

mended the Corporation not to enforce the by-law too rigorously, especially in houses which were well kept, as it would only result in driving the evicted lodgers into other tenements; probably less sanitary.

In my opinion the regulation that the walls of rooms be plastered is too stringent, but that with regard to separate privy accommodation for the sexes should be enforced.

Owing to the scarcity of house accommodation in the city, and the high rentals obtaining, I suggested to the Council the advisability of erecting "model lodgingshouses." As a means of education, the undertaking might prove of value, and at the same time it would not be entirely unremunerative.

#### WANGANUI.

Population, 7,334; death-rate, 11.1; infectious diseases, 233; notified deaths, 82—under one year 24, under five years 10, five years and over 48; deaths from infectious diseases, 17—measles 5 (all under five years), phthisis 6, tabes mesenterica 1, tubercular meningitis 4 (3 under five years), septicæmia 1.

The sanitary inspection of this town has been under the immediate supervision of this Department since the 1st May, 1902. Owing to the exertions of Inspectors Kendall and Schauer during the past year, the sanitary condition of the borough has been considerably improved; but despite this, although there has been nothing of the nature of an epidemic, the number of cases of typhoid notified have not decreased. Typhoid has been practically endemic in Wanganui for the past forty years, and the disease periodically manifests itself in epidemic explosions. There has, however, been nothing in the shape of a typhoid epidemic in Wanganui since 1897, when the source of a smart outbreak was traced to an infected dairy in the suburbs.

There is, however, one particular factor which greatly militates against the sanitation of Wanganui, and that is the unsatisfactory manner in which nightsoil and rubbish are removed from the borough. Although a drainage scheme has been in existence in Wanganui for the last thirty years, no less than 780 pans of nightsoil have to be removed weekly by the contractor, at a cost of £525 per annum. Owing to the limited water-supply, the Council has been greatly handicapped in its efforts to extend the drainage scheme. Until the Okehu water scheme is completed, it will be impossible to connect all the houses in the borough with the drainage system. Nightsoil is removed from the borough weekly, the contractor charging per receptacle. If occupiers of houses neglect to pay the contractor his well-earned dues, the latter retaliates by refusing to remove the receptacles. The results of this practice are obvious. There is no doubt that the removal of nightsoil could be more efficiently and economically performed if it were undertaken by the Corporation authorities. Unfortunately the Council cannot see this. The same may also be said of the removal of rubbish. The nightsoil contractor has the right to remove rubbish from premises at a cost of 1s. 6d. per cubic yard, but apparently his services are seldom used. In many instances the occupiers make their own arrangements for the removal of such refuse. In all cases that have come under their notice the Inspectors have insisted on a prompt removal of accumulated rubbish, but it would be far better for the Corporation to undertake the periodical removal of rubbish, rather than leave it to the discretion of a private individual or the peremptory demand of an Inspector.

#### *Drainage.*

As mentioned in a previous report, the "combined system" of drainage is in vogue in the borough; the large sewers that this system entails consequently become very foul in dry weather. Many complaints have been made concerning the nuisance caused by these sewers where they discharge into the river. There are twenty-eight in all. Unfortunately there is not sufficient fall for an intercepting sewer to be laid to take the drainage so that it would be discharged further down the river. The only way, therefore, to do away with the present nuisance is to carry the sewers down below the low-water mark. This the Council has undertaken to carry out.

#### *Water-supply.*

The supply from the Westmere and Victoria Lakes proving entirely inadequate, the Council has decided to obtain, at an expenditure of £60,000, a supply from Okehu, eighteen miles distant from Wanganui. Not only has the quantity from the above-mentioned lakes seriously lessened during the past five years, but the water has also deteriorated considerably in quality, a recent analysis showing it to be largely impregnated with vegetable matter. The shortage of water rendered it imperative for the Council to limit the water-supply to an intermittent service for about thirteen hours and a half out of the twenty-four. Analysis of samples of the Okehu water shows that the town is shortly to be supplied with excellent drinking-water.

#### *Plumbing.*

It is a pity that the recent by-law dealing with the licensing of plumbers and drain-layers has not yet been put into operation. A considerable improvement in the general sanitation of Wanganui would follow the enforcement of this by-law, as much of the plumbing and drain-laying is performed in a very primitive manner. The following is Inspector Kendall's epitome of work done during the year: Inspections made, 1,356; inspection of hotels, 11; inspection of butchers' shops, 7; inspection of bakers' shops, 11; requisitions served, 36; improvements effected, 33; infectious diseases cases visited, 160; complaints received, 26; nuisances abated, 25; disinfections performed, 50; cabs disinfected, 12; water-samples collected, 4; patients removed to hospital, 10.

#### *Infectious-diseases Hospital.*

Appended is a photograph of the infectious-diseases hospital which was erected by the Wanganui Borough and Wanganui and Waitotara County Councils.