

The prohibition of water-closets in the district has proved a hardship in some places. This was done with the laudable intention of minimising the pollution of the harbour at the sewer-outfall. The opinion, however, of authorities on the matter seems to indicate that slop-water sewage is not rendered more offensive by the introduction of closet-discharge. It is a matter for the consideration of the Council whether it would not be better and less costly to face the question of treatment-tanks at the outfall and introduce water-closets than to attempt any further dealings with a nightsoil contract. This contract, which included a closed-pan service, has proved an utter failure, and has given rise to much cause for complaint.

One ruinous house has been condemned, but no action has yet been taken.

In *Parnell Borough* little has been done in the matter of improving the many sanitary defects. The Council renewed the nightsoil contract on the antiquated and offensive system of the past, and a fortnightly service, with wooden receptacles. Therefore foul privies continue to exist. In the older parts the drainage system is very defective, and the by-laws as to house-connections are primitive.

Newmarket Borough has done practically nothing as regards sanitation. A drainage scheme failed to obtain the support of the ratepayers. The district is very backward in all respects.

Devonport Borough.—The Council asked for the approval of the Department of a plan for the completion of their sewerage at Stanley Point to enable the money to be borrowed under the Loans to Local Bodies Act. Approval was given to the loan, but the work has not yet been taken in hand. Some improvements in the ventilation of the sewers have been made.

An effort was made by the Department to improve the condition of the milk-supply of the district.

More attention should be paid to the method of carrying meat from town on the ferry-boats. At present it is allowed to lie on the deck, and is in no way protected.

The general sanitary condition of the district is good.

Birkenhead Borough.—This is a growing district, and one which calls for more effort on the part of the Council to improve the conditions affecting the public health. It has the unenviable distinction of possessing the highest death-rate of any of the suburbs. From March, 1902, to April, 1903, the death-rate was 24·12 per 1,000 of population, against 17·68 in the city, and 12·72 in Grey Lynn. The infant mortality, too, was high, being 13·24, against 7·33 in the city.

The increasing number of houses makes the drainage question a matter of importance. The foreshore also is suffering. I made the suggestion that, failing a sufficiency of funds to introduce a sewerage system, certain householders should be called on to provide septic tanks. The Council, however, would not fall in with my proposals. A nightsoil service has been introduced; but the Council ignored the advice of the Department as to closed pans and a weekly service.

Northcote.—This district is growing too big for primitive sanitation. Lack of drainage is causing trouble, and a water-supply is urgently required. The present arrangements for nightsoil-disposal are most unsatisfactory. The Waitemata County Council have been approached on these questions.

Onehunga Borough.—At a conference with the Council the subject of drainage was introduced, and it was resolved to obtain a report from the Engineer as to this most needful improvement. So far I have not learned the result of this action. The pumping-spring remains without adequate protection, though, I understand, the work was decided on some time ago. The nightsoil service is on the most primitive lines. Too many cases of typhoid have recently occurred in this borough.

Mount Eden Road District.—The introduction of the closed-pan nightsoil service has not proved as great a success as might have been expected. Here, as in Grey Lynn and the city, the system is not carried out in its entirety, and therefore but poor results follow. People are inclined to blame the system rather than the manner of administering it, and it is hard to get them to believe that with proper attention to detail the work can be done without offence.

The difficulties of drainage in this district are great, and little can be done until there is some combined attempt by the neighbouring bodies to deal with the question. However, in one street a connection with the city sewer could be made at once, and without much cost. I have repeatedly approached the Board on this question.

For one group of houses, rapidly increasing in numbers, situated at the outlying part of the district, I suggested a septic tank to deal with the sewage of the whole group. The houses are here so placed as to be beyond the reach of any but a very costly general sewerage scheme, hence my proposal to deal with it separately. No action has been taken, however.

At *Remuera Road District*, for similar groups of dwellings, the drainage from which caused trouble, the Board have agreed to provide a septic tank. The drainage in the parts of this district adjoining Newmarket calls for improvement.

At *Eden Terrace* one owner was prosecuted at my instance for allowing his premises to be insanitary.

At *One-tree Hill* and *Mount Albert Road Districts* the new by-laws are being introduced. At the slaughter-yard for condemned stock in the former district considerable improvements have been effected, the carcasses of horses no longer being allowed to lie decomposing in the paddocks, while the pig-sties are being concreted and drained. The boiling-down vats were being fitted with fume-cremators when a fire destroyed the whole place. The owner is, however, rebuilding with all the improvements suggested by the Department.

In the other districts various minor matters have been dealt with.

Country Districts.

Owing to the many calls on my time the country districts have not received the attention they deserve. In the boroughs generally drainage and nightsoil-removal are neglected; while among farmhouses only the isolated position protects the occupants from such diseases as typhoid, since