

ANTHRAX.

A fatal case occurred in an industrial works using imported material from an Asiatic source, and although we were unable to demonstrate the presence of anthrax bacilli in the materials examined, the probable offending material having already passed through various stages, thereby being rendered innocuous. Material from this particular source is always suspect, in spite of careful supervision and inspection at forwarding end.

FOOD POISONING.

Fifty-seven cases. The majority occurred in an institutional outbreak. Delay in notification made a satisfactory investigation impossible.

LEAD POISONING.

A fatal case occurred. A post-mortem was held and portions of viscera submitted for chemical analysis. The District Analyst was able to demonstrate lead in these in appreciable quantity.

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.

An increase occurred of thirty-four on last year's figures. An annual tendency to rise has been noted since the end of 1923.

SANITATION.

The Christchurch Drainage Board's extension scheme, commenced in July, 1924, is now well advanced, and should be completed during the coming year.

The Redcliffs drainage scheme is completed, as is also the reticulation, except for a very small number of householders who have not yet connected. The Sumner Borough Council has served final notice on these owners to connect.

WATER-SUPPLY.

The Christchurch City Council's Water Board has now installed the high-pressure supply in Papanui, Spreydon, Opawa, and Woolston. The only portion not included is that portion of Bromley recently included in the city area.

Difficulty was experienced in the last quarter of the year in regard to water-supplies in the West Coast Health District. This was particularly so at Reefton, where the normal feeders for the reservoir went dry and use had to be made of the Inangahua River by means of pumping, this source being open to occasional pollution.

In Greymouth the difficulty has been the alteration of the river at the water-intake and trouble with silt at flood-time.

A considerable amount of clerical work has been experienced in drafting model health by-laws for the North Canterbury counties. These were submitted to a special committee, and have been revised on two occasions. The final amendments are few in number, and I have no doubt that the counties will adopt them in their final state *in toto*. Their adoption will make the administration of the various health regulations easier than in the past.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

The majority have been well conducted. One meat company caused a considerable amount of trouble by allowing an undue amount of solids to pollute the river into which it discharged. Requisitions were served on this company to install certain improvements, but the company objected, and an appeal was lodged. The appeal was heard in due course, and the appeal Commission unanimously upheld the Department's requirements.

INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE.

Attention has been paid to certain of the trades, particularly paint-spraying and industries in which dust is likely to be injurious to the worker. It is pleasing to note that manufacturers in general show a willingness to co-operate with the Department in any suggested improvements for their employees' welfare.

FOOD AND DRUGS.

Milk.—A very great amount of work has been carried out in ascertaining the quality of the Christchurch milk-supply, both from the bacteriological and the chemical sides. On the whole, the standard of milk is very good. Dairymen are improving their premises, and particularly is this so in the case of two firms bottling milk, who have arranged steam-ovens for the sterilizing of their bottles. A particularly satisfactory point brought out in the bacteriological investigations is the absence of evidence of tuberculosis in the composite milks used for guinea-pig inoculations. We have two advantages in regard to the milk-supply in this locality—namely, that the bulk is drawn from within a seven-mile radius, and the maximum is about fifteen miles. The other is the abundance of artesian water available for cooling purposes, so that there is little difficulty in holding the milk at an even temperature of 60° to 62° F.

General food and drugs work was well attended to during the year, and food was seized, particularly in the West Coast District. In Canterbury a number of crates of cheese were condemned owing to faulty storage in the hold of a steamer, whereby they were contaminated by sheep-droppings.

The amount recovered for legal proceedings under the various Acts and regulations was £494 10s. 9d.

It will be noted that the number of food-premises inspected has fallen off considerably. This is due to a considerable number of local authorities having adopted Regulation H. 125 and carrying out the inspections themselves, the work of this Department being purely advisory.