

MEDICAL SERVICES

Kaikoura has one full-time medical practitioner who is assisted by a second doctor on a part-time basis. The practice is a large one and includes not only Kaikoura, but a very considerable area of the surrounding country. The next doctor to the south is at Cheviot, some forty miles away.

The North Canterbury Hospital Board maintains a hospital in Kaikoura of some thirty medical and surgical beds and ten maternity beds. The local doctor is also medical officer to this hospital. There is no resident bacteriologist. Specimens for bacteriological examination have to be sent to Christchurch.

SEWERAGE AND NIGHTSOIL DISPOSAL

There is no sewerage scheme operated by the local sanitary authority. About three-fifths of the houses have pan privies. A Public Works Department camp housing over forty families has its own private contractor. The collection service for the remainder of the township is carried out by a contractor engaged by the County Council. The contract calls for a weekly service, the used pan being replaced by a clean one. The remaining two-fifths of the houses have either individual or communal septic tanks. Two of these communal schemes are of some size : one serves a group of houses owned by the New Zealand Railways, the other a State housing block. In both cases septic-tank effluent is piped to the foreshore and disposed of by sub-surface drains in a large bank of coarse shingle. A few business premises and a local hospital discharge their septic-tank effluent into the Lyell Creek, which enters the town from the north and discharges on the foreshore almost at the town's central point.

WATER-SUPPLY

The township has a high-pressure water-supply which is operated by the Kaikoura County Council. The source of supply is a stream coming from Mount Fyffe, an outlying peak of the Seaward Kaikoura Range. The collecting area is totally uninhabited. From the intake the water is piped across an intervening plain to the township. Along this main are several break-pressure tanks. A rising main supplies a reservoir situated in the township itself. Its only function is to act as a balance tank at times of considerable draw-off. There is no treatment of any kind. The water is of good chemical quality, and routine tests made prior to the outbreak show it to be of a high degree of bacterial purity.

MILK-SUPPLY

The law provides that all dairies for production of "town" milk must be registered by the Live-stock Division of the Department of Agriculture, which is responsible for their supervision. At the time of the outbreak there were three such dairies in Kaikoura : one supplied the local hospital but no other residents ; the second, cream to a local ice-cream manufacturer ; and the third, some two-thirds of the town with milk, including all the hotels, tea-shops, and milk-bars.

In this dairy the cows were machine milked and the milk cooled by passing over a water cooler. It was neither pasteurized nor bottled. The milk was transported in cans on an open motor-truck and the individual customers served from a hand-can periodically filled from the cans on the truck. There were no facilities for cleansing the dippers during progress of the round. To supplement the milk produced at his own dairy this vendor found it necessary for a portion of the year to obtain supplies from the Milk Marketing Division's plant at Blenheim. This, like the milk produced by himself, was sold loose. The total daily distribution was in the neighbourhood of 80 gallons.

The remaining households either had their own cow or obtained their milk by "arrangement" from a neighbour who had. Since these small producers were and still are unregistered, this traffic in milk does not have the sanction of the law. It is, however, a matter of extreme difficulty to eliminate it.