Doneghue was transferred from the position of Matron of the Otaki Health Camp, which she filled most competently for a period of two years and a half, to the position of School Nurse, Nelson. Miss I. Kohn was appointed to Dunedin to replace Miss McCormick, who was seconded for duty in Samoa.

The arrangement by which District Nurses (whether officers of this Department or of Hospital Boards) carry out School Nursing duties has proved most satisfactory, ensuring a better supervision of local problems. District Nurses and School Nurses have worked with interest and capability.

FIGURES RELATING TO WORK ACCOMPLISHED IN 1935.

The following summary serves to indicate the extent of work accomplished during the school period, February to December, 1935:—

Schools inspected—				
Of roll under 100	..	..	..	936
Of roll 100 to 500	..	..	..	329
Of roll over 500	..	..	..	104
				1,369
Children examined—				
Complete examinations	..	..	..	64,397
Partial examinations	..	..	..	35,761
				100,158
Number of notifications sent to parents	..	..	..	41,807
Number of addresses to school-children	..	..	..	446
Number of parents interviewed	..	..	..	11,121
Number of lectures or addresses to parents	..	..	..	25
The figures for the work of the Schools Nurses are as follows:—				
Number of days assisted Medical Officer in schools	..	..	..	1,559½
Number of children examined for medical schedule (H. Sch. 14)	..	..	..	94,842
Number of days engaged wholly in clerical work	..	..	..	909½
Number of children re-examined after Medical Officer's inspection	..	..	..	31,855
Number of children examined by special request	..	..	..	9,541
Number of visits to homes in—				
Large towns	..	..	..	5,964
Small country towns	..	..	..	1,598
Scattered districts	..	..	..	1,835
				9,397
Number of children taken personally to hospital, &c.	..	..	..	615
Number of children taken personally to dental clinic	..	..	..	151
Number of health talks given	..	..	..	823