

General.

Other matters referred to in the Reports of District Health Officers are :—

GENERAL SANITARY CONDITIONS OF DISTRICTS.

Auckland.—"Owing to the great increase all round in the cost of materials, and the difficulty of finding money for large schemes of improvement such as sewerage and water-supplies, there have been no large sanitary works started during the year 1918. The increasing difficulty of finding sanitary depots, and also of men willing to undertake nightsoil-removal work, makes the provision of the water-carriage system of sewerage more necessary, and there are several places in this district which would derive distinct benefit from such works; Pukekohe, Huntly, Waiuku, and Thames are four examples.

"I have noticed in several towns when visiting them that there has been a tendency to fall back in the question of street-cleansing. The difficulty of obtaining labour and its increased cost are the excuses, but increased sickness and spread of disease will be the penalty if more attention is not paid to this necessary work."

Wellington.—"There has been little tendency on the part of local bodies to undertake works of any magnitude during the year just ended. Small extensions to existing drainage-works have been carried out in Hawera, Patea, Waipukurau, Napier, Hastings, and Petone.

"Generally speaking, the sanitary condition of the district is satisfactory. The scarcity of labour and the lack of building materials have resulted, however, in the erection of very few new houses. Consequently there is at present an acute shortage of housing-accommodation.

"New sanitary by-laws have been drafted by the boroughs of Wanganui, Dannevirke, Marton, and Shannon, and the Town District of Bull's, and have been approved by the Department. The boroughs of Karori, Featherston, and Masterton, and the town districts of Raetihi and Opunake, have been granted advice and assistance in the direction of framing suitable by-laws."

Canterbury.—"Taken as a whole the sanitary conditions of the district are fairly satisfactory, though conditions from time to time come under notice which indicate that there is still room for improvement.

"The termination of hostilities will no doubt enable work to be carried out which has been in abeyance for the last three or four years, especially in connection with the provision of sewerage in the suburbs of Christchurch and the larger country towns.

"Ashburton is moving in this direction, and it is to be hoped that before the end of the year a scheme will be in operation, or well on its way thereto."

HOTEL-INSPECTION.

Auckland.—"As has been the custom in previous years, the hotels have been inspected and reported upon before the licensing meetings. The bulk of the hotels are in very fair sanitary condition, and the Health Department has much less trouble in getting improvements done amongst the hotels than in any other section of the community."

Wellington.—Hotels inspected, 339; satisfactory, 200; alterations and recommendations carried out, 139.

Canterbury.—"A number of the hotels were inspected, but owing to some misunderstanding this was not as generally carried out as usual, being somewhat complicated by the view taken by some of the Hospital Boards, who control the Inspectors, as regards their relations with the Licensing Committee. I do not anticipate any difficulties this coming year, but there is no doubt the whole matter would be very much simplified if the Inspectors were directly under the control of the Department. There would then be no question regarding the duties to be performed.

"The total number of hotels inspected was sixty.

"The number of these in which alterations were recommended and carried out was fifty."

Otago.—"No special inspections of licensed hotels were carried out, but a large number were inspected during the year in the course of the Inspector's ordinary visits to the various localities."

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

Auckland.—"Fewer complaints have been made against the owners of offensive-trade premises than in previous years, with the exception of one district. The large works have been carried on with very little complaint, and where up-to-date plant has been established no trouble has ensued. In one instance where a small plant is run by one or two men we have had numerous complaints, and inspection nearly always revealed the fact that the cleaning-up had either been forgotten or else only partially done. A threat to cancel the permit had an excellent effect. Complaints about slaughterhouses used to be very common, but at the present time are few and far between. The disappearance of many of the small private slaughterhouses, and the growth of the large killing companies, whose works are well built and designed for the work, has been the cause of this decrease in complaints."

Wellington.—Premises inspected, 66; satisfactory, 59; unsatisfactory, 7.

Otago.—"No new offensive trade was established during the year. Inspections of rabbit-canning factories and boiling-down works at Burnside were carried out. At one rabbit-canning works a large number of rabbits in a decayed condition were condemned.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTIONS.

Auckland.—Two hundred and thirty-one vessels inspected during the year. Of these ships twelve had specific disease amongst the crew; two had cases of tubercular disease amongst crew and passengers, whilst three had cases of influenza.