

Health Committee's report / City of Melbourne.

Contributors

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CITY OF MELBOURNE



REPORT OF HEALTH COMMITTEE

for the

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31
1948

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CITY OF MELBOURNE

Report of the Health Committee for the Year 1948

Members of Committee:

Councillor Boulton (Chairman).
Councillor Brens.
Councillor Coleman (resigned 20th August, 1948).
Councillor Connelly (elected 29th August, 1948).
Councillor Holland.
Councillor E. L. Morton.
Councillor Sir Harold Gengoult Smith.

The Health Committee submits for the information of the Council a report regarding the work carried out under the direction of the Committee during the year ended 31st December, 1948.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

A report by the Medical Officer of Health (Dr. John Dale) upon the work of the Health Department during 1948, and upon the health of the inhabitants of the City generally, is attached hereto, together with reports by Dr. Hilda Kincaid upon child welfare work; by Dr. Hilda Bull, upon infectious diseases; by Mr. T. G. O. Jordan, the Chief Health Inspector, on the routine work of the Department; by Messrs. Dunn, Son and Stone, City Analysts; by Mr. Reeve, Dental Officer, upon the work of dental centres at Kensington and North Carlton, and by the Senior Bacteriologist of the Bacteriology Department, University of Melbourne. Full details of the various health activities of the Council are contained in these reports.

CHILD WELFARE

The report of Dr. Hilda Kincaid upon the work of the Child Welfare Branch gives details of the year's activities, and statistics for the year reveal that there was a further decline in the number of births registered in the City (1,786) which represents a fall of about 12% from the maximum number (2,033) recorded in 1947. The infant mortality rate of 25.2 per 1,000 births is very satisfactory and is the lowest on record except for the year 1946 when it was 23.1.

The amount of milk and accessory foodstuffs distributed under the Council's scheme of assisted milk distribution and the number of families assisted thereunder is approximately the same when compared with last year. In the latter part of the year the distribution of the free tinned milk for baby feeding was discontinued and a small charge is now made in all cases.

The Committee again continued its assistance to parents in indigent circumstances by the supply of milk, the total expenditure for the year being £1,408/0/11, of which the amount of £499/4/6 was refunded by parents.

It is interesting to note that an analysis of the birth notifications of the City for the year 1948 showed that approximately 85% of the babies had parents who were both Australian born, 5.5% had British parents born outside Australia, and approximately 9.5% had parents one or both of whom were not of British birth. Approximately 7% of the births were ex-nuptial.

The maintenance grants made by the Council to kindergartens and creches for the year 1948 were the same as for previous years, viz., £1,000 and £500 respectively.

The total amount expended by the Council on the conduct and maintenance of the Child Welfare Centres in the City of Melbourne during 1948 was £6,481/12/7, of which £1,940 was contributed by the State Government.

The Committee desires to again record its appreciation of the services of all those who have contributed to the carrying out of Child Welfare work throughout the year, especially the Committees of Management of the Lady Huntingfield Free Kindergarten, the Hopetoun Free Kindergarten and the Fawkner Park Pre-School Centre and the voluntary workers in all the other kindergartens and creches in the City of Melbourne.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The accompanying reports of the Medical Officer of Health and Dr. Hilda Bull show the amount of preventative work carried out against Infectious Diseases.

Although the number of new cases of tuberculosis (96) is somewhat larger than that notified last year (36), it is still considerably less than notified annually during the war years, the number of new female cases (24) is the smallest ever

recorded and is less than half the number notified annually during the period 1939-44.

It is gratifying to note also that the number of deaths of cases in the City area (47) is considerably less than any figure previously recorded.

The number of diphtheria cases (41) was somewhat above the average of recent years, but many of the cases were mild and were discovered in the course of an extensive supervisory effort to observe and swab the contacts of definite cases, and it is probable that they were evidence of the natural process of immunisation which goes on among young children, and the children could have passed unnoticed and recovered without treatment had they not been looked for.

The immunisation against diphtheria was carried on as usual, but when compared with the number of births, the number of babies immunised still appears to be insufficient.

A very large proportion of the babies who continue to attend the Centre during their first years are immunised, but the fraction who, by reason of removal or unsatisfactory attendance, do not maintain contact with the Centres, and who are not immunised, is still too large.

It is considered that in order to reduce diphtheria in Victoria to a level comparable with that now attained in most parts of the U.S.A., Canada and Great Britain, a State-wide campaign with effective publicity is necessary.

DENTAL

During the year 890 children between the ages of 1 to 5 years were examined and treated at the two dental centres situated at Kensington and Newry Street Centres.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES HOSPITAL, FAIRFIELD

The Council's contribution towards the Queen's Memorial Infectious Diseases Hospital amounted to £11,400/4/6.

The contributions for the past five years were:—

1944	£12,414	11	4
1945	12,325	10	2
1946	9,957	2	2
1947	10,066	8	1
1948	11,400	4	6

FOOD SUPPLIES

The attached report of the Chief Health Inspector gives details of the inspections of food premises and of examination of foods.

The customary systematic inspections were carried out and results can be regarded as relatively satisfactory.

The quality of the milk supply from the chemical aspect has been maintained in a very satisfactory manner. Owing to pressure of work in the Milk Laboratory of the Veterinary Research Institute it has not been possible to continue the regular bacteriological examination of milk as delivered to consumers in the City. The control of the safety of the supplies is in the hands of the Dairying Division of the Department of Agriculture, and there is no doubt that the officers of that division are doing their best under conditions which allow of little improvement or any greater security until steps are taken by the Government to ensure that the whole of the milk of the Metropolitan Area is effectively pasteurised and protected from contamination.

The number of food samples which failed to comply with the standard was 15, or approximately 3.2% of the total number submitted for analysis. These included milk 9, mustard 1, chopped meat 4, vinegar 1.

The average composition of milk samples was again excellent, the average percentage of fat being 4.3, which shows the average quality of milk is being maintained in spite of being slightly lower than the average for last year (4.4).

SWIMMING BATHS

Regular sampling for bacteriological examination of the water in the several swimming pools throughout the City was carried out during rush periods at the pools and the results of the examinations showed that the purification plants were operating in quite a satisfactory manner.

RODENT CONTROL

The usual attention has again been given to the problem of rat infestation, 75,000 poison baits having been prepared, of which 47,000 were laid by the staff and 28,000 supplied to ratepayers with directions as to how the bait should be used.

During the year the Rat Destruction Regulations were amended to enable premises to be dealt with where evidence of rat infestation was found, it being necessary previously to find live rats before action could be taken.

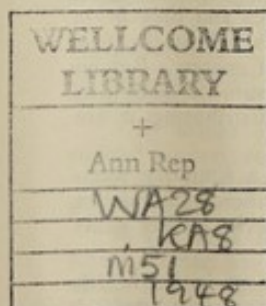
STABLES

Since the introduction of By-law No. 276, covering the registration, etc., of stables, it is now possible to enforce the removal of manure and the cleansing of manure pits, which has assisted in combating the fly menace.

157 stables and five blocks of land used as resting places for horses are now registered with the Council.

G. R. BOULTON, *Chairman.*

H. S. WOOTTON, *Town Clerk.*



Report of the Medical Officer for Health

Health Department,
Town Hall Chambers, Melbourne.
28th July, 1949.

The Chairman and Members,
Health Committee:

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my report for the year 1948.

The health of the community was relatively good throughout the year, and there were no unusual or severe outbreaks of disease. The same fortunate state of affairs appears to have prevailed throughout the whole of Australia and no alarming prevalence of disease was reported from any part of the world.

VITAL STATISTICS

Some vital statistics for the City for the last ten years and the averages for the preceding five-year period are shown in Table I.

TABLE I

Year	Estimated Mean Population	No. of Births	Birth Rate	No. of Deaths	Death Rate	Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births
1934-38 (5-year av.)	92,762	1,140	12.2	1,127	12.1	47.0
1939	93,200	1,105	12.2	1,208	13.4	36.2
1940	93,650	1,257	13.7	1,210	13.3	54.1
1941	95,400	1,303	14.2	1,186	12.9	36.8
1942	95,500	1,499	16.1	1,283	13.0	44.0
1943	99,393	1,804	18.1	1,226	12.3	43.8
1944	100,485	1,655	16.5	1,227	12.2	32.0
1945	101,130	1,709	16.9	1,225	12.1	26.3
1946	105,300	2,033	19.8	1,177	11.5	23.1
1947	99,868	1,961	20.2	1,281	13.2	35.7
1948	101,000	1,786	18.2	1,163	11.9	25.2

The number of births recorded in the City, 1,786, was considerably less than those of last year, and represents a fall of about 12 per cent. from the maximum, 2,033, recorded in 1946. It is to be expected that this fall will continue in conformity with the decline in the marriage rate.

The infantile mortality rate in the City, 25.2 per 1,000 live births, is very satisfactory and is the lowest recorded except for the year 1946, when it was 23.1. The rate for the State of Victoria was 23.9, which is a low record.

The general death rate for the City was 11.9. This figure is low and reflects the relatively favourable health conditions of the year.

CHILD WELFARE

The report of Dr. Hilda E. Kincaid gives details of the work of the Child Welfare branch of the Department. With the reduction in the birth rate the number of babies attending is rather smaller than was the case last year and this decline is likely, as already suggested, to continue for several years.

The work with the pre-school children, however, continues to increase, both in numbers of children attending and in total attendances of children, and this is very much to be desired.

In her report Dr. Kincaid discusses at some length the work with pre-school children which is now attracting so much sympathetic interest from governmental bodies and from the community as a whole. These activities represent the growing point of preventive medicine at the present time. The work of the health centres dealing with mothers and infants may be regarded as an established success and to have achieved its main ends. It will, no doubt, continue to improve and, indeed, current research on the causes and prevention of the hitherto resistant neonatal mortality (deaths of infants within the first few weeks of life) is proceeding with encouraging prospects of success. But on the whole it seems that most of the knowledge necessary to ensure the health of mothers and infants already exists and that the means of distributing it are effective.

We are now confronted with the problem of ensuring a similarly satisfactory state of affairs for the children of pre-school age and there is no doubt that the solution of the problems encountered there will secure even greater gains in community health and welfare.

