

is being taken as to the final decision of the Board, whether "to mill" or "not to mill." It is pleasing to note that during the last dry summer there was no shortage in Wellington. The City Council will, however, shortly require to decide upon future policy—whether to obtain water from the new Water Board area, or to build further dams at Wainui.

Drainage: The drainage at Seatoun Heights, Karori, and Onslow is practically completed.

City Milk-supply: The municipal milk-depot has had another very satisfactory year. The Manager has recently returned from a visit to America and England, where he visited many milk-stations. The Council hope to commence the erection of the new depot during the coming year. There is no question but that the new depot is necessary. The old depot is not up to the required standard. During the year bacteriological and chemical checks by this office were made. These were satisfactory. The Medical Officer of Health and Inspectors also paid visits from time to time to the depot, particularly with a view to testing and ensuring the efficiency of the pasteurizing process. Recent bacteriological counts showed that the washing-machine in use is quite capable of producing a sterile bottle. I am co-operating closely with the Manager and committee with a view to ensuring that the new station will be satisfactory. Plans are to be submitted to this office. The amount of milk consumed in Wellington per day in 1926 was 0.69 pint per head. This is perhaps higher than in England, but it is probable that an even increased consumption per head would be beneficial to the community, especially for children.

Housing: During the year some fifty-two houses were demolished, thus leaving a net total of some 816 increase in dwellings in the city. The Wellington City Council recently constituted a Housing Committee, which is inquiring into the position in Wellington at present. I duly communicated with that committee, suggesting certain lines of action with a view to arriving at a true estimate of the position. Structural alterations were carried out in fifty-six instances, cleansing-orders in fifty-three, and closing-orders in eighteen.

By-laws: The Wellington City Council is at present remodelling its by-laws. I have asked that, in the main, this Department's model by-laws on buildings for habitation be embodied. This will be of service not only in private houses, but in the control of flats, boarding and lodging houses.

Public Baths: During the summer months inspections were made of the various baths in the city and surrounding districts. Conditions at Thorndon Baths were not of the best. The filtration plant is not satisfactory. The matter was brought to the notice of the Council. I am co-operating with the Engineer in an effort to ensure that any future baths erected comply with the standards now recognized in England and America, where continuous filtration and chlorination are widely practised.

Recreation-grounds and Play Areas: As opportunity offers, the City Council continues to progress in this work. In a city like Wellington the need for such is more apparent. A new area for Wellington North is under construction at Anderson Park. The Council is making headway with the reclamation of the sandhills as a sports area at Rongotai. The proposal to acquire Gear Island for sports bodies has not yet definitely become fact, but there are hopes that the proposal will eventually become concrete. The Hutt Valley must continue to increase in value as a sports asset for Wellington City.

Dust Nuisance: The policy of the Council in constructing sealed roads has resulted in a diminished dust nuisance.

Conveniences: During the year the ratepayers authorized a loan for the construction of conveniences in various parts of the city. When these are built Wellington should be well supplied.

Beach Nuisance, Island Bay: In October the Council decided to proceed with the construction of wharf and shipway on the island at Island Bay. Further investigations are being made with the intention of proceeding shortly with the work.

Rat Nuisance: During the year 496 rats were caught on ships and 307 in Harbour Board sheds; also 498 by the Wellington City Council: total, 1,301. Of these, 1,001 were examined by the bacteriologist. During the year the Wellington City Council rat-catcher resigned, thus causing a break of a few months. The Council have recently appointed another man. Steps have been taken to ensure that this officer is adequately equipped, and that he carries out his work on a proper system. I am much indebted to the Harbour Board for their most helpful co-operation in the matter of rat-catching. Traps are regularly set on ships, and by this method a close guard against the introduction of plague is assured.

Free Ambulance (Wellington City): Towards the end of the year, the Wellington Hospital Board discontinued this service, which is now in the hands of the Free Ambulance Committee, as representative of various local bodies in the Wellington District. Premises were secured near the Town Hall. Prior to the commencement of operations the Medical Officer of Health paid a visit and inquired carefully into the methods *re* disinfection and removal of infectious cases.

Theatres (City): As mentioned in my last report, there is room for improvement in the ventilation of some of the theatres. With the advent of more up-to-date buildings and close competition, there is a tendency for some of the smaller and less satisfactory picture-theatres to disappear. In connection with a large new picture-theatre about to be erected in Wellington I have asked the City Council to require some system of mechanical ventilation. I have further discussed the matter with the architect, and it is hoped that the ventilation in this theatre will be of the most modern type yet installed in this country.

Food Premises (City): Since the advent of the Department's regulations upon food-shops generally, and the co-operative by-laws of the City Council, a gradual improvement is taking place. As many of the premises are old and really unsuitable, progress in some instances is necessarily slow. For a long time the control of fruit-hawkers' carts in the city was not good. This has improved considerably during the last year, and the carts are kept in better condition. Many people take exception to the open type of fish-shop in Wellington. These shops comply, as you are aware, with