

VACCINATIONS.

I regret to have a record a great falling-off from the vaccinations this year as compared with the last, which, however, was a record one, in great part due to special efforts on the part of Vaccination Registrars.

This year I issued to medical men, 2,281 tubes; last year the number was 4,502 tubes; showing a deficiency for this year of 2,221 tubes.

The Chief Health Officer, Wellington.

FRANK OGSTON,
District Health Officer.

PART F.—MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

SIR,—

Department of Public Health, Picton, 6th April, 1909.

I have the honour to present my annual report as to the conditions of public health in the Province of Marlborough for the year ending 31st March, 1909.

I am very pleased to be able to state that there has been a steady and marked improvement in matters sanitary throughout this district. There has been a total absence of friction in carrying out my duties, and I have to thank the various public bodies of the district for the courtesy with which they have always received any suggestions I have had to make, and the willingness they have shown in carrying out the necessary improvements.

WATER-SUPPLY.

Marlborough is plentifully supplied with good drinking-water of excellent quality. Picton for many years has possessed a good high-pressure gravity water-service, supplied to every house in the borough. The growing requirements of the port has necessitated the laying of a new 9 in. main, together with the formation of an accessory dam. The Corporation now supplies an increasing number of consumers and ships with fresh water of excellent quality.

In Blenheim several schemes are being discussed as to the best means of providing a house-to-house water-service, some advocating the erection of a large water-tower fed from artesian sources, others favouring the tapping of the Omaka, Taylor, and other streams in the vicinity. I advised the Mayor and Corporation to obtain the services of a civil engineer to give them expert advice in the matter. At the present time the inhabitants obtain their supplies from private artesian wells, which generally yield a copious supply of good drinking-water.

My attention was directed to the pollution of Blind River, on the Flaxbourne-Seddon Road, used for watering stock. The nuisance was abated by the closing of a flaxmill in the vicinity. An alleged pollution of the Ward Stream at Seddon was investigated, and instructions given for its abatement.

HOTELS.

An increased amount of work has been performed in improving the sanitary conditions existing in various hotels in the province during the year. New septic tanks, which are working satisfactorily, have been installed, and improved modern sanitary fittings have been adopted in many instances. In all cases the recommendations of the Department have been carefully and willingly attended to.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Picton.

Extensive sewerage works are now in course of construction in this town, the work of laying the reticulation of pipes being at the time of writing almost completed. The work is being carried out by the Corporation by day-labour, in accordance with plans prepared by Mr. Leslie Reynolds, under the personal supervision of Mr. Henderson. The system is a gravity one, the sewage being conveyed into a septic tank upon the beach, whence, after disintegration, the effluent is carried out to sea by pipes situated below low-water mark.

Blenheim.

In this town a system of efficient drainage is urgently needed. I have interviewed the Mayor and Sanitary Committee, and have urged them most strongly to obtain the advice of a civil engineer, as to the most suitable methods to be adopted. This is a matter which in the interests of public health cannot be delayed much longer, and it should at once claim the attention of the local municipal authority.

Havelock.

In Havelock a system of drainage, with septic-tank attachment, for the use of the Police-station and Post-office has been installed, and is working satisfactorily.

SCHOOLS.

Many school-buildings have been inspected, and in several instances metal receptacles have been substituted for the insanitary pit privies in such general use in country districts. The retention of large quantities of excreta in pits near schools is most objectionable, and the nuisance is increased at the time of emptying, while it is very likely that diseases such as enteric fever are disseminated through the medium of flies, and also by leakage, by which means the surrounding soil and subsoil water becomes polluted.