In recent decades there has been considerable improvement in the health of pre-school children and of children of school age. In Victoria the medical examination of school children has never been comprehensive, and has covered

only a considerable fraction of them, but the results have shown that they are, on the average, better developed than their predecessors and fewer defects are discovered in their examination. Among pre-school children work has been carried out mainly on a basis of voluntary participation in the benefits offered and has been far from complete, but the results of examination show that they also are taller and heavier, and present fewer defects than their predecessors.

These improvements probably result in part from the better start in life which has been ensured through the operation of the Baby Health Centres, and in part from the influence of the very widespread health education, especially in dietetics, carried out by various agencies, official and unofficial, which has been such a feature of recent times. It is likely also that the improved standard of living and the institution of child endowment have also played their parts.

The general health of the children, however, and consequently of the community into which they merge, is still very far from satisfactory. As Dr. Kincaid mentions in her report—"the growing young are so persistently offered mental and physical food inconsistent with their best development." It is particularly, perhaps, on the mental side, in the domain of what is known as mental hygiene, that the experience of recent years in our now numerous kindergartens and the contributions of the fast developing science of child psychology, promise valuable results if the knowledge now available can be systematically and generally applied. Public opinion, and consequently public authorities, are awake to the advantages of the organised community care of pre-school children and there is no doubt that if present difficulties concerning the training of staff, the provision of buildings and other facilities, and the allotment of financial responsibilities can be overcome, we can confidently expect further great improvements in the health of children within a relatively short time.

The report by Dr. Hilda Bull upon the results of her examination of pre-school children entering the Pigdon Street Kindergarten, which was included in last year's annual report, illustrates, in the manner of a pilot investigation, some of the interesting possibilities of this work.

Dr. Bull made a careful physical and psychological examination of 96 pre-school children, interviewed the parents and examined the home conditions. Many of the children showed patterns of behaviour, such as nail biting, refusal of food, stammering, shyness, tantrums, etc., which indicated that some factors were interfering seriously with the happiness of the children and prevented their living in concord or harmony with their fellows. It is of the utmost importance that little children should be happy, should "live in concord"! Otherwise they must be gravely hindered in their development, may become anti-social or be permanently set upon a course of unhappiness and peculiarity. This is, of course, well understood by kindergarteners, teachers and intelligent people generally, but it is perhaps only now becoming realised how early in life unfavourable influences may begin to damage a child, how serious and permanent the damage may be and how easy it may be to prevent if appropriate action is taken at the right time.

Dr. Bull's modest report shows that she and her collaborators were able in many cases to take appropriate action at the right time and similarly successful efforts are made in many of the child welfare and kindergarten services. This is Mental Hygiene. It aims to encourage the harmonious development of the child as a whole person learning to live in association with his fellows.

Opinions may differ as to the details of the framework of society in which human beings may live in the greatest harmony. But we cannot be wrong in desiring the full physical and mental development of all our children, in fostering their harmonious association and regarding their interest and happiness as a measure of our success in organising our schools and educational institutions. This is the process of civilisation.

The quality of the personnel, teachers, doctors, psychologists and nurses, who deal with our children is all important. They must be as well-trained as possible and we must have enough of them. In relation to this vital need, the recent steps taken to improve the status and training of teachers and kindergarteners, the establishment of the full School of Psychology in the University, the setting up of new Child Guidance Clinics by the Government, and the recent developments in child psychiatry and psychological medicine, are welcome evidence of progress.

As Dr. Kincaid says in her report, few parents nowadays are unaware of the importance of the pre-school years and all the authorities and organisations in the City which have established Kindergartens are extending them as rapidly as possible.

It would be desirable now, if staff were available, to appoint a fully trained kindergartener to co-ordinate the work of the kindergartens in the City area, and to strengthen the medical staff and consider the appointment of a psychologist.

The work in the dental clinics at the Health Centres at Kensington and North Carlton has been very successful and it is now proposed to extend the work to the Health Centre in North Melbourne. We are grateful, as in former years, to Professor Amies and the staff at the Dental Hospital for carrying out the work on the pre-school children from other areas of the City.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Details of infectious diseases and their control are given in a report upon the work of Dr. Hilda W. Bull, who carried it out during the year.

The incidence of disease was generally low and there were no unusual happenings.

The immunisation against diphtheria was carried on as usual, but the number of babies immunised still appears to be insufficient when compared to the number of births. Of babies who continue to be centre attendants until late in their first year, a very large proportion are immunised, but the fraction who by reason of removal or unsatisfactory attendance do not maintain contact with the Centres and who are probably not immunised, is still too large. I still consider that a State-wide campaign with effective posters is necessary to reduce diphtheria in Victoria to a level comparable with that now attained in most parts of the United States of America, Canada and Great Britain. Some hundreds of children were immunised against whooping cough. Very soon, it is hoped, a combined vaccine will be available which will allow of simultaneous immunisation against both diphtheria and whooping cough.

The situation regarding tuberculosis continues to be satisfactory in that the death rate continues to fall, that reasonable living allowances are available for patients and their families, that the State Department is continuing its campaign of radiological examination of well persons and has approved plans for the extension and improvements of hospitals and accommodation at sanatoria. Unfortunately, acute shortage of staff still prevents the full utilisation of the accommodation already existing.

The number of new cases, 96, is somewhat larger than that notified in last year, but is considerably less than the numbers notified annually during the years of war. The number of new female cases, 24, is the smallest on record and is less than half those notified annually during the period 1939-1944.

The number of deaths of City cases, 47, is also considerably less than any figure previously recorded.

FOOD SUPPLIES

The attached report of the Chief Health Inspector, Mr. T. G. O. Jordan, gives details of the inspections of food premises and of examination of foods. The customary systematic inspections were carried out and results can be regarded as relatively satisfactory.

The quality of the milk supply from the chemical aspect has been maintained in a very satisfactory manner. Owing to pressure of work in the Milk Laboratory of the Veterinary Research Institute it has not been possible to continue the regular bacteriological examination of milk as delivered to consumers in the City. Control of the safety of the supplies is in the hands of the Dairying Division of the Department of Agriculture and I have no doubt that the officers of that division are doing their best under conditions which allow of little improvement or any greater security until steps are taken by the Government to ensure that the whole of the milk of the metropolitan area is effectively pasteurised and protected from contamination.

HOUSING

It is regretted that much of the work is still gravely hampered and, to some extent, frustrated by the continued shortages of labour and materials, and that there is apparently little prospect of any improvement in the near future.

Apart from a detailed housing survey of a large area in Carlton in connection with a Planning Scheme which is being prepared under the direction of the City Engineer, the efforts of the staff were mainly directed to the carrying out of urgent repairs.

For yet another year it is regretted that as far as the City is concerned it is impossible to report that any progress has been made in the improvement of housing conditions.

I wish to express once again my sincere appreciation of the work of the whole of the officers and staff of the department, and of the voluntary helpers in the child welfare centres and kindergartens.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN DALE, O.B.E., M.D., B.Sc. (Public Health),
Medical Officer of Health.

Child Welfare

Health Department,
Town Hall Chambers, Melbourne.
6th June, 1949.

The Medical Officer of Health:

Sir,

I have the honour to report on the Child Welfare activities for the year 1948.

Whilst there has been no extension of activities, Health Centres and Kindergartens have been kept busily occupied in attending to their clientele. Kindergartens continue to have long waiting lists of children who can not be accommodated. With building and staffing difficulties as they are, there seems little chance of immediate increase in Kindergarten facilities.

The trend, therefore, to-day, in order to meet the need, is to give less Kindergarten time to more children. This policy, I feel, is sound, socially, physiologically and educationally, as well as economically.

In the past, stress has been laid on daily regular attendance of children in kindergartens for a relatively large portion of their day. Recently, however, it has been felt that, for young children particularly, shorter periods in kindergartens are preferable, and that attendance need not necessarily be daily. For older children in poor homes, daily attendance is probably very desirable to combat the poor environment in which they live; but for children in good homes, short periods at kindergarten, say two or three times a week, would possibly give enough developmental experience to be satisfactory, and would induce them to react beneficially in their own homes along their individual lines. Such shorter or less frequent attendances of children would allow of staggering, so that a greater number of children could avail themselves of kindergarten experience. Whilst the staggering of attendances would have the desired effect of allowing more children to share in the benefits of any one kindergarten, it would automatically throw more work on the kindergarten teachers, who would have to observe and deal with the problems of a greater number of children and gain the intelligent co-operation of a greater number of parents. All such work, however, as it increases in quantity, often becomes less difficult qualitatively, because as knowledge becomes more widespread, and as fundamental principles are more commonly accepted, public co-operation becomes more active and reliable. The Health Centres have found this over the years. The bulk of work has increased tremendously and exhaustingly, but much of the hopeless frustration experienced by workers in their earlier struggles against ignorance, apathy, or even antagonism, has been eliminated by the actual expansion of the work.

The function of institutions such as Health Centres and Kindergartens is obviously twofold, viz., the supervision and care of the individuals who attend them and, more far reaching, the dissemination of knowledge through the community of the essentials of child development.

So much pre-school work has been done in the City in the last 20 years, and so much publicity and propaganda advanced throughout the State in recent years, that few parents are unaware of the importance of the pre-school years; and many are anxious to avail themselves of what Kindergartens have to offer. This means that Kindergartens now, as well as Health Centres, are coming in touch with more and more parents ready and eager to know more about their children and their psychological, emotional and social needs as well as their physical ones. Knowledge of the needs of children and a determination to faithfully and intelligently supply them, both in home and community life, must lead to higher levels of physical and mental growth.

In spite of this progress, and of the increased desire to improve home and community life, practical difficulties arise on every hand. The struggle for housing, transport and shopping is apt to sap vitality and spirit. Shortages of accommodation and of staffing in hospitals frequently send convalescents home after illness or confinement before they are well enough to take up their home duties, and the growing young are so persistently offered mental and physical food inconsistent with their best development that it can hardly be avoided.

The Government's sympathetic attitude towards Centres for pre-school child development has been shown by increased grants to the Kindergarten Training College and to Kindergartens, as well as by the offering of scholarships for girls wishing to train for kindergartens.

Figures given in our last year's report showed the increase in the average height and weight of children attending our Centres, as compared with earlier years. This indicates an improvement in physique, and, whilst definite criteria are not available for measuring improvement in mental physique, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that averages of mental and emotional development may also have improved.

