

than 4,278 cases were notified, an increase of 1,977 over the previous year. Of diphtheria, 2,376 cases were notified, being an increase of 972 cases as compared with the preceding year. Fortunately there was a decrease in the number of notifications of tubercular diseases (950), and also a decrease of 14 in the number of notifications of enteric fever (806). The year was also an unfortunate one as regards the epidemic of infantile paralysis, no less than 1,018 cases being reported, as follows: From the Auckland Provincial District, 546; Wellington, 382; Canterbury, 65; and Otago, 25. The special report by Dr. Sydney Smith on this subject has already been laid before you, but reference might well be made again to the good work performed by Nurse Bevilaqua and her assistant Miss Gully, who were brought over from Australia so that the experience they had received there under Dr. McKenzie might be used to the advantage of the patients suffering from this disease in the Dominion. It is early yet to judge the results attained by their ministrations, but from reports received it would appear that extraordinarily good results were achieved, and that many a child who might otherwise have been a permanent cripple has been able to regain the full use of its limbs. In the course of the ensuing year it is hoped that a full report as to the results attained by Nurse Bevilaqua's treatment will be laid before you. In connection with this matter I am glad that you have determined to send two New Zealand nurses to Manchester, so that they will be able to acquaint themselves with the methods adopted by Sir Alfred Jones in the treatment of this disease, and on their return to the Dominion be competent to assist the afflicted, and train other nurses in the special methods they have learned.

I would refer you to an appendix to this report, prepared by the Government Statistician, showing the number of deaths from the various infectious diseases, and also the number of deaths of children under one year. Reference may also be made to an appendix to this report showing the number of infectious-disease cases notified in the Dominion.

Cerebro-spinal Meningitis.—During the year 135 cases of this disease were notified, an increase of 50 over the previous year. There were 54 deaths from this disease. Where cases of this disease have occurred amongst civilians strict inquiries have been made into all the circumstances and steps taken to prevent the spread of the disease.

Consumption.—In several reports reference has been made to the large number of cases of this disease occurring amongst members of the Expeditionary Force. Up to date no fewer than 261 cases have been reported. 281 cases were also notified by the Medical Boards. These figures show the necessity for increasing the accommodation for consumptives in the Dominion, and I have no doubt that it will before long be necessary to erect an additional sanatorium for consumptives in the North Island. The institution at Cambridge is capable at the utmost of accommodating 100 patients, though considerable improvements will have to be effected there before it can be said to be thoroughly equipped in every particular for the treatment of this disease. Your recent decision that this institution should be reserved entirely for male patients is a very excellent one, and as time goes on it may be possible to so improve this Sanatorium that it can with some degree of confidence be compared with similar institutions in Otaki and Christchurch. But owing to the configuration of the land, its situation, and its distance from the town it will never be possible to administer this place as efficiently and as economically as institutions of a similar nature more favourably situated. With the erection of a new institution that does not suffer from the disadvantages that Te Waikato labours under it might be possible to divert the land now attached to it to some other useful purpose.

It is also fortunate that you decided to take over the Sanatorium at Otaki from the Wellington Hospital Board. By this means matters as regards the admission of patients have been much simplified. It is proposed for the present to use Otaki for female patients only, but as time goes on it will be necessary to greatly increase the accommodation at this institution. It is indeed questionable if it would not be of great advantage to the community for the Government to take over all the existing consumptive sanatoria. There is no doubt that there is much argument on the side of the administration of consumption being regarded as a national rather than a local responsibility.

DANGEROUS INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Smallpox.—There were two cases of smallpox on the transport "Willochra," which arrived at Port Chalmers on the 13th May, 1916. The vessel was accordingly placed in quarantine and all persons on board sent to the Quarantine Island and retained sixteen days, those who did not show signs of recent vaccination being vaccinated. Two cases of the disease subsequently developed on the island, and of the total of four cases two proved fatal. I would call your attention to the District Health Officer's report thereon, which has again exemplified the protection afforded by vaccination. When it is considered that there were 303 persons on board the "Willochra," many of whom had never been vaccinated, or had only been vaccinated in infancy, and, further, that the means of isolation on board the vessel were by no means satisfactory, the protection afforded by vaccination on the vessel after the outbreak is very striking. It is on this account that I specially draw your attention to this report in the hope that it may induce parents and guardians to have their children vaccinated, for this is the only known means of protection against the grave and horrible disease. The latest reports of Vaccination Inspectors show that not 1 per cent. of the children born in the Dominion have been vaccinated, and though possibly a number of children were vaccinated and were not notified, yet undoubtedly a very large percentage of the children born in the Dominion are not vaccinated. The District Health Officer, Dunedin, Dr. M. H. Watt, reported as follows:—

"*Vaccination as a Protection against Smallpox.*—The recent outbreak of smallpox on the 'Willochra' again serves to illustrate very clearly the efficacy of successful vaccination in protecting the individual against a most dreadful and loathsome disease. While the smallpox in the