

Section 7 provides for the constitution of the Board of Health. Sections 15 to 19 deal with the constitution of health districts, and the appointment of Medical Officers of Health.

Part II (Powers and Duties of Local Authorities): The object of this part is to define clearly the powers and duties of local authorities in respect of public health. Care has been taken to avoid as far as possible the division of power and responsibility with respect to the same matters between the Department and local authorities, which militated against the successful administration of the Public Health Act, 1908. The general principle of this part is that each local authority is to be responsible within its district for the exercise of certain powers and the performance of certain duties respecting sanitary works, nuisances, refuse, night-soil and sanitary services, buildings, offensive trades, animals, and pollution of watercourses, &c., and that the function of the Department is to supervise the activities of local authorities, to take care that they do exercise their powers and perform their duties. Sections 20 and 21 define the general powers and duties of local authorities, and authorize the Governor-General to exempt certain of them from the performance of all or any of such duties, and in any such case to limit the powers. Section 22 requires a local authority to provide such sanitary works as the Board of Health may require. By section 23 provision is made for appeal against the Board's requirements. Section 24 empowers local authorities to borrow, without the consent of ratepayers, moneys for sanitary works. Sections 26 to 32 make provision for dealing with nuisances, and sections 33 to 35 with respect to refuse, &c. Sections 36 to 53, as to buildings, contain, *inter alia*, provisions for closing of insanitary premises, and in certain cases for their demolition. A Medical Officer of Health is empowered in certain cases to issue closing-orders and to make requisitions for the destruction of insanitary premises. Sections 54 to 56 require the consent of the local authority and of a Medical Officer of Health to be obtained before an offensive trade may be established in any district, and provide for the registration of premises used for offensive trades. By sections 57 to 60 local authorities are empowered to restrict the keeping of animals within their districts, and to register and restrict the establishment of cattle-saleyards. Sections 61 to 65 make provision for preventing the pollution of watercourses. By section 66 the Governor-General is empowered to declare districts constituted under the Maori Councils Act, 1900, to be special districts within which the Maori Councils shall be Health Councils, with such powers as may be prescribed. Sections 67 to 73 deal with local authorities' power to make by-laws. The purposes for which by-laws may be made are set out in paragraphs (a) to (y) of section 67 (1), and, *inter alia*, comprise such as the fixing of minimum frontages and areas of land on which dwellinghouses may be erected, in addition to other purposes more directly affecting the public health. Section 74 makes special provisions as to the powers of Harbour Boards.

Part III (Infectious and Notifiable Diseases): The experience of twenty years' working of the original Public Health Act of 1900, and in particular the experience of the epidemic of 1918, have been drawn upon in framing this part of this Act. The general and special powers of Medical Officers of Health and Health Inspectors have been carefully defined, and the various provisions made as elastic as possible to enable outbreaks of infectious disease to be coped with adequately and expeditiously. Infectious diseases are, in the First Schedule to this Act, divided into notifiable infectious diseases and other infectious diseases, with power to the Governor-General to declare any other infectious disease to be a notifiable infectious disease. Certain non-infectious diseases are in the Second Schedule declared to be notifiable, and the Governor-General has power to add to the list. The obligation to notify disease rests on medical practitioners, but any case not attended by a medical practitioner must be notified by the occupier of the premises in which the person affected is living. Sections 85 and 86 create offences with regard to infectious diseases. Adequate powers to order disinfection of persons and premises are conferred on various officers, and local authorities may be required by the Board of Health to establish mortuaries and disinfecting-stations. Section 94 provides for the payment of compensation to persons injuriously affected by the destruction, pursuant to this part, of any animal, building, or thing.

Part IV (Quarantine): The general remarks made with respect to Part III apply equally to this part. The Governor-General is empowered to proclaim quarantine grounds and stations and any port to be an infected place, and certain ships, persons, and goods are declared to be liable to quarantine. Section 104 prescribes the restrictions to be operative while a ship remains liable to quarantine. The duties of the masters with reference to the inspection of ships liable to quarantine, and provisions applicable to persons liable to quarantine, are detailed in sections 107 and 111 respectively. Section 126 prescribes the duty of the owners of any ship with respect to persons in quarantine.

Part V (Regulations): Very wide powers to make, by Order in Council, regulations for the purposes of this Act are conferred on the Governor-General by this part, the underlying principle being that the interests of public health demand the utmost freedom of action compatible with the legislative supremacy of Parliament. The purposes for which regulations may be made are set out at length in thirty-one paragraphs of section 132 (1).

Part VI (Miscellaneous): This part contains miscellaneous provisions, mostly of the nature of machinery, but includes powers to medically examine school-children, to remove infirm and neglected persons to suitable institutions, and for the Board of Health, in default of action by a local authority, to do any sanitary works and to recover the cost thereof from the defaulting local authority.

1920, No. 46.—The Statutes Drafting and Compilation Act, 1920.—This Act provides for the appointment of an office of Parliament to be called the Law-drafting Office, and the appointment of a Law Draftsman and Compiler of Statutes, and defines the duties of those officers.