

The Public Works Health Act is administered by the Department of Pensions and National Health. Under this Act, the Department is required to see that men working on construction work, canals, railways and other forms of public works, are provided with efficient medical and hospital attention.

The Food and Drugs Branch of the Department has to do with the safeguarding of foods and drugs from adulteration. Inspectors pick up, throughout the country, samples which are subjected to analysis in the various departmental laboratories. This Branch is under the direction of the Chief Dominion Analyst.

The Proprietary or Patent Medicine Branch operates in a somewhat similar manner. No patent medicine may be offered to the public as a "cure" for disease. The word "cure" is taboo. All must be registered, and it is the duty of the Department to see that each is of some value and not dangerous. The presence of all potent drugs, with the dosage, must be stated on the label.

The prevention of the pollution of inland waters is receiving the serious attention of the Department. A special division conducted by a sanitary engineer has been created for the purpose of providing a safe water supply on board vessels and preventing pollution of rivers and streams through discharged sewage. This division co-operates with the International Joint Commission in the enforcement of rules and regulations relating to questions involving public health with regard to boundary waters between the United States of America and Canada, in addition to supervising federal public buildings and offices with a view to conserving and promoting the health of civil servants and other government employees.

The Division of Hospital Advisory Services offers expert advice and assistance with regard to planning, construction, organization and maintenance of hospitals.

Since the introduction of opium smoking in Canada thirty or more years ago the use of habit-forming drugs, such as morphine, heroin and cocaine, has increased. It is estimated that there are about 8,000 drug addicts in Canada. One of the first steps taken by the Department of Health was the creation of a Narcotic Branch. Through this Branch, the importation and sale of such drugs are controlled in accordance with the principles laid down by the Hague Convention and now adopted by the League of Nations. Wholesale agents, physicians and druggists are obliged to keep records of importation or sale, as the case may be, and to forward their records periodically to the Department. The legitimate use of these dangerous habit-forming drugs is thus controlled.

The Laboratory of Hygiene is concerned with the examination of bacteriological and seriological products, such as vaccines and sera, as well as the standardization of the more potent remedies such as digitalis and strophanthus. Research is an important function of the Laboratory.

Section 2.—Provincial Public Health Activities.

The material appearing under this heading in the 1930 edition of the Year Book has not been brought up-to-date this year, in view of the intended change in the compilation of these statistics referred to on p. 1010. The reader is referred to pp. 948-959 of the 1930 Year Book and to the individual reports published by the Public Health authorities of the Provincial Governments.