

The cordials received were not satisfactory, on the whole. Two were artificially coloured, one contained preservative, one was deficient in strength, one contained tartaric acid. In one or two instances the labelling was not in accordance with the regulations.

Boric acid was found in two lots of cream. One brand of jelly-crystals had been prepared from very inferior gelatine. Several samples of cream of tartar contained comparatively large amounts of lead, ranging from 0.6 to 0.8 grains per pound. Some of the food-colours examined were not colours permitted by regulation. Two lime-waters contained chlorides, indicating insufficient washing of the lime, or the use of ordinary tap water instead of distilled. One sample was only half the required strength.

A considerable amount of mislabelling of perfectly sound food products was noted during the year. Custard-powders frequently had the word "cream" or "egg" prominently on the label, although they contained no trace of either. Vinegars deriving only one-fifth of their acidity from malt were labelled, notwithstanding, "Malt Vinegar." Boric acid was frequently detected in butter which did not have the required notification on the wrapper. In one case a condensed milk was branded in large letters "Evaporated Cream." The pork in a pound tin of "pork and beans" did not usually amount to more than one-third of an ounce. Other instances might be given of similar labelling deliberately intended to mislead the consumers.

#### Milk.

There were 2,064 samples of milk examined which had been taken under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act. With the exception of one or two check samples, they all came from Wellington City and Province, and Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Marlborough, Nelson, and Westland Provinces.

*Wellington City.*—The City Corporation inspector must again be credited with all but a small percentage of the 1,665 samples taken in the city. Of these, ten were watered, five had been partly skimmed, ten contained an undue proportion of dirt, nine were decidedly stale, four were slightly deficient in fat, and six others slightly below the standard in non-fatty solids. The highest amount of added water detected was 20 per cent., in two samples, while the worst case of skimming represented the removal of 40 per cent. of fat from a milk of standard quality.

The results for other localities are summarized in the following table, from which it is apparent that milk-adulteration is still a common practice in some country districts:—

Locality.	Samples received.	Seriously skimmed.	Watered.	Slightly below Standard.	Locality.	Samples received.	Seriously skimmed.	Watered.	Slightly below Standard.
Blenheim ..	12	..	..	..	Napier.. ..	97	2	4	4
Carterton ..	5	..	..	..	Nelson.. ..	21	..	5	2
Dannevirke ..	14	..	3	1	Otaki .. ..	1	..	1	..
Denniston ..	4	..	..	..	Palmerston North	17	..	3	1
Eltham .. ..	1	..	..	..	Petone .. ..	12	..	..	..
Featherston ..	1	..	..	..	Shannon .. ..	1	..	..	..
Feilding .. ..	5	..	..	..	Stratford .. ..	3	..	1	1
Foxton .. ..	2	..	..	..	Taihape .. ..	3	..	..	..
Gisborne .. ..	63	1	2	1	Taranaki Hospital	22	..	3	..
Greytown .. ..	6	..	..	..	District				
Hastings .. ..	31	..	2	2	Wairoa (H.B.) ..	3	..	..	..
Hawera .. ..	23	..	3	..	Waipawa .. ..	7	1	..	1
Hutt (Lower) ..	12	..	1	..	Waipiro Bay .. ..	2	..	..	..
Hutt (Upper) ..	6	1	2	..	Wanganui .. ..	23	..	4	..
Johnsonville ..	1	..	..	..	Westport .. ..	1	..	..	..
Khandallah ..	3	..	..	..					
Levin .. ..	1	..	..	..	Totals, 1920	409	5	34	13
Marton .. ..	2	..	..	..					
Masterton .. ..	4	..	..	..	Totals, 1919	234	..	14	8

*Plunket Nurse.*—There has been a decided increase in the number of analyses made for Plunket nurses, who appreciate highly the assistance thus given. Fifty-three samples were received during the year.

#### PUBLIC WORKS.

The work carried out for this Department included the examination of some waters that had caused corrosion of pipes, and the analyses of rocks from various strata at the proposed Arapuni Dam site. An investigation was also required as to the cause of the rapid deterioration of some Muntz-metal sheathing after only a few months' use. This developed into an extensive research, the results of which will be published in the *Journal of the Society of Chemical Industry*.

As a result of this investigation it now appears possible to ascertain beforehand with some degree of certainty whether a given sample of Muntz metal will corrode rapidly or not, and an examination of all sheathing prior to use should result in considerable saving in the upkeep and repairs of structures built on Muntz-metal sheathed piles.

#### OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

Some coals and boiler-waters were analysed for the Railway Department. Several samples relating to kauri-gum and gum-bearing peats were examined for the Kauri-gum Commissioner. A few mineral waters were reported on for the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. In addition the chemical knowledge of the officers of the Laboratory has been at the disposal of all Government Departments when required, and several Departments have made use of it on numerous occasions during the year.