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The DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH to the Hon. the MINISTER OF HEALTH.

Health Department, Wellington, 22nd September, 1921.

I HAVE the honour to submit the annual report of the Department for the year 1920-21.

PART I.—GENERAL SURVEY.

SECTION 1.—GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

The Department can now be congratulated on being possessed of a thoroughly workable Health Act, which I have reason to believe may be said of the Act of 1920. In fact, it is even said to be the best Act of its kind in the English language. That such an Act has been brought into existence is largely due to the energy and devotion of my colleague Dr. R. H. Makgill, who has given much time during his service to the construction of a workable Act—which is more than can be said of the Public Health Act under which the officers of this Department had been working until this year.

By this Act the Department is divided into the following divisions, under the control of the Director-General and the Deputy Director-General, who are responsible for the co-ordination of the work of the various divisions:—

Division of Public Hygiene	M. H. Watt, M.D., D.P.H.
Division of Hospitals	D. S. Wylie, C.M.G., C.B.E., F.R.C.S.
Division of Nursing	Miss Hester Maclean, R.R.C.
Division of School Hygiene	E. H. Wilkins, M.B.
Division of Dental Hygiene	T. A. Hunter, C.B.E.
Division of Child Welfare	F. Truby King, C.M.G., M.B., B.Sc. (P.H.).
Division of Maori Hygiene	Te Rangi Hiroa, D.S.O., M.B.

In this connection the Department specially welcomes the services of Dr. Truby King, Director of the Division of Child Welfare, who has a world-wide reputation for work in the special division to which he has been appointed.

It is to be hoped that when, after the struggles of years, the Department has been adequately staffed, and thus given every opportunity of making its influence felt, the financial necessities of the Dominion will not necessitate any curtailment of its activities. As the matter now stands we have not been able to obtain the staff necessary to carry out the various duties imposed upon the Department by the Health Act, and in that connection it is especially regrettable that, for the reasons mentioned, the Department has not been able to wholly fulfil its obligations to the local authorities as regards the appointment of Sanitary Inspectors. It is hoped that local authorities will recognize this.

It is also to be regretted that the Department has not been able to establish additional health districts at Invercargill, Nelson, and Hamilton, with a Medical Officer of Health in charge, as was originally intended.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

The past year has, on the whole, been a disappointing one, especially as regards notifiable diseases. In his report the Director, Division of Public Hygiene, states: "The outstanding features of the year under review were widespread epidemics of influenza, measles, and whooping-cough, an increased prevalence of poliomyelitis, and an outbreak of smallpox in the Otago Health District."

Though there is a considerable decrease in the number of notifications of scarlet fever, and a considerable decrease in the notifications of diphtheria, a great deal too many cases of diphtheria are