

SANITATION.

During the year the New Plymouth Borough Engineer completed the plans and estimates for a complete sewerage scheme for the town. The estimated cost is just under £160,000. In view of the unsatisfactory sanitary condition of a large part of the town, it is to be hoped that an adequate sewerage scheme will be adopted by the ratepayers at an early date.

As a result of representations made by the Medical Officer of Health, the New Plymouth Borough Council agreed to make the departmental Plumbing and Drainage Regulations the basis of their new by-laws. This was very necessary in view of the previous lack of control of septic-tank installation, and plumbing and drainage in general.

In the rest of the Taranaki District the sanitation of the boroughs is fairly good, though greater attention was needed in certain places to rubbish-disposal and nightsoil-removal. Opunake is in need of an adequate water-supply.

PRIVATE HOSPITALS.

In addition to the routine inspections by Nurse Inspector Broad from Wellington, it was found necessary for the Medical Officer of Health to visit many of the private hospitals in the district in connection with cases of puerperal morbidity, pyrexia, or fever, and also to investigate cases of overcrowding.

PORT HEALTH INSPECTION.

Twenty-five vessels arriving from overseas were inspected by the Port Health Officer at New Plymouth. During the year no prohibited or restricted immigrants were found, nor were any cases of infectious disease reported on board the vessels inspected.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

Ninety-three samples of milk taken from the 1st May to the end of the year resulted in two successful prosecutions for added water. Fines and costs totalled £13 4s. 6d. Seizure of food was carried out on three occasions. Five samples of butter, twenty-six of bread, and one of ice-cream were taken throughout the district, but in no case did the samples taken fall below the standard laid down by the regulations.

INSPECTIONS OF FOOD-PREMISES, ETC.

In the many eating-houses which were inspected it was found that in many cases the kitchens were not adequately flyproofed. Butchers' shops in New Plymouth and in some of the country districts fell below a reasonable standard of cleanliness, and in many cases the necessity for flyproofing was completely ignored. A general survey of the cattle-saleyards throughout the district indicated that few were properly cared for, and the majority did not comply with the regulations in regard to surface and the provision of sanitary conveniences.

REFRESHER COURSE FOR NURSES.

A two-days course of lectures and demonstration was arranged by Miss Lambie, in June, for all those nurses employed on work allied to that of the Department of Health. This was attended by four district nurses, two dental nurses, three Plunket nurses, one Red Cross nurse, and one school nurse. The course would appear to have fulfilled its purpose in helping those who attended to understand many of the problems which confront the officers of the Department, and in enlisting their co-operation in solving them.

GENERAL.

A separate report on the school medical duties carried out by the Medical Officer of Health is being submitted.

The experiment in this district of combining Public Health and school duties under one Medical Officer has proceeded for a sufficient period of time to pass judgment in favour of its practicability. The compactness of the main body of the population, together with the mobility of the Medical Officer of Health, through having a car attached for his personal use, have been two of the most important factors in his covering the district successfully.

SECTION 3.—CANTERBURY-WESTLAND HEALTH DISTRICT.

DR. TELFORD, Medical Officer of Health.

*Part I.**Infectious Diseases.*

Scarlet Fever showed an increase during this year, the increase being forty-nine in excess of last year's figures.

Diphtheria.—In this disease it is pleasing to record a great falling-off in the number of cases, the reduction being 229, the incidence per 1,000 population being 0.63, as against the average for 1920 to 1927 of 1.58.

Enteric Fever.—Nineteen cases were notified which, though in excess of last year's figures, was well below the district average.

Puerperal Fever.—The notification total for the year corresponds exactly with the preceding year.

Pneumonia and Influenzal Pneumonia.—Notifications under these headings were markedly lower than the district average.