In spite of the demand for, and the dearth of, trained Kindergarten Directors, the City has been fortunate in having well-trained and efficient girls in charge of the Kindergartens. There are four girls, of whom the College gives

excellent reports, at present training at the Kindergarten Training College, on scholarships provided by the City Council.

It is to be regretted that the number of girls at present wishing to train as kindergarteners is falling short of the demand for them in the various pre-school activities which the public are now asking for. This dearth of trained personnel is by no means confined to Child Welfare work, but is common to all work throughout the community. Various reasons have been given for this shortage, among them, the low birth rate during the depression years. Whatever the cause, it is obvious that if the work of the community is to be adequately done those able to work must give as much service as possible.

The number of births notified in 1948 was less than in the previous year (1,786 as against 1,961). This was reflected in the slightly smaller number of individual babies attending the Centres, and of their total attendances. On the other hand, the number of consultations with expectant mothers and the attendances of pre-school children increased a little. The differences, however, are practically inappreciable, the volume of work remaining about the same, and keeping the Sisters extremely busy. There were many premature babies, as well as a number of mothers who were discharged from hospital with their babies very early in the puerperium, who needed a great deal of help. It is unfortunate that such early return of mothers from hospital to their homes after confinement has been found necessary. Some of these mothers have remarked that they felt their strength insufficient to cope with the heavy domestic round. In some mothers lactation had hardly been established, and tended to diminish rapidly, and there had been scarcely time for the mother to acquire confidence in handling her baby before the return home. If there is not enough accommodation or enough trained nursing personnel to keep mothers in hospital for a sufficient time, the establishment of rest homes might be a solution to the problem and help to tide mothers satisfactorily over a period until they feel able again to look after their homes and a new baby.

Such rest homes could probably be run very largely by the mothers themselves, with a good matron to supervise diet and routine, and with girls trained in mothercraft to help the mothers with their babies until they have adjusted themselves to household work and responsibility, and until lactation is satisfactorily established and being maintained.

An analysis of the birth notifications for the City for 1948 showed that roughly 85% of the babies had parents who were both Australian born, 5.5% had British parents born outside Australia, and approximately 9.5% had parents one or both of whom were not of British birth. Approximately 7% of the births were ex-nuptial.

Throughout the Health Centres, general progress among the children was maintained, although there was a good deal of sickness, at times, during the year. The winter was unusually long and bleak, and colds and bronchitis were prevalent, as well as measles, mumps and whooping cough. There were also a number of cases of diphtheria. Towards the end of the year a mild gastroenteritis assumed epidemic proportions and very many adults, as well as children, were affected. Most of the cases were not very ill and responded quickly to dieting, with or without medication. Many of the cases were admitted to hospital. A certain proportion of these was found to be due to the Salmonella group of organisms, and some of these remained carriers for a considerable time. When a disease is mild and widespread and can be transferred by carriers for a considerable time after they are free from symptoms, it is very difficult to control, except by the teaching and application of general good hygiene.

There were four deaths due to gastroenteritis in babies under one year, two of them being associated with bronchopneumonia. There were also two deaths from the same disease in children of two years. None of the children were Centre attendants, except one baby who lived in Camp Pell and had attended the Centre there twice. The number (6) of children under three years lost this year through gastroenteritis was about twice the average for the last five years.

TABLE SHOWING VOLUME OF HEALTH CENTRE WORK

	Council Centres		Training Centres (V.B.H.C. & Tandarra)		Total	
	1947	1948	1947	1948	1947	1948
No. of new babies attending	1,571	1,481	652	473	2,223	1,954
No. of individual babies under 1 year attending	1,406	1,411	541	450	1,947	1,861
No. of individual babies between 1 and 2 years attending	1,483	1,521	198	198	1,681	1,719
Total number of individuals under 2 years	2,889	2,932	739	648	3,628	3,580
Total attendances of babies under 2 years	33,176	32,866	6,926	6,042	40,102	38,908
No. of new expectant mothers	155	214	39	49	194	263
No. of individual expectant mothers	169	245	41	51	210	296

Table Showing Volume of Health Centre Work (Continued)

	Council Centres		Training Centres (V.B.H.C. & Tandarra)		Total	
	1947	1948	1947	1948	1947	1948
Total consultations with expectant mothers	380	596	112	150	492	746
Visits by nurses to babies and mothers	4,862	4,974	1,287	1,144	6,149	6,118
No. of times babies referred to doctor or hospital	531	486	205	154	736	640
No. of children new to pre-school sessions	945	904	91	265	1,036	1,169
No. of individual pre-school children	1,748	2,021	176	161	1,924	2,182
Total attendances of pre-school children	7,258	7,663	685	687	7,943	8,350
Visits (or consultations apart from sessions) re pre-school children	2,362	2,650	45	151	2,407	2,801
No. referred to Dental Hospital	260	228	8	6	268	234
No. of pre-school children examined in their own kindergartens	—	—	—	—	370	276

Maternal Mortality

There was only one death notified during the year as due to pregnancy or labour. It was notified as Renal failure and infection following abortion, the evidence being insufficient to say by whom the abortion was brought about. The death occurred at the Women's Hospital and was of a married woman, aged 27 years, who was employed in work outside her home.

Infant Mortality

The number of births notified during the year was 1,786, and included 16 sets of twins. The number of infant deaths notified was 43 (26 of them being neonatal). The infantile death rate, however, after certain allocations, was computed by the Government Statist to be 25.2, the neonatal rate being 15.1, and the rate of those between one month and one year being 10.1

The following table shows comparison with the last five years:—

Year	Neonatal Death Rate	Rate between one month and one year	Rate of all under one year	No. of Births
1943	28.8	14.9	43.7	1,804
1944	19.9	12.1	32.0	1,655
1945	19.8	6.4	26.3	1,709
1946	17.7	5.4	23.1	2,033
1947	21.9	13.7	35.7	1,961
Average for 5 years	21.6	10.5	32.1	1,832
1948	15.1	10.1	25.2	1,786

Neonatal Deaths

The causes of the 26 neonatal deaths were:—

Prematurity	7	Cerebral haemorrhage	3
Prematurity and atelectasis	10	Asphyxia pallida and shock	1
Prematurity and erythroblastosis	1	Congenital heart	1
Prematurity and placenta praevia	1	Accidental suffocation	1
Atelectasis	1		

Of the twenty-six (26) babies who died in the neonatal period there was only one of whom no details could be obtained. This was an ex-nuptial child and the mother could not be located. This was the only death of an ex-nuptial baby. Of the remaining 25, there was a history of regular antenatal attention in 22 cases, either at hospital or by private doctor. In all 25 cases the fathers were working. Diet appeared to be satisfactory on the whole. Two of the deaths were of twins whose mother resided in the Camp Pell temporary housing area, from which 6.4% of our birth notifications were received. Two other of the deaths were also of Camp Pell residents. Eleven were born in The Women's Hospital, 3 in the Queen Victoria Hospital, 10 in private hospitals and 2 in their own homes. Ten were in first children, 5 in second children, 7 in third children and 4 in children of larger families.

Deaths between one month and one year of age

The causes of the 17 deaths at this age were as follows:—

Bronchopneumonia	2	Pneumonia and chronic bronchitis	1
Bronchopneumonia and mongolism	1	Pneumonia and gastroenteritis	3
Bronchopneumonia, mongolism		Enteritis and prematurity	1
and congenital heart	1	Influenzal meningitis	1
Bronchopneumonia and congenital		Diaphragmatic hernia and empy-	
heart	1	aema	1
Bronchopneumonia and cleft		Purpura haemorrhagica	1
palate	1	Accidental burns	1
Bronchopneumonia and hydro-		Accidental suffocation	1
cephalus	1		

Six of these 17 babies had attended the Centres, but only three of them regularly. These three died respectively of influenzal meningitis, accidental burns and diaphragmatic hernia with empyaema. Three of the 17 deaths were in the Camp Pell area. Seven of the 17 babies who did not attend the Centres were not known to the Sisters at all, but four were known to the Centres through birth notification, and had been visited in their own homes. One of the 17 was an ex-nuptial child.

Deaths (5) in children between 1 and 2 years of age

Bronchopneumonia	1	Hydrocephalus	1
Lobar Pneumonia	1	Accidental injuries	1
Pneumococcal peritonitis	1		

One of these (the pneumococcal peritonitis case) attended Centre regularly, two others attended Centre only in their early months, and the remaining two had not attended a Centre but were known and had been home visited. One of the children lived in Camp Pell.

Deaths (8) in children between 2 and 6 years of age

Gastroenteritis	2	Congenital heart disease	1
Bronchopneumonia and mongolism	1	Accidental injuries	1
Diphtheria	1	Accidental burns	1
Coeliac disease	1		

One of these (the congenital heart case) attended Centre till about one year of age. Four had never attended a Centre and were not known to the Sisters. Three were known to the Sisters and had been home visited, but one of these was admitted early to Kew Mental Hospital.

Of the 13 deaths between one and six years of age, three were due to accident and two to congenital malformations.

Milk and Accessory Foods supplied through the Centres to people needing aid

The figures given in brackets in the following records show comparative figures for 1947.

The amount of wet milk supplied was 639 pints (270). This was supplied to five tuberculosis patients.

The amount of dried milk distributed was 20,753 lbs. (21,653). Sixty-nine gallons (180) of an iron and vitamin mixture were distributed.

The total number of recipients was 505 (470), belonging to 465 (438) families. Seventy-seven individuals (93), belonging to 62 (77) families, received help continuously during the year.

Early in November all recipients were re-assessed on a new basis and, except in very necessitous cases, no free issue was made, 6d. or 1/- being paid per tin, according to the assessment; the retail price being 2/11.

Training Courses

Eight Sisters doing their Infant Welfare Course at the Presbyterian Babies' Home attended our Centres for instruction and practice in the Centre work required for their course.

Lectures in Mothercraft

Lectures were given by Sister Duncan to girls in 13 schools (State and Roman Catholic). 395 girls sat for the examination at the end of the course. Of these 125 obtained certificates of merit and 170 passed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like, once more, to thank Dr. Bull for her work with the children at Pigdon Street, and to express sincere regret at the serious illness which overtook her towards the end of the year. I also wish to record my very real appreciation of the steady, painstaking and competent work of all the Sisters, and to register a deep appreciation of the aid so generously given by the voluntary helpers.

