

thirty beef tongues had been received from a prominent Auckland firm in salt-bags on Tuesday, the 13th. A fresh pickle was then made, and the tongues were put into this and placed in a cool-chamber. On Thursday evening sixteen tongues were left unsold. These were boiled in two coppers, eight in one and eight in the other, and pressed in butter-boxes that evening. One set of eight were delivered, and from these no ill effects resulted. The other eight were given to the racecourse caterer on the morning of the 17th. I obtained details of other meat supplied, but I will omit these as of no consequence as the sequel will show. From the caterer I obtained information as to ham, salad, dressing, bread, and examined the mustard, sugar, salt, and sauces used. It is important to note that when the poisoning was so pronounced on Monday more than one person acknowledged to having felt "queer" after lunch on the Saturday. Sunday was an extremely close and hot day, and I am told the tongues uneaten on Saturday remained on the table till the Monday. Any doubt of the article of food at fault was set at rest by inquiry from one of the families to whom Dr. Smith directed me. The father was at the racecourse on Saturday, but lunched at home. On Sunday, as he lived alongside the course, he went over to the booth and gave the waiter who was tidying-up some assistance. He was asked to take away with him a little of the cold tongue he saw; he took three slices, and did not touch anything else there. Arriving home about 1.30, the family, three in number, indulged in the tongue. At 4.30 they were all ill with the very symptoms which next day were evidenced by so many others. Having other food as well that day, I need hardly say it never dawned on them that the tongue was at fault. Samples of the tongue were taken and submitted to the Bacteriologist, Dr. Makgill, for investigation. Decomposition, however, was by this time so far advanced that it was "impossible to say whether the organisms found were present in the tongue as originally eaten or were the result of subsequent decomposition."

LOCAL SANITATION.

AUCKLAND CITY.

Generally speaking it will be shown here that towards sanitary matters during the year the City Council have evinced a *laissez faire* when not a definitely retrograde tendency. Nothing whatever has been done towards the provision of workmen's dwellings or accommodation for those others who are best described in the generic term "very poor." The worst of the dilapidated and insanitary buildings have been removed; there are others requiring similar treatment, but while the city authorities fail to provide housing for those turned out of these hovels it is unwise to force removal, the doing-so only tending to cause congestion in other buildings verging upon the condemning stage. In September, twenty-two cases of condemned buildings were listed by the City Council for Court proceedings. Ultimately, however, these were reduced to six, the owners in the other instances either having effected radical improvements or promised to remove the buildings. It is to be hoped the Council will become progressive enough to make some provision for those who either must or for preference will live near the central streets—be they genuine workmen or the very poor. The wharf labourer, the shoeblack, and the sandwich-man typify the classes to be catered for. A Town Hall to cost over £50,000 is on the *tapis*: the bare necessities of the many are to give way to *éclat* and benefit to a few.

The junction of Karangahape, Ponsonby, Newton, and Great North Roads is a very busy centre, and much traffic passes to and fro. At one corner is the reservoir from which the greater part of the city is supplied. Galvanised-iron roofing exists over each chamber of the reservoir. The roofs are low, and readily collect all the dust—desiccated street-sweepings—wafted up from the street; an open urinal stands at one corner. When Nature's rain falls, by the ingenuity of man the spouting has been so arranged that all the watery "extracts" from the filth collected on the roof passes into the drinking-water of the citizens. One would have thought that, as there was no denying the facts, the Council would have at once ordered an effective remedy. But not so; my report was received with jocosity and gibes, and much valuable time was lost in obtaining analyses—which at the most could only prove that what was admitted passed into the water was actually there.

I received from Dr. Makgill the following details of the result of the bacteriological examination of the Auckland water-supply held during November and December, 1905:—

"Quantitative Examination.

"1. Samples were taken from the tap at the Laboratory in Chancery Street on the 26th November. The tap was allowed to run ten minutes before samples were taken, to insure the water being drawn from the main. This water is drawn from the Ponsonby Reservoir.

"In gelatine plates grown for four days at normal temperature portions of the water from 0.01 to 0.1 of a cubic centimeter were taken. Some difficulty was experienced owing to the large number of rapidly liquefying organisms present; but the average number was 340 organisms per cubic centimeter, placing it among the medium waters. It is evident, therefore, that there is no very extensive pollution of the water.

"In agar, incubated two days at 35° C., 206 organisms per cubic centimeter developed. This is perhaps a somewhat high proportion of organisms growing at this temperature, and indicates the presence of organisms other than those normally found in water. This indication is borne out by the rapidity of the liquefaction of the gelatine and by the extremely fetid odour which was produced during the process by some of the organisms, both being suggestive of the presence of organisms of the Proteus group, which are found in water polluted by sewage and animal excreta, &c.

"2. Samples taken on the 23rd December from the reservoir at Ponsonby:—

"Gelatine plates gave an average of 130 organisms per cubic centimeter—less than half those found in the mains, as might be expected. There was in these plates more than usual rapid liquefaction, and the same fetid odour found in those taken from the tap.