

*Lyttelton.*

*Drainage.*—Owing to the usual dispute that occurs between local authorities and Harbour Boards having occurred in Lyttelton, no progress has been made with the urgently required drainage system. At present all sorts of defects occur in the way that existing house-connections are connected with the sewers, which carry both household drainage and storm-water. The Health Department is put in the dilemma of either insisting on the necessary alterations being made to temporary connections, which if a proper drainage system was carried would probably have to be altered, and thus the householder would be put to a double expense, or of leaving things as they are in the belief that the matters of dispute as to the site of the outfall of the sewers between the Harbour Board and the Borough Council will speedily be satisfactorily settled, and the steps necessary for the satisfactory installation of a drainage scheme be put forward by the Council as speedily as possible. Owing to the sinking of new wells and an increased pumping plant there is no difficulty on the score of water-supply in Lyttelton adopting a complete water-carriage system for slops and nightsoil which could be satisfactorily treated in a septic tank before being discharged into the sea. About two years ago a short series of by-laws dealing with house connections was submitted to the Borough Council which should have applied to all new house connections; but apparently the Council considered the complete drainage scheme and complete by-laws to be possible in the near future, and these temporary by-laws were not adopted. However, the conclusion of the whole matter is that Lyttelton is very little nearer obtaining a drainage scheme than it was two years ago.

*Water-supply.*—Owing to the occurrence of some cases of typhoid fever in Lyttelton, the question of the possible contamination of the water-supply was carefully gone into. Numerous samples of water were taken for chemical and bacteriological analysis from the sources of supply—the reservoir, and supply-taps in the town—but although one analysis raised some suspicion of sewage contamination, subsequent analysis practically disproved this possibility.

*Timaru.*

In this town, as in Lyttelton, the question of allowing sewage matter to discharge into any waters under the control of the Harbour Board has been a matter of long and heated argument between the two parties concerned. Timaru has, however, advanced a step beyond Lyttelton, as it succeeded last session in getting the Timaru Borough Drainage, Sewerage, and Loans Act passed. New by-laws which have been under discussion some two years are at last approaching finality. The by-laws dealing with sewerage and sanitary matters have been submitted to and approved by this Department. In Timaru, again, the Department was in the same dilemma as in Lyttelton, except that as there is every probability of the loan being submitted to the ratepayers this year, there is more reason for delay in taking any action in improving defective house connections until after the result of the poll is known.

*Waimate.*

Steady progress should be made this year in making the necessary works to bring the water from the Kelsey's Bush Creek into Waimate. The necessary money has been obtained and nearly all the legal preliminaries as to acquirements of land and rights of way for the pipes have been got over. As the matter for the proper construction of cesspits has been before the Council several times and no action had been taken by them, the owners and occupiers of sections on which cesspits existed were notified by this Department to either cease using them and fill them up or to construct them properly of impervious material according to the specifications of the by-laws. With two exceptions, these pits were immediately so dealt with. As defect was made in the other two instances, informations were laid against the offending parties, and would have been taken into Court but that the parties agreed to do the work before the cases came on for hearing.

*Oamaru.*

The new by-laws which came into force on the 1st April, 1905, were, after a lengthy interval, duly printed so that they could practically be put in force. Drains and plumbing-work have, by arrangement with the Council, to be put in under the supervision of Inspector Kershaw. Little progress has been made with the proposed nightsoil and rubbish removal services. In order to minimise the expense of carrying nightsoil away from the town it was proposed to erect a sump into which the carts could be emptied close to the beach on a site near the old swimming-baths. A good pressure of water would be laid on, and by means of a chute the nightsoil would be discharged straight into the sea. The Borough Council were advised by this Department not to adopt such a method, as the proposed site was in fairly close proximity to dwellinghouses, and a nuisance would very probably occur. It was also pointed out that the discharge of nightsoil into the sea so close to the town might cause a nuisance. The Borough Council, however, decided to risk causing a nuisance and to put up the proposed sump on the understanding that it should be removed if any nuisance occurred. In many towns such a proposal would have aroused such indignation on the part of the inhabitants on mere sentimental reasons that such a scheme would have been speedily abandoned; but the Council and the inhabitants did not apparently consider that a sentimental objection to putting up a nightsoil depot on what might be a pleasant resort on the seaside would be of any value.

*Akaroa.*

The drainage scheme and septic tank is now complete, and good progress is now being made in the connection of houses with the sewer. All new work is inspected from time to time by Inspector Kershaw before it is passed.