HILDA E. KINCAID, D.Sc. M.B., B.S.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

INCIDENCE AND CONTROL DURING 1948

The following facts and figures have been compiled from records made by or for Dr. Hilda W. Bull in the course of her work during 1948. Unfortunately, owing to sickness, Dr. Bull has not been able to prepare her usual report.

There was no unusual prevalence of infectious diseases during the year. The number of diphtheria cases (44) was somewhat above the average of recent years, but many of the cases were mild and were discovered in the course of an intensive supervisory effort to observe and swab the contacts of definite cases, and it is probable that they were evidence of the natural process of immunisation which goes on among young children, and that they could have passed unnoticed and recovered without treatment had they not been looked for. Both measles and whooping cough were prevalent, especially during the third quarter of the year, but do not seem to have been severe.

DIPHTHERIA

TABLE I

Year	No. of Cases	Cases per 100,000	Deaths	Case Fatality	Fatality per 100,000
1915-1924 (average)	373	355	14	3.7	13
*1925-1934 (average)	230	239	6	2.9	7
1935-1939 (average)	168	178	3	1.8	3
1940-1944 (average)	102	106	3	2.9	3
1945	35	34	1	2.8	1
1946	34	32	2	5.8	2
1947	21	21	—	—	—
1948	44	43	2	4.5	1.9

* Immunisation commenced in City.

Incidence

Of the 44 cases, 22 were in males and 22 in females. There were two deaths from diphtheria in 1948, a boy of five years and a girl of seven.

Rates

The following figures show the rates per 100,000 of the City, the nine adjacent municipalities, the metropolitan area and the State, for the past five years.

TABLE II

	Population	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Melbourne City	101,000	71	35	32	21	43
9 Adjacent Municipalities	387,321	69	85	37	33	28
Greater Melbourne	1,250,000	54	51	23	23	21
Whole State	2,090,668	62	45	24	19	18

It will be observed that rates for all areas are low. The higher rate for Melbourne City is probably due, in part, at least, to the fact that a search is made for cases, as mentioned above.

TABLE III

Age Incidence

Age	Males	Females	Totals	Percentages
0-4 years	8	4	12	27
5-9 years	9	12	21	48
10-14 years	3	2	5	11
15 years and over	2	4	6	
	22	22	44	

TABLE IV

Institutional and General Cases

Year	Total	Institutional	General
1931-1935	280	44	236
1936-1940	136	28	108
1941	235	15	220
1942	56	12	44
1943	48	21	27
1944	71	11	60
1945	35	3	32
1946	34	7	27
1947	21	5	16
1948	44	2	42

Swabs

494 swabs were taken from contacts of diphtheria cases. 94 were positive, of which two were avirulent, seven were of the gravis type and 13 of the mitis type. Most of the swabs were taken from carriers, 18 of which were under supervision in the second and third quarters of the year.

Diphtheria in families

Fourteen cases occurred in five families. Six children in one family were carriers, and in each of two families one child was a clinical case and the other was a carrier.

Diphtheria in individuals previously treated

Seven cases were reported to have had some treatment. One of these was the fatal case in a boy aged 5½. The parents were new arrivals in the City and the mother gave a vague history that immunisation had been commenced in Brisbane and then in Sydney, but it is unlikely that the treatment was completed. It was not possible to verify the mother's statement, as she had forgotten the doctors' names and the exact places of treatment. Another case, mild, was said to have been immunised in 1943 at Westgarth. Another case was immunised at school a few weeks before the disease occurred. Two other cases had received one dose only, in one case four years and the other case one year previously. Two other cases had been Shick tested in 1946 and were reported as being negative.

Immunisation

The figures for immunisation in Health Centres for the last five years are as follows:—

TABLE V

Year	Total Individuals	Immunised	
		1 Dose	2 Doses
1944	1,116	79	668
1945	1,224	74	864
1946	1,683	72	853
1947	1,772	102	1,001
1948	1,304	118	808

The figures for the number of children immunised at the Health Centres show a decrease but are reasonably well maintained in view of the decline in the birth rate.

Immunisation (after testing) of the children under 10 years in schools was recommenced and the usual testing and immunisation was carried out among hospital nurses and in certain institutions. The work is shown in the following table.

TABLE VI.

	Total Presenting	Immunised
Health Centres	1,304	808
Schools		
Errol Street S.S.	212	48
Faraday Street S.S.	101	20
King Street S.S.	129	27
Lee Street S.S.	310	73
Rathdown Street S.S.	186	57
St. George's School	101	13
St. John's School	191	62
St. Michael's School	110	26
Yooralla	80	20
Total	1,420	346
Hospitals and Institutions		
Children's Welfare Department	244	34
Royal Melbourne Hospital	116	23
Alfred Hospital	109	32
Children's Hospital	76	27
Carlton Creche	22	18
Victorian Children's Aid	48	5
City Free Kindergarten	15	13
Total	630	152
Grand Total	3,354	1,306

Re-Tests

353 children were re-tested in Health Centres, of whom four gave some reaction. Re-testing was discontinued after July, as it seemed unnecessary to go on with it in view of the highly successful results obtained.

SCARLET FEVER

The number and notifications received during the year was 40, which indicates a continuation in the decline of prevalence of this disease which has taken place in recent years. Of the 40 cases, 16 occurred in males and 24 in females. There were no deaths.

TABLE I

Year	No. of Cases	Cases per 100,000	Deaths	Case Fatality	Deaths per 100,000
1933-1937 (average)	85	247	0.6	0.2	0.6
1938-1942 (average)	233	91	0.2	0.2	0.2
1943	285	287	2	0.7	2
1944	229	228	—	—	—
1945	76	75	1	1.3	1
1946	91	86	—	—	—
1947	59	59	—	—	—
1948	40	39	—	—	—

AGE INCIDENCE OF SCARLET FEVER

TABLE II

Age	Males	Females	Totals	Percentages
0-4 years	8	8	16	40.0
5-9 years	5	6	11	27.5
10-14 years	1	2	3	7.5
15 years and over	2	8	10	25.0
	16	24	40	

The tendency of the incidence to shift from the older years to the pre-school years, which was noticed last year, is again evidenced from these figures.

Swabs

Fourteen swabs were taken from cases or contacts of the disease, of which eight showed presence of haemolytic streptococci belonging to one of the groups associated with the disease.

Scarlet Fever in Institutions

Only two cases of scarlet fever occurred in institutions, both in children. Six cases were reported from Camp Pell.

CEREBRO-SPINAL MENINGITIS

There was only one case of cerebro-spinal meningitis, in a boy aged two years, from Camp Pell. The response of this disease to sulphonamide and penicillin therapy has removed most of its terrors. There were no deaths.

POLIOMYELITIS

There was only one case of poliomyelitis reported, in a female aged 24 years.

WHOOPING COUGH, MEASLES AND MUMPS

These three infections were prevalent, especially during the latter part of the year, but there were no deaths. Immunisation against whooping cough was carried out during the first half of the year and 462 infants and pre-school children were treated. As far as could be ascertained, no treated child suffered at all severely during the subsequent prevalence of the disease.

TUBERCULOSIS

The figures in this section have been supplied by Miss Roberts, Health Visitor, who, acting in close liaison with the staff of the Central Tuberculosis Bureau of the State Department of Health, visits and keeps in close touch with all cases of tuberculosis in the City.

New Cases

The number of new cases notified during the year was 96, of whom 72 were males and 24 females.

TABLE "A"

	Male	Female	Total
1939	68	56	124
1940	116	54	170
1941	87	63	150
1942	103	57	160
1943	101	50	151
1944	88	61	149
1945	42	26	68
1946	45	42	87
1947	36	35	71
1948	72	24	96

The number and sex of new cases notified during recent years is shown in the above Table "A". The number is rather higher than that of last year but is much less than the numbers notified during the years of war, 1940-1944. The unusual preponderance of males is difficult to explain, but variations in the apparent incidence of the disease in the City are likely to be greater than elsewhere, owing to the large number of boarding houses and, perhaps, of public hospitals in the City.

Six of the new cases were non-pulmonary and included two infants with glands, one girl of seven with meningitis, and three adult males, two with renal tuberculosis and one with tuberculosis of the prostate.

The age and sex distribution of the new pulmonary cases is shown in the following Table "B":—

TABLE "B"
Age and Sex of new Pulmonary Cases

	Male	Female
0-5	2	—
5-10	2	1
10-15	1	2
15-25	7	7
25-35	8	8
35-45	13	2
45-55	12	—
55-65	12	1
65 and over	12	1
	68	22

Total Cases

The total number of cases under supervision on the 31/12/48, together with the corresponding figures for each year since 1939, is shown in Table "C":—

TABLE "C"			
Year	Number of Cases	Year	Number of Cases
1939	311	1944	430
1940	311	1945	389
1941	308	1946	423
1942	350	1947	425
1943	393	1948	419

Of the 419 cases, 48 were under the Repatriation Department.

The total number of cases under supervision during the year was 521. The details are shown in Table "D":—

TABLE "D"
Total Cases under supervision during 1948

		New		Old		Totals
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
In City on 31/12/47.	Pulmonary			192	193	385
	Non-Pulmonary			1	—	1
In Sanatoria	Pulmonary			21	18	39
				214	211	425
New Cases for 1948.	Pulmonary	68	22			90
	Non-Pulmonary	4	2			6
		72	24	214	211	251
Left Melbourne area 1948			1	29	25	55
		72	23	185	186	466
Died in 1948		17	2	16	12	47
In City on 31/12/48.	Pulmonary	45	16	154	163	378
	Non-Pulmonary	3	—	1	—	4
	In Sanatoria	7	5	14	11	37
Total cases in M.C.C. on 31/12/48		55	21	169	174	419

The age and sex distribution of cases under supervision on 31/12/48 is shown in the following Table "E":—

TABLE "E"

	Male	Female	Total
0-4 years	3	—	3
5-9 "	5	4	9
10-14 "	2	2	4
15-19 "	5	7	12
20-24 "	18	19	37
25-34 "	39	57	96
35-44 "	44	59	103
45-54 "	48	28	76
55-64 "	36	14	50
65 and over	24	5	29
	224	195	419

The length of time the cases under supervision on 31/12/48 had been known to the Department is of some interest and is shown in the following Table "F":—

TABLE "F"

1928 or earlier	2	1938	14
1929	3	1939	15
1930	4	1940	16
1931	4	1941	22
1932	8	1942	36
1933	3	1943	27
1934	9	1945	30
1935	6	1946	53
1936	5	1947	52
1937	16	1948	65

Deaths

The number of deaths during the year was 47. Numbers for the years since 1939 are shown in Table "G". The number is very much smaller than any previous figure recorded.

