

The average consumption of milk (see the *Monthly Abstract of Statistics*, June, 1936) has, however, recently gone up from $\frac{1}{2}$ pint per person to $\frac{3}{8}$ pint per day, presumably as a result of wide-spread propaganda and of schemes for milk-distribution at school.

The following extract from the "New Zealand Official Year-Book" for 1936 (page 690) is of interest:—

Average Annual Consumption of certain Articles of Foodstuffs.

| Article. | Amount available for Local Consumption, per Head. | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----|----|----|----|-----|
| | lb. | | | | | |
| Butter | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 40 |
| Cheese | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5 |
| Fresh Meat— | | | | | | |
| Beef | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 117 |
| Mutton | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 87 |
| Lamb | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 23 |
| Pork | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 6 |
| Bacon and ham | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 11 |
| Sugar | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 104 |
| Potatoes | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 181 |

The annual average consumption of butter (according to the *Monthly Abstract of Statistics*, June, 1936) has gone up from 37 lb. to 40 lb. per head within the last year, attributable probably to the low level of butter prices for the greater part of the last three years.

Cheese, a source of first-class protein, calcium, and other minerals, could with advantage be more freely used. It would serve to replace to some extent the meat which is so generously eaten by a section of the people.

The Department issued last year two pamphlets for the guidance of its officers in the field—"Hints on Health," and "Hints on Diet," which are proving of use in popular education.

Consideration of other essentials for health—that is exercise, fresh air, and sunlight—brings us to the subject of—

Physical Deformity and Faulty Posture.—Though the marked bony deformities associated with deficiency disease, as rickets, are practically never seen in New Zealand, minor deformities resulting from errors of diet and régime may be noted. Several School Medical Officers refer to the frequency of flat feet, and draw attention to the necessity for appropriate exercise and suitable shoes. Faulty posture, a common defect, readily develops in the wrongly fed and insufficiently rested child. Consideration must be given to the daily routine, since it is often a combination of factors, fatigue, wrong feeding, &c., which is responsible. Excessive homework is to be strongly deprecated. The importance in the school curriculum of a comprehensive scheme of physical education (that is inclusive of health education and physical training) cannot be over-emphasized, since it encourages not only sound health and physical development, but promotes poise and balance, affording wider capability and greater happiness. The importance of swimming may be mentioned in passing. All children should have knowledge of the simple and fundamental laws which must be observed to ensure individual health and racial survival. Girls should know something of home-management, and the teaching should be such as to be applicable with the least possible equipment so that it may be readily used where most needed. Manual training and skill at handicraft encourage better home-makers and citizens (note the potentialities for the development of cottage gardens, often far distant from fruit and vegetable markets). Though sport and active games are widely available in New Zealand and are generally much loved, with the growth of towns on the one hand and the development of motor-cars on the other, there is a tendency in some places for enjoyment to become sedentary. The cinema, for instance, rightly used is of great educational value, but playing-fields, swimming-pools, and opportunities for rambling should not be forgotten. Much attention is paid to the rules of the road for motorists, but little to the right of pedestrians to go long walks. The Youth Movement now manifesting itself with enthusiasm for tramping, mountaineering, &c., is a hopeful sign, and merits generous encouragement.

MILK-DISTRIBUTION.

During the year a considerable amount of work was carried out in connection with extensive arrangements for supplying children at school with half-pint of milk daily free of charge. Space does not permit of detailed information regarding the many schemes adopted. Government and municipal subsidies, the generosity of voluntary organizations, and private philanthropy gave material assistance. In Auckland City over 5,000 children participated, and in Wellington City some 2,400 children were provided with a daily milk ration by the Smith Family, other schemes on a smaller scale operating in the Hutt district. In Dunedin 1,064 children were given a daily free-milk ration, and in other cities and also in rural areas provision on similar lines was widely adopted.

From observations in New Zealand schools (including height and weight statistics) and in view of the mass of evidence available from Great Britain and elsewhere, it may be regarded as proven that the addition of $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of milk to the usual daily dietary of children will, generally speaking, result in improved nutrition and health. The benefit of such a measure is most obvious where the food-supply is inadequate in quantity or quality.

It is essential that all schemes of milk-distribution be carried out under the strict surveillance of the Department of Health.