

LYTTELTON.

Drainage.—The drainage-works were commenced on the 16th July, 1908. At the end of March two-thirds of the sewers had been laid, and rather more than half the houses had been connected. The Borough Council are carrying out all the work themselves, and this rate of progress is very satisfactory, as the result of municipal enterprise. An arrangement was come to between this Department and the Lyttelton Borough Council under which the Council agreed to pay for Inspector Kershaw's services in inspecting and planning house-connections, with the result that the work has probably been much more thoroughly carried out than it would have been had no such arrangement been made.

Water-supply.—A new pumping plant of the suction-gas type has been installed at Heathcote, which will be capable of pumping up a much larger amount of water than the old steam plant. In the Town Clerk's annual report it is stated that the fuel-cost in the case of the steam plant is £6 11s. 3d. per million gallons, and the fuel-cost of the producer-gas plant is £1 11s. 3d. per million gallons. The saving in fuel is estimated to more than pay the interest on the total capital expenditure of the new plant and building.

ASHBURTON.

On the 1st May, 1908, a second poll was taken on the question of a high-pressure water-supply, and was carried by 66 votes. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining the money at a satisfactory rate of interest, no steps have yet been taken to carry out this scheme.

TEMUKA.

A poll was carried in favour of completing the sewers in the northern part of the borough. No further progress has been made in the matter of providing a high-pressure water-supply.

TIMARU.

Drainage.—The sewers and septic tank for the north end of the town have been completed, and 75 houses have been connected with the system. There were nine miles of sewers and about 244 chains of house-connections to the fence-line in this section of the sewerage scheme, and these, together with the septic tank, cost £10,520, which was about £1,000 below the engineer's estimate. The estimated cost of the sewers and septic tank for the south end of the town is £17,000. About two miles of sewers in this section are completed. An arrangement has been made between the Borough Council and the Health Department similar to the one made with Lyttelton, by which Inspector Kershaw supervises and passes the plumbing-work in the new house-connections.

Water-supply.—Extensive alterations are contemplated in the Timaru water-supply, and a report has been obtained from Mr. Dudley Dobson, C.E., on the matter. It is proposed to largely increase the storage-capacity, and to lay a new main. The Timaru water-supply becomes very discoloured in wet weather, and the increased storage-capacity will give greater facilities for cutting off the supply from the race in wet weather or while the race is being cleaned, and also give the water more time to clear. I think it is doubtful, however, whether anything short of filtering the water will give Timaru a really pure water under all conditions.

WAIMATE.

The disposal of waste water and household slops, especially in the case of hotels and boarding-houses, has been a matter for consultation between the Borough Council and the Health Department. Under the old by-laws hotels had to drain everything into a water-tight cesspit, and this cesspit had to be emptied by pumping into a tank in a cart, which put some individuals to a considerable expense. After full consideration of the matter it was resolved to allow waste water from baths, &c., to be discharged into the old wells, provided that a separate drain existed on the premises leading to a water-tight cesspit into which all foul drainage had to be discharged. These provisions were incorporated in the new by-laws which have been recently drawn up and are now in force.

OAMARU.

Not much progress has been made with the extension of the existing sewers. A short length of sewer has been put in, to which the Post-office and new Council Buildings have been connected. A few new house-connections have been made with the existing sewers during the year.

GENERAL SUMMARY OF WORK DONE.

Offensive Trades.

At the freezing-works of the Christchurch Meat Company at Timaru and Oamaru, apparatus was installed to prevent the escape of offensive gases from the boiling-down vats and from the drier into the air. I believe that the results have been quite satisfactory at Timaru and fairly satisfactory at Oamaru. It is certain that where good facilities for drainage exist, these works could be carried on without causing the particularly offensive smells that are frequently complained of.

In the case of Clegg, the contractor for the removal of offal from the Christchurch City abattoirs, which was referred to in my last report, an order was obtained from the Magistrate specifying certain alterations and additions, including the erection of a deodoriser. The structural alterations have been carried out and have much improved the facilities for carrying on the trade with less offensiveness, but the deodoriser is not yet entirely satisfactory.

Buildings unfit for occupation.

Twenty buildings were condemned in Christchurch, three in Lyttelton, four in Rangiora, and four in Timaru. In the case of four other buildings, alterations were required.