TABLE "G"

1948	47	1943	75
1947	68	1942	67
1946	53	1941	68
1945	72	1940	88
1944	85	1939	69

Of the fatal cases 43 were pulmonary and four non-pulmonary. Thirteen of them were not known to the Department before death, and five were known for less than one month. Twenty-two died in Sanatoria, 12 in hospital and 15 in their homes.

The age and sex distribution of the cases which died is shown in Table "H":—

TABLE "H"

	Males	Females	Total
0-4 years	—	—	—
5-9 "	—	1	1
10-14 "	—	—	—
15-19 "	—	—	—
20-24 "	—	1	1
25-34 "	2	2	4
35-44 "	5	3	8
45-54 "	5	2	7
55-64 "	12	3	15
65 and over	9	2	11
	33	14	47

Exposure of children to infection

During the year continuous efforts were made to ensure that children did not live in the same house as active cases of tuberculosis. Owing to the shortage of available beds, however, it is not possible to avoid this altogether, and at 31/12/48 27 children of school age or under were known to be living in the same house as potentially infectious cases. In all such instances, however, special care is taken in advising as to precautions and the children are regularly examined at three-monthly intervals at the Tuberculosis Bureau of the State Health Department in the City.

Report of Dental Officer

13 McKinley Avenue,
Malvern, S.E.4.
21st March, 1949.

The Medical Officer of Health:

Sir,

I beg to submit the report of activities at the Dental Sections of the Kensington and Newry Street, North Carlton, Health Centres for the year 1948.

	<i>Kensington Health Centre</i>	<i>Newry Street Health Centre</i>
Number of children (1 to 5 years) contacted	443	447
Treatments — silver nitrate, sodium fluoride applications, teeth cleaning, instructions to mothers	1,592	1,418
Fillings	228	166
Extractions	28	23
Referred to Dental Hospital	19	10

Considering the work in the two clinics it can be confidently stated that by the use of silver nitrate and sodium fluoride applications in the mouths of children checked at one year old and then inspected at three-monthly intervals incipient caries is arrested and the teeth maintained in good condition.

Numbers of malacotic incisors due to pre-natal influences associated with illness or dietetic errors of the mother are encountered, and much later deterioration of the mouths is obviated by very early treatment. Often it is found that the eldest child is the only one affected, subsequent children benefiting by the education of the mother.

Deformed mouths, due to thumb sucking and undue retention of the comforter, are being encountered in a small proportion of cases. These habits are difficult to deal with, bearing in mind that the comforter at least ensures nasal breathing.

The appearance in greater numbers, in the very young, of Vincent's Infection (Trench Mouth) is noted. All cases have responded satisfactorily to treatment.

The enthusiasm and co-operation of the mothers is becoming more marked than ever, and the number of mothers interdicting sweets and markedly limiting white flour confections is quite impressive.

As can be seen by the appended details of treatments, the numbers have increased considerably and mark perhaps the limit for the time allotted.

E. R. REEVE, B.DSc., L.D.S.

Report of the Chief Health Inspector

Health Department,
Town Hall Chambers, Melbourne.
7th March, 1949.

The Medical Officer of Health:
Sir,

I have the honour to submit a report for the year 1948 upon the varied activities of the Department which come under my direction and are governed by the provisions of the Acts, Regulations and By-laws detailed in previous reports.

HOUSING

It is regretted that the question of sub-standard housing still presents an almost insuperable problem and that slum reclamation is now admitted to be impossible whilst the acute shortage of housing persists; and despite many optimistic forecasts it seems that this condition is likely to continue for a very long time. Lack of materials and scarcity of labour still continue to hamper our efforts to maintain existing dwellings in a reasonable state of repair.

Our activities under the Slum Reclamation and Housing Acts have been considerably curtailed, owing to the policy of the Housing Commission of offering deferments where requirements have been reported. During the year the Commission also decided to discontinue issuing notices for demolition as, on legal advice, it was found that this practice conflicted with the Building Operations and Building Control Act 1946, and so when a property is reported as being unfit for human habitation a letter is now forwarded by the Commission to the owner intimating that the property is "due for demolition." When this is done no further action can be taken, it being impossible even to insist upon urgent repairs.

In view of these restrictions on work under the Housing Acts we find it is far more expedient to work under the Nuisance sections of the Health Acts relative to various phases of housing. Under these provisions it is possible to give attention only to specific or more urgent defects, whereas reports to the Commission entail a complete and detailed inspection of the premises and the enumeration of all the defects discovered.

As agents for the Housing Commission 541 inspections and re-inspections for work in progress have been carried out. In connection with this work forty-four (44) progress reports were submitted to the Commission. Statutory reports to the Commission, which have been kept at a minimum because of the difficulties mentioned, numbered six (6), and of this number three (3) were classified in List "A" for demolition and three (3) in List "B" for repairs to comply with the Regulations.

Acting upon original reports submitted during the year the Commission declared three (3) houses unfit for habitation, one (1) of which was classified for demolition, and two (2) for repairs in compliance with the Standard of Habitation Regulations. Notices were accordingly prepared and served upon the owners.

In compliance with notices previously issued, thirty-five (35) premises were demolished, thirty-three (33) of which were in the Molesworth Street Reclamation Area in North Melbourne, and two (2) in the Carlton district, whilst seven (7) houses in the Carlton area were completely renovated and repaired in compliance with the Regulations. Urgent repairs resulting from deferments were carried out at 69 premises, whilst work in various stages of progress was carried out at a number of other properties.

The total number of houses reported, of notices served and of compliances since the coming into operation of the Housing legislation in 1940 is as follows:—

Number of houses reported to the Housing Commission for demolition	537
Number of houses reported to the Housing Commission for repairs	229
Notices served on behalf of the Housing Commission for demolition	434
Notices served on behalf of the Housing Commission for repairs	190
Compliance with notices to date—Demolition	267
Repairs	68
Urgent repairs (where deferment granted)	179

The total number of demolitions of dwellings within the City during the year was thirty-five (35), making, since 1940, a total of 402 demolitions, of which 267 were demolished on notice from the Housing Commission, as shown above.

Families from the City of Melbourne re-housed by the Housing Commission during the year numbered 104, consisting of 204 adults and 299 children. Of this number only 25, consisting of 49 adults and 60 children, came from premises that had been declared unfit for human habitation within the City area. This now makes the total number of families re-housed 428, consisting of 736 adults and 809 children.

HEALTH ACTS

Operating under the nuisance sections of the Health Acts relating to housing, 607 complaints were investigated relative to such items as leaking roofs, dampness in walls, defective sanitary conveniences, drainage, etc., and notices were served on the owners to carry out the urgent repairs which were specified. Resulting from current notices issued and those carried forward from the previous year, repairs or renovations were effected in 537 premises, and work was in various stages of progress at a number of other properties at the close of the year.

Whilst we confine ourselves to the minimum of urgent work it frequently takes up to six or seven months to have the repairs effected, and even then, in many cases, the condition of the premises is such that only unsatisfactory patching is possible.

In connection with the planning scheme which is being prepared under the direction of the City Engineer (as required by the Town Planning Committee), a survey was made of a large area in Carlton, bounded by Grattan, Carlton, Lygon, Princes and Nicholson Streets. 1,844 properties were inspected and reported upon in detail. This number included—dwellings, 1,433; shops with dwellings, 252; factories, 67; businesses other than shops with dwellings, 77; public buildings, 15.

FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES

In addition to the regular inspections of eating houses and premises where aerated waters, ice cream, cordials, ice blocks, etc., are manufactured, which number 490 and 364 respectively, supervision was effected over all the other food premises throughout the City which are not subject to registration and which include such businesses as hotels, grocers, greengrocers, butchers, delicatessen, small-goods and confectionery shops, and food factories. These premises generally were found to be well maintained and in reasonable conformity with the Health Acts and Regulations.

Special attention has been given to milk bars throughout the City areas with regard to the cleanliness of the premises, utensils and other equipment used in the preparation of drinks, and particularly to the condition of glassware and crockery, and the means taken for the efficient cleansing of same.

Sixty-eight (68) samples of "drinking milk" were taken at these premises for the purpose of chemical analysis, details of which are reported under the heading of "Food Sampling."

Hotel bars have been regularly inspected and attention given to the washing of glasses and the colouring of waste beer in drip trays, and, in most instances, it was found that the licensees were endeavouring to comply with the Regulations. Many hotels have now installed automatic glass washers, which appear to be operating satisfactorily. We understand that the Government is contemplating the issue of new Regulations by which it is hoped to ensure a more hygienic treatment of glasses in all premises where drinks are served.

Every care has been taken, during the inspections of food premises, to prevent the use of damaged glassware, crockery and kitchenware, and in this connection 390 pieces of glassware, 1,153 pieces of crockery, and 81 pieces of kitchenware were seized and destroyed at various establishments throughout the City.

Renovations and repairs were carried out at 46 food premises other than registered premises, which are reported in detail under the heading of "Registered Premises" on page 22.

FOOD SAMPLING

In conformity with the requirements of the Health Acts and Regulations, regular collection of food samples for chemical analysis was made during the year, and 472 samples were submitted to the City Analyst. The samples comprised—butter 10 (8), cheese 10 (9), coffee 3 (7); coffee and chicory 5 (—), ice cream 8 (8), jam 9 (10), milk 352 (346), mustard 3 (—), pepper 4 (6), sausage meat 33 (36), chopped meat 28 (13), sauces 4 (5), vinegar 3 (4). The figures in brackets indicate the number of samples submitted in the previous year.

Of the total number of samples submitted, 15, or 3.2 per cent., failed to comply with the standard. The number of samples below standard include—nine (9) milk, one (1) mustard, four (4) chopped meat and one (1) vinegar.

The total number of milk samples procured during the year was 342, involving 94 vendors, consisting of 25 dairymen, 9 house trade dairies, 1 producer and 59 milk bars. 343, or 97.5 per cent. of the total from all sources, complied with the standard. Nine (9), or 2.5 per cent., did not comply with the standard. The percentage of failures is slightly higher than that recorded for the last two years, but is still below that of the years previous to 1946.

