

to examination by the Port Health Officer disclosed the fact that the machinery for carrying out this most important part of the Act was not of the best. As the doors jamb and the windows creak they will be noted and as soon as may be put right.

The cumbersome machinery of previous Acts, which, even when necessity for immediate action arose, could only be brought into force after delay, and in some cases with difficulty, has given way to the more rapid method of disposing of the matter by Order in Council. The advantage of this course over the older methods was well exemplified in the measures taken to protect the colony from bubonic plague. While, of course, the centering of such power in the hands of His Excellency, the Minister of Public Health, the Chief Health Officer, and the District Health Officers might be open to grave complaint if unfairly used, I feel certain that so far it has enabled us to effect reforms which otherwise would have been impossible, without in any way detracting from the powers or lessening the influence of the various bodies whose duty it is to look after such matters.

As there seemed a general impression among some of the members of the various local bodies that the Health Department intended to entirely abolish their powers as sanitary authorities, a circular was issued by your authority explaining that this department desired in no way to interfere with such bodies so long as they did what was right. They were asked to look upon the officers of this department in the light of expert advisers on all sanitary and health matters. I am glad to say that the majority of the authorities has shown towards the department a most friendly and helpful attitude, and, so far, we have not had to invoke any greater power than persuasion.

For the purpose of this Act the colony has been divided into six divisions of much the same area and description as the old provincial districts (see attached map). Each of these districts will be under the charge of a District Health Officer, who must be a duly qualified registered medical practitioner. He must possess a special qualification in public health or sanitary science, or have special knowledge of sanitary and bacteriological work. He must be able to decide, by cultivation, diseases such as diphtheria, so that any medical practitioner in his district may be able to receive an authoritative and absolute diagnosis within, say, twelve or fourteen hours of the specimen being received by the District Health Officer. He will be required to do such simple bacteriological work as "Widal's reaction" for enteric fever. He will inform himself, as far as practicable, respecting all influences affecting or threatening to affect injuriously the public health within the district. He will inquire into and ascertain by such means as are at his disposal the causes, origin, and distribution of diseases within the district, and ascertain to what extent the same have depended on conditions capable of removal or mitigation. He will, by the inspection of the district both systematically at certain periods and at intervals, as occasion may require, keep himself informed of the conditions injurious to health existing therein. He will be prepared to advise the various local bodies on all matters affecting the health of the district, and on all sanitary points involved in the action of the various local bodies. He will advise the various local bodies on any question relating to health involved in the framing and subsequent working of such by-laws and regulations as they may have power to make.

On receiving information of the outbreak of any contagious, infectious, or epidemic disease of a dangerous character within the district, he will visit without delay the spot where the outbreak has occurred, and inquire into the cause and circumstances of such outbreak; and, in case he is not satisfied that all due precautions are being taken, he will advise the persons competent to act as to the measures which may appear to him to be required to prevent the extension of the disease, and take such measures for the prevention of the disease as he is legally authorised to take under "The Public Health Act, 1900."

He will direct or superintend the work of the Inspectors of Nuisances when such are appointed within his district, and on receiving from the Inspector of Nuisances information that his intervention is required in consequence of the existence of any nuisance injurious to health, or of any overcrowding in a house, he will, as early as practicable, take such steps as he is legally authorised to take.

In any case in which it may appear to him to be necessary or advisable, he will himself inspect and examine any animal, carcase, meat, poultry, game, flesh, fruit, fish, vegetables, corn, bread, flour, or milk, &c., exposed for sale, or deposited for the purpose of sale, or for preparation for sale, and intended for the food of man, which is deemed to be diseased, or unsound, or unwholesome, or unfit for the food of man; and if he finds that such animal or article is diseased, or unsound, or unwholesome, or unfit for the food of man, he will give directions such as may be necessary for causing the same to be dealt with according to the Act. He will inquire into any offensive process of trade carried on within the district, and report on the appropriate means for the prevention of any nuisance or injury to health therefrom.

He will report monthly to the Chief Health Officer his proceedings, and the measures which may require to be adopted for the improvement or protection of the public health in the district. He will also report with respect to the sickness and mortality within the district so far as he has been able to ascertain the same.

He will prepare an annual report, comprising a summary of the actions taken during the year for preventing the spread of disease, and an account of the sanitary state of his district generally at the end of the year. The report shall also contain an account of the inquiries which he has made as to the conditions injurious to health existing in his district, and of the proceedings which he has taken part or advised under "The Public Health Act, 1900," so far as such proceedings relate to those conditions; and also an account of the supervision exercised by him, or on his advice, for sanitary purposes, over places and houses that the various local bodies in his district have power to regulate, with the nature and result of any proceedings which may have been so required and taken in respect of the same during the year. He will keep a record of the number of specimens sent to be examined by him, with the result of the examinations. He will also record the action taken by him, or on his advice, during the year, in regard to