

PART VIII.—HEALTH DISTRICTS.—EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

SECTION 1.—CENTRAL AND SOUTH AUCKLAND HEALTH DISTRICTS.

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Part I.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The general position regarding infectious diseases may be regarded as satisfactory, inasmuch as there have been no large outbreaks of disease, and the districts have been very free from pneumonic influenza of epidemic type, and also from infantile paralysis and cerebro-spinal meningitis. With the exception of diphtheria, enteric fever, and puerperal fever, the other diseases have run a normal incidence, and there is little worthy of comment, except that the School Medical Division is now co-operating in the supervision of children, contacts of tuberculosis cases, visits of inspection being made to the homes and systematic records being kept regarding the children whenever possible.

Small outbreaks of diphtheria occurred at Papatoetoe, East Tamaki, Mount Albert, Richmond, and, in the South Auckland District, at Otorohanga, the greatest number of cases (28) being notified from Papatoetoe. Most of the cases occurred amongst school-children, and extensive swabbing of contacts resulted in the discovery of quite a number of "carriers," who were promptly isolated and treated until clear of infection. Diphtheria toxin anti-toxin immunization treatment was also made available to children at these schools, and parents took advantage of this treatment fairly extensively.

In the South Auckland District two small outbreaks of enteric fever were experienced. One of these occurred in the sawmilling district around Kakahi, just south of Taumarunui, and the other at Oruanui, near Taupo. Most of these cases occurred amongst Natives, and whenever it was possible patients were moved to hospital and contacts inoculated.

Cases of puerperal fever (ordinary) notified were: Central Auckland, forty-one, of which number twenty-four occurred in private houses, nine in licensed private hospitals, and eight in public institutions: and South Auckland, seventeen—nine in private houses, five in licensed private hospitals, two in public institutions, and one was a Maori confinement without skilled attention.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

In connection with the general sanitation of the two districts many visits of inspection have been made by the Medical Officer of Health, and, in addition, the usual supervision has been exercised by the Inspectors of Health in their respective districts.

Considerable improvement has been effected in the sanitation of the two districts, and local authorities generally show a desire to co-operate in effecting improvements. Sanitary matters which have been dealt with include the control of rubbish-tips, nightsoil-dumps, sanitary services, drainage schemes, insanitary buildings, and the administration of offensive trades. Other matters dealt with include the supervision of Native health, food and drugs works, water-supplies, cemeteries, and the inspection of hotels.

The following is a résumé of various improvements which have been made during the year:—

Auckland City.—With the exception of the flooding and consequent sewerage nuisance experienced in the Kimberley Road area at Epsom, which proved rather difficult to deal with, the general sanitary condition of the city is satisfactory, drainage systems have been extended to new areas during the year.

Hamilton.—This borough employs its own sanitary inspector, and its sanitary condition is good. A refuse-tip is maintained by the Council and is in good order, a new tip having been opened during the year; but no refuse-collecting service is carried out, and this should be made available in the future. Good progress has been made with the drainage scheme, and the closer settled parts of the borough are well reticulated, while the more scattered parts are being rapidly connected up.

Rotorua.—A reorganization of the nightsoil and refuse removal systems have been made, and these are now run on better lines. The advice of an expert is now being obtained by the Council on the sewerage question of the township. A great improvement has been effected in the sanitation of the Whaka Maori Settlement.

WATER-SUPPLIES.

The outstanding feature of the year in regard to water-supplies has been the special Commission of Inquiry which was held in Auckland during April and May in regard to the water-supplies of the city and suburbs, and also of certain of the Waikato towns.

The various water-supplies have been kept under constant supervision during the year, and numbers of samples have been obtained for chemical and bacteriological examination. The total number of samples so examined were: Central Auckland—Chemical examinations, 11; bacteriological, 41. South Auckland—Chemical examinations, 14; bacteriological, 18. Some of these examinations were made at the instigation and for the information of the Water Commission.

FOOD AND DRUGS.

A great deal of work has been done in connection with the supervision of food-sellers' premises, and the control of the sale of food and drugs. Whenever foodstuffs were found not to comply with the regulations warning notices were issued or legal proceedings instituted against the vendors. In the Central Auckland District it was necessary to institute fourteen prosecutions, the total fines and costs imposed being £65 18s. 1d., and in the South Auckland District eleven prosecutions, with fines and costs amounting to £45 17s. 10d.