Samples taken from milk carts in course of delivery numbered 273, and consisted of 156 from bulk supplies and 117 from bottled milk. Sixty-eight (68) samples of "drinking milk" were obtained from City milk bars, and ten (10) from house trade dairies, whilst one (1) producer's sample was taken at the point of delivery.

Of the nine (9) samples found below standard, five (5) were from delivery carts, two (2) from bulk supplies and three (3) from bottles, and four (4)

represented drinking milk from milk bars. In six (6) instances deficiencies related to non-fatty solids and the Freezing Point test indicated the addition of added water. In three (3) instances the samples failed to comply with the Freezing Point, but did not allow of a determination as to the percentage of added water. Proceedings were instituted in all cases, details of which are recorded under the heading of "Prosecutions."

An analysis of the figures shows the average quality of milk per sample as follows:—

	Total Solids	Non-Fats	Fats
All sources	13.29	8.99	4.30
Bulk supplies	13.31	8.97	4.33
Bottled samples	13.23	8.99	4.23
Producer's sample	13.24	8.72	4.52
Milk bars	13.30	9.01	4.28
House trade dairies	13.70	9.00	4.70

The following comparative table shows the average quality of milk per sample during the past 10-year period, and also the percentage of samples which did not comply with the standard.

Year	No. of Samples	Total Solids	Non-Fats	Fats	Percentage of samples below standard
1939	275	13.38	9.18	4.20	1.09%
1940	279	13.24	8.98	4.26	3.2%
1941	281	13.27	9.03	4.24	2.8%
1942	274	13.18	9.00	4.18	5.8%
1943	305	13.12	8.92	4.20	6.6%
1944	331	13.15	8.93	4.22	4.6%
1945	347	13.10	8.97	4.13	6.9%
1946	344	13.39	9.09	4.30	1.8%
1947	346	13.45	9.04	4.41	1.7%
1948	352	13.29	8.99	4.30	2.5%

The following list gives particulars of the number of samples taken from each vendor or source, and the average quality of the milk supplied. It shows that the average quality of milk is being maintained, although the figures are slightly lower than that shown for the previous year. (As shown in the previous comparative table the average milk fat per sample was 4.30).

Group "A" represents 15 dairymen (60 per cent. of vendors concerned) from whom 7 or more samples were obtained. Group "B" represents 6 dairymen (24 per cent. of vendors) whose supplies were sampled from 4 to 6 times during the year. Group "C" represents 4 dairymen (16 per cent. of vendors) from whom 3 or less samples were taken. Group "D" represents producers' samples. Group "E" represents house trade dairies and Group "F" milk bars.

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS OF MILK, 1948

SUMMARY OF AVERAGES

Delivery Carts

GROUP "A"

(Over six (6) samples). Fifteen (15) vendors.

No.	No. of Samples	Average Quality per Sample			Remarks
		Total Solids	Non-Fats	Fats	
1	8	13.52	8.92	4.6	One sample below standard
2	9	13.6	9.1	4.5	
3	9	13.5	9.0	4.5	
4	13	13.37	8.9	4.47	One sample below standard Three samples below standard
5	26	13.12	8.73	4.39	
6	18	13.4	9.1	4.3	
7	8	13.4	9.1	4.3	
8	20	13.3	9.0	4.3	
9	32	13.2	8.9	4.3	
10	16	13.3	9.1	4.2	
11	11	13.2	9.0	4.2	
12	21	13.1	9.0	4.1	
13	9	13.1	9.0	4.1	
14	13	13.0	8.9	4.1	
15	23	13.0	9.0	4.0	

GROUP "B"

(Over three (3) and under seven (7) samples). Six (6) vendors.

No.	No. of Samples	Average Quality per Sample			Remarks
		Total Solids	Non-Fats	Fats	
1	6	13.7	9.0	4.7	
2	6	13.4	9.0	4.4	
3	4	13.0	8.8	4.2	
4	6	13.2	9.1	4.1	
5	4	13.2	9.1	4.1	
6	4	12.8	8.9	3.9	

GROUP "C"

(Three (3) samples and under). Four (4) vendors.

No.	No. of Samples	Average Quality per Sample			Remarks
		Total Solids	Non-Fats	Fats	
1	2	13.8	9.2	4.6	
2	1	13.1	8.8	4.3	
3	1	13.3	9.1	4.2	
4	3	13.1	9.0	4.1	

GROUP "D"

Producers

One (1) vendor

No.	No. of Samples	Average Quality per Sample			Remarks
		Total Solids	Non-Fats	Fats	
1	1	13.24	8.72	4.52	

GROUP "E"

House Trade Dairies

Nine (9) vendors

No.	No. of Samples	Average Quality per Sample			Remarks
		Total Solids	Non-Fats	Fats	
9	10	13.7	9.0	4.7	

GROUP "F"

59 Milk Bars

"Drinking Milk"

No.	No. of Samples	Average Quality per Sample			Remarks
		Total Solids	Non-Fats	Fats	
59	68	13.30	9.01	4.28	Four samples below standard

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS OF MILK SAMPLES, 1948

The following report has been received from the Dairying Division of the Department of Agriculture, of the bacteriological examination of milk samples within the City area during 1948.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE—DAIRYING DIVISION

(1) Raw Milk Samples

Results of the Examination of Samples by the Direct Microscopic Count method during the period January to December, 1948, from dairies situated in the Melbourne City area.

Melbourne/Carlton

No.	Samples	Complied
1	24	15
2	16	8
3	15	10
4	20	15

Flemington & Kensington

5	7	7
6	23	20

North Melbourne

7	19	18
8	18	14
9	10	6
10	15	12
11	14	10
12	18	17

199	152	76.4% compliance
-----	-----	------------------

(2) Pasteurised Milk Samples

Additional samples taken for Special Tests of Pasteurised Milk from a Flemington dairy.

17 visits	15 samples
of which	
5 complied in respect of Standard Plate Count	9.1%
45 complied in respect of Coliform Test	81.8%
48 complied in respect of Phosphatase Test	100%

This dairy is equipped with the most modern type of pasteurisation plant, operating on the High-Temperature-Short-Time principle, and has given very satisfactory results as far as the Phosphatase test is concerned.

The poor compliance with the Standard Plate Count obtained by this process is attributed to the presence of thermophilic bacteria in the raw milk supplies. It is generally accepted that these organisms have no public health significance.

SWIMMING BATHS

Regular sampling for bacteriological examination of the water in the various pools throughout the City was carried out during the warm weather. The samples were all taken during the afternoons when the pools were in active use by a good attendance of bathers. The results of these examinations, together with those for free chlorine in the water, give the assurance that the purification plants were operating satisfactorily.

RODENT CONTROL

The problem of rat infestation is constantly with us and careful attention has again been given to this work. Despite the fact that the staff has been seriously depleted through resignations and retirements, the work has been fairly well maintained within the City proper where food premises, shops, factories, and warehouses have been given regular attention. It is quite impossible to use the rat gang in the outer areas and it is necessary to rely upon the district inspectors to give the necessary advice and direct the efforts of the householders in combating the nuisance as it arises in the respective areas.

No abnormal conditions were noticed that would indicate any sickness in the rat population and consequently it was not necessary to submit any specimens for bacteriological examination. The extent of the operations of inspectors and rat gang is shown in the following table, in addition to which the rat staff prepared 75,000 poison baits, of which 47,000 were laid by the staff and 28,000 supplied to ratepayers, together with directions as to how the bait should be used. It is the practice to make a survey of all premises where poison baits have been laid, from which it is ascertained the actual number of baits taken by the rats. As this averages approximately 80 per cent. of the baits laid it can be reliably assumed that a very much larger number of rats has been destroyed than those shown in the table as destroyed by trapping and the use of dogs.

The depletion of the staff is causing considerable worry as it has now at the end of the year reached a dangerous low level that must seriously interfere with the efficiency of the service. Action will have to be taken to make the position more attractive as we are unable to compete with the lucrative wages being offered for unskilled labour outside the service.

TABLE I

Complaints attended to	Notices under Rat Regulations	Premises Visited	No. of premises where structural work carried out	Total No. of rodents destroyed
555	160	2,251	221	Rats 5,442 Mice 489
				5,931

The species of rats caught and destroyed during the year is shown in the following table, which gives a comparison for the 10-year period, and shows the differentiation between the sub-species of black rats.

Year	M. Rattus	M. Alex.	M. Norveg	Total
1939	1,090	2,065	4,252	7,407
1940	923	1,620	3,933	6,576
1941	924	1,510	4,172	6,606
1942	1,034	1,648	3,298	5,980
1943	951	2,075	4,743	7,769
1944	546	1,540	5,933	8,019
1945	499	1,515	4,975	6,989
1946	698	1,594	4,344	6,636
1947	1,078	1,266	4,136	6,480
1948	630	995	3,817	5,442

During the year the Rat Destruction Regulations were amended to enable premises to be dealt with where evidence of rat infestation was found. Previously it was necessary to find live rats before action could be taken.

REGISTERED PREMISES

In conformity with the statutory requirements of the Health Acts, 1,756 premises were registered during the year. This indicates an increase of 92 premises during the five-year period 1944-1948. The following schedule gives details of registrations, transfers and other particulars.

Premises	No. Registered	No. not renewed	No. altns. repairs or renovations	No. new registrations	No. of Transfers
Boarding Houses	773	11	164	12	83
Eating Houses	490	17	143	18	122
Ice Cream and Aerated Waters, etc.	363	8	26	34	84
Common Lodging Houses	6	—	—	—	—
Cattle Sale Yard	1	—	—	—	—
Premises where Eggs are Chilled	4	—	—	—	—
Offensive Trades	119	1	7	4	8
Totals	1,756	37	340	68	297

In compliance with the Council's By-laws and Regulations 30 Dancing Saloons, 4 Places of Pastime, 157 Stables and 5 Resting Yards were also registered.

BOARDING HOUSES

The supervision of boarding and lodging houses demands the constant attention of the staff to ensure that the regulations are being observed, and to provide against the possibility of gross over-crowding. In view of the continuance of the acute shortage of housing and the fact that people must be housed and all available space utilised, it is necessary that this administration be carried out sympathetically, with due regard to all circumstances. There were 773 boarding houses and six common lodging houses registered during the year, whilst 83 transfers of proprietorship were also effected. Resulting from current notices and notices served in the previous year, improvements were effected at 164 premises during the year, and from various reports it is shown that a large majority of such premises have been well maintained and are generally in compliance with the Health Act.

