

PART VIII.—HEALTH DISTRICTS.—EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

SECTION I.—CENTRAL AND SOUTH AUCKLAND HEALTH DISTRICTS.

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Part I.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

In reviewing the notifications of infectious disease recorded during the calendar year 1926 a general increase in the number of notifications recorded is noted. With the exception of the outbreak of influenza pneumonia which occurred during July and August, there were no pronounced outbreaks of infectious disease. The notifications recorded in these two months totalled, Central Auckland, 119, and South Auckland, 71 ; and of this number approximately 20 per cent. and 13 per cent. respectively proved fatal. Notifications of pneumonia during these months were also considerably above the average, and probably some were of influenza origin. Ordinary mild influenza was also prevalent throughout both districts at this time.

In regard to diphtheria, three small outbreaks were experienced during the year—one, of fourteen cases, at Akaaka, near Waiuku ; one, of five cases, at the Children's Home, Grey Lynn ; and the third amongst children attending the infants' classes at Maungawhau School, Mount Eden. In all these cases extensive swabbing of contacts was carried out, and carriers were detected and isolated in their own homes until the virulence tests were negative.

It is pleasing to record that only five cases of infantile paralysis were notified during the year, in comparison with the outbreak of 293 cases recorded during 1925. Of the other diseases but little can be said, except that the notifications of puerperal septicæmia, ordinary, dropped almost 50 