EATING HOUSES

Registrations of Eating Houses varies little from year to year and 490 registrations of such premises were effected. Regular inspections of these premises are carried out to ensure that a reasonable standard of hygiene is maintained. Improvements and renovations were carried out at 143 premises during the year.

TRANSFERS

Strict surveillance is necessary to ensure that when businesses change hands transfers of proprietorship are effected in accordance with the Health Act and Regulations. A total of 297 transfers in all classes of registration were completed during the year.

GAS APPLIANCES

Cordial relationship between the Metropolitan Gas Company and the department has been maintained, as a result of which we are able to control the installation of gas stoves in conformity with the Housing, and Boarding and Lodging House Regulations. During the year 20 applications were dealt with; 18 were approved, whilst approval in two cases was refused because of unsuitable location. Owing to the shortage of sheet iron the enforcement of hoods and flue pipes over gas appliances has been held in abeyance for the time being.

OFFENSIVE TRADES

During the year 5 applications, under Section 82 of the Health Act 1928, were considered and consent of Council was granted for the establishment of two (2) skin stores, two (2) butchers' premises for the rendering of fat for dripping, and one (1) marine store. One (1) application to alter and extend premises at a hide and skin establishment was also approved.

In the administration of the Offensive Trades Regulations and the relevant sections of the Health Act, 824 visits of inspection have been made and with few exceptions the condition of the premises were found to be satisfactory. Minor improvements were effected at seven (7) premises. The total number of Offensive Trades registered for the year was 119, and their classification is shown in the following schedule, which includes four (4) new registrations. One (1) poultry killing establishment was abolished during the year.

Bone boiling and milling, 2; fat extracting or melting, 26; fellmongery, woolscouring and woolwashing, 14; flock, shoddy or mungo manufacture, 2; glue or size factories, 1; gut cleaning or scraping, 2; knackers' yards, 2; manure works, 2; marine stores, 10; poultry killing, cleaning and dressing, 8; rag picking or sorting, 2; soap works, 2; store for skins, hides, hoofs, hair or bones, 49; boiling down works, 1; oil boiling, 1; fish curing, 1; abattoirs, 1; refuse destructor, 1; tip, 1.

HAIRDRESSING SALOONS

Regular inspections were made of male and female establishments throughout the City areas. This work is carried out in conjunction with officers of the Hairdressers' Registration Board of Victoria and the premises were found generally to be capably managed and in compliance with the Health Act.

STABLES

With the introduction of By-law No. 276, covering the registration, management and control of stables, we are now in the position to enforce the regular removal of manure and the cleansing of manure pits. This, together with the regular spraying of manure pits and stables with approved D.D.T. preparations will help materially in combating the fly menace, of which stables have been in the past the main breeding ground.

One hundred and fifty-seven stables and five blocks of land used as resting places for horses are now registered with the Council and since the By-law has been in operation seven stables have been abolished.

In most instances the proprietors have resorted to motor transport rather than go to the expense of bringing the stables up to the requirements demanded by the By-law.

Repairs and improvements have been effected at 69 premises as a result of notices served on the proprietors.

From the records of the registrations effected it is disclosed that the horse population of the City has been reduced since the last survey was made in 1942. The number of horses housed in the registered stables is 1,003 as compared with 1,227 as shown by the figures of the previous survey.

SMOKE NUISANCE

The smoke and soot problem has received the continuous attention of the staff throughout the year and from the relatively few complaints received, which numbered only 31, it may be assumed that this problem is fairly well under control. Alterations were effected to seven furnaces, whilst minor improvements were carried out in 10 instances at cafes and boarding houses.

The scarcity of brown coal briquettes, together with the inferior quality of black coal being used, renders the position more difficult than it would be under normal circumstances.

SANITARY SERVICES

In connection with temporary sanitary conveniences, 33 buildings in course of erection were serviced and this involved approximately 1,716 clearances. As there was no Henley carnival this year we were not called upon for the customary service on the river bank.

As in former years the night soil was transported by motor truck to the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works' Depot at Campbellfield.

INVESTIGATIONS

Enquiries and requests for advice on the various phases of the Health Acts and Regulations, together with complaints received involved approximately 1,532 investigations throughout the year. On an analysis of these figures it is shown that 555 dealt with the rat problem, 563 related to various phases of defective housing, 82 to foodstuffs and food premises, 85 to unsatisfactory garbage bins and refuse, 31 to smoke nuisance, 44 to yards and drainage of premises, 8 to vermin in dwellings, the remaining 152 being classed as miscellaneous.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

The customary supervision of all registered dancing saloons and places of pastime under the Council's By-laws and Regulations has been maintained and, in co-operation with officers of the Public Health Department, theatres and other public buildings have been regularly inspected both day and night. Resulting from this supervision it can be reported that the premises generally are being conducted in conformity with the By-laws and Regulations.

HOUSE TO HOUSE INSPECTIONS

The customary house to house survey on the block system, although interrupted for a period by the housing survey in Carlton, has been continued. The object of the survey is to ensure a regular supervision of the general condition of yards and out-buildings, condition of garbage bins, accumulation of rubbish, litter, and foodscraps, condition of fowl yards, and rat infestation.

During the year 2,939 premises were inspected. Defective or irregular garbage bins were found in 356 instances, accumulation of rubbish likely to harbour rats was found in 45 premises, definite rat infestation was discovered at 74 properties, whilst nine fowl yards were found not to be in compliance with the Council's By-laws. In all, 484 notices were issued, the majority of which were complied with before the end of the year.

SUMMARY OF ROUTINE WORK CARRIED OUT DURING 1948

No. of complaints received and attended to	1,532
Re-inspections for compliance with notices	2,985
Fire reports received and attended to	313
Inspections and re-inspections under Slum Reclamation and Housing Acts	541
Reports forwarded to Housing Commission	50
Notices served under Slum Reclamation and Housing Acts	4
Specifications forwarded to owners under Slum Reclamation and Housing Acts	2
Inspections and re-inspections made under Health Act	1,343
No. of specifications forwarded to owners and proprietors under Health Act	644
Inspections of boarding and lodging houses	2,957
Inspections of hotel bars	1,241
Inspections of eating houses	7,692
Inspections of ice cream and aerated water premises	3,270
Inspections of factories (where food is manufactured)	953
Inspections of other food premises	7,577
Seizures of foodstuffs (consisting of 6 4-oz. bars of toffee, 5 56-lb. boxes of butter, 400 lbs. gummy shark, 2 jars peanut butter).	
Inspections of public buildings (day and evening)	716
Inspections of hairdressing saloons	463
Inspections of offensive trades and cattle saleyards	824
Inspections of vacant land	138
Inspections of yards and refuse	21,683
Inspections of stables and manure bins	1,410
Interviews with property owners, architects, contractors, etc.	5,981
Inspections by female staff of premises where females employed	115
Investigations of infectious disease and instructions to householders (scarlet fever, 35; diphtheria, 199; other infectious diseases, 2)	236
Investigation of tuberculosis and domiciliary visits	1,223
Visits to Health Centres (40) and midwives (27)	67
Returns of infectious disease furnished to Public Health Department	103
Notifications of infectious disease forwarded to headmasters	35
Returns of registrations and transfers forwarded to Public Health Department	365
No. of notices received under Births Notification Acts	1,786
Plans of new buildings and alterations examined	73
Notices served to secure the abatement of nuisances—	
(a) Defective sanitary conveniences	138
(b) Defective drainage	30
(c) Dirty premises and yards	57
(d) Accumulation of refuse and rubbish	90
(e) Defective or irregular garbage bins	432
(f) Dirty and defective stables	37
(g) Other nuisances	87
	871
Matters referred to other Departments—City Engineer, 30; Building Surveyor, 31; Dog Inspector, 3; By-laws' Officer, 2	66
Premises within the City registered by Factories Department—Factories, 2,869; shops, 4,504	7,373

NEW LEGISLATION

Proclamation—Certain premises in which Dancing is engaged in Declared to be Public Buildings within meaning of Health Act.
 Patent Medicine Regulations 1948.
 Amending Patent Medicine Regulations 1948.
 Amending Rat Destruction Regulations 1948.
 Amending Infectious Diseases Regulations 1948.
 Amending Meat Transport Vehicles Regulations 1948.
 Amending Building Regulations 1948.

PROSECUTIONS

Proceedings were instituted against 21 offenders for contraventions of the Health Acts and Regulations made thereunder. In five (5) instances, affecting employees, the cases were withdrawn. In four (4) relating to samples of milk, two (2) relating to samples of chopped meat, and one (1) vinegar, where the deficiency in the samples was only slight, letters of warning were issued, and one (1) case was withdrawn on the payment of costs. In eight (8) instances the defendants were convicted and fined as follows:—

Nature of Offence	No. of Cases	Fines	Costs
Selling adulterated milk	3	£7 0 0	£12 7 6
Selling adulterated chopped meat	1	1 0 0	2 17 6
Selling adulterated mustard	1	0 10 0	3 5 6
Establishing Offensive Trade with consent of Council	1	5 0 0	3 3 0
Failing to keep premises free from rats	1	5 0 0	—
Failing to provide proper garbage bins	1	2 0 0	1 17 6
Totals	8	£20 10 0	£23 11 0

GENERAL

Mr. A. E. Clarke, foreman of the rat gang, resigned during the year to go into private business.

Despite the many difficulties with which the administration is beset, the staff has again demonstrated its capacity and willingness to discharge its duties and are largely responsible for the fact that the sanitary condition of the City, having regard to all circumstances, has been generally satisfactory. I am pleased to record my sincere appreciation of the loyal co-operation and assistance rendered by all the staff, inspectorial, clerical and out-door, during the year.

THOS. G. O. JORDAN, F.R.S.I.,

Chief Health Inspector.

Public Health Laboratory

Bacteriology Department,

University of Melbourne, Carlton, N.3.

11th November, 1949.

Annual Report on the Bacteriological Examinations undertaken on behalf of the Melbourne City Council by the Bacteriological Laboratory, Melbourne University, for the year 1948.

Diphtheria

A total of 428 swabs from case contacts were examined and from 90 diphtheria organisms were isolated.

Scarlet Fever

A total of 38 swabs were cultured and from 22 haemolytic streptococci were isolated.

Water

Fifteen samples of water from swimming baths were examined and reported for total count of bacteria and B.coli content.

(Sgd.) M. M. WILSON,

Assistant Director.

Melbourne Analytical Laboratory

27 William Street,
Melbourne.
24th January, 1949.

The Chairman,
Health Committee,
City of Melbourne.

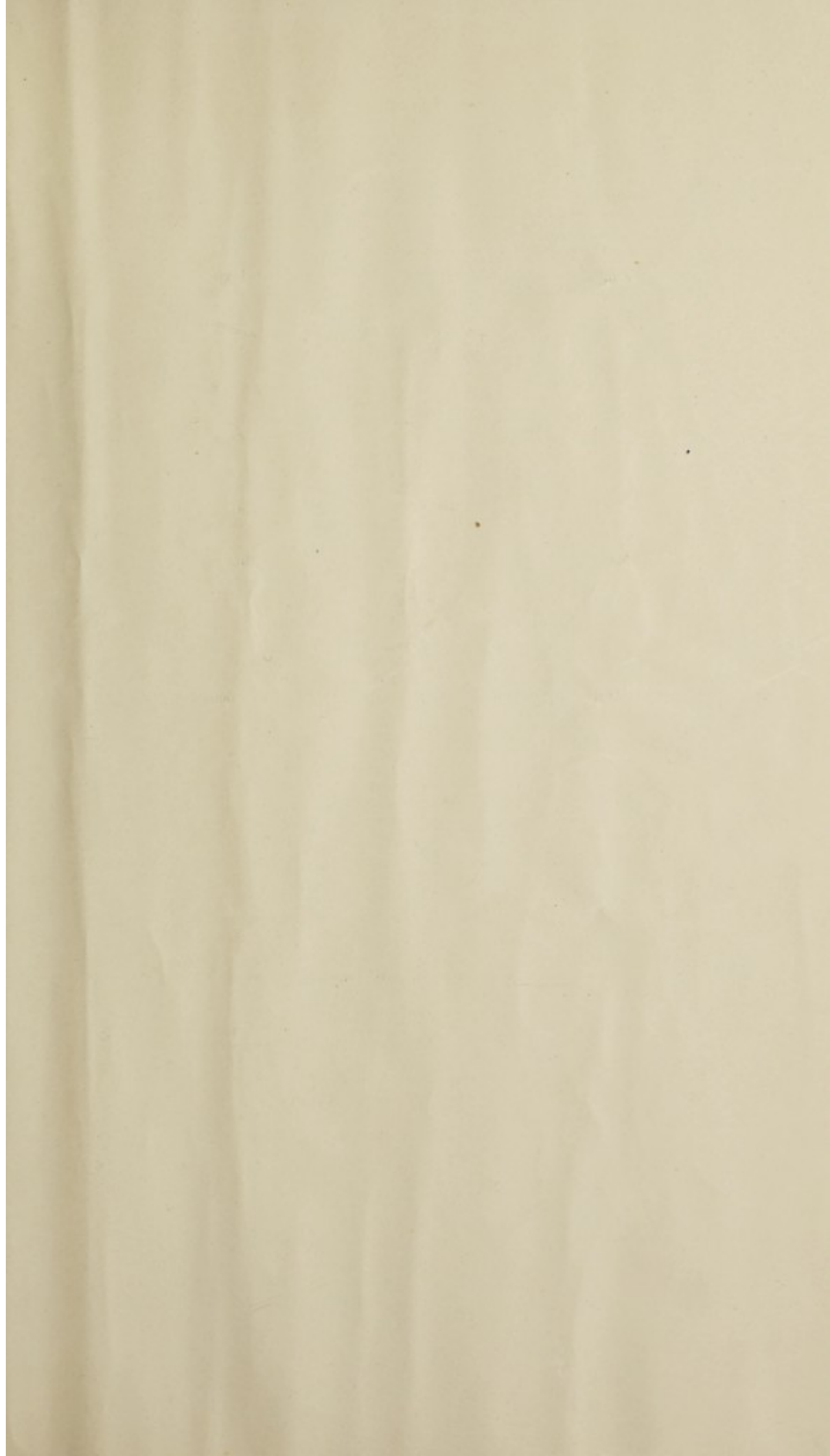
Sir,

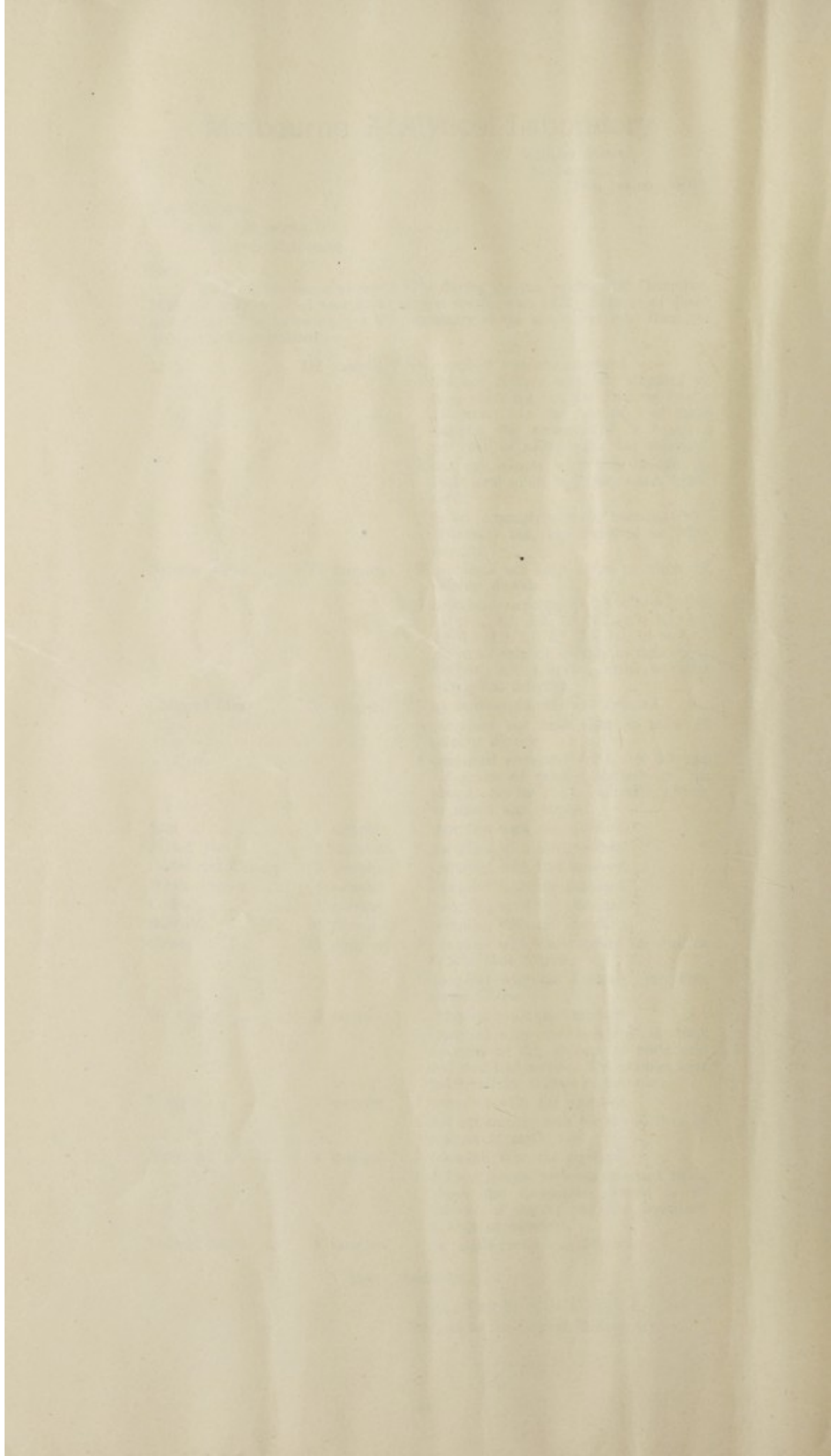
We have the honor to report that during the year ended 31st December, 1948, we have received four hundred and seventy-two (472) samples of Food and Drugs. The following is a brief summary of the results obtained from the Analytical Examinations:—

Milk	352 samples	343 complied with the standard. 5 did not comply with the standard in their solids not fat, and Freezing Points (Hortvet). In the case of 3 of these samples, the presence of 3, 5 and 7 per cent. of added water was indicated. 2 did not comply with the standard in their total solids and fatty solids (milk fats). 2 failed to comply with the Freezing Point (Hortvet) test, but complied in other respects.
Sausage Meat	33 samples	9 contained not more than a trace of sulphur dioxide. 24 contained respectively 0.5, 0.6, 0.7, 0.8, 1.0, 1.1, 1.1, 1.2, 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.5, 1.8, 1.8, 1.9, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.0, 3.1 and 3.3 grains of sulphur dioxide to the pound. No boric acid, saltpetre, nitrite, or excess starch was detected.
Chopped Meat	28 samples	21 no sulphur dioxide was detected. 3 contained not more than a trace of sulphur dioxide. 4 contained respectively 0.4, 0.5, 0.7 and 2.3 grains of sulphur dioxide to the pound. No boric acid, saltpetre, nitrite, or starch was detected.
Jam	1 sample	complied with the standard.
Mixed Jam	8 samples	complied with the standard.
Coffee and Chicory	5 samples	complied with the standard.
White Pepper	4 samples	complied with the standard.
Coffee	3 samples	complied with the standard.
Butter	10 samples	complied with the standard.
Cheese	10 samples	9 complied with the standard for Full or Whole Milk Cheese. 1 complied with the standard for Processed Cheese.
Ice Cream	8 samples	3 complied with the standard. 5 complied with the standard in their amounts of fat, absence of boric acid and lead and arsenic. The samples were too small for further examination.
Vinegar	3 samples	2 complied with the standard. 1 did not comply with the standard in its amount of acetic acid.
Mustard	3 samples	2 complied with the standard. 1 did not comply with the standard, being above the maximum allowed in its amount of starch; and also contained a trace of turmeric.
Tomato Sauce	4 samples	No adulteration was detected.

Yours obediently,

(Sgd.) DUNN, SON & STONE,
(Analysts to the City of Melbourne).







RENWICK PRIDE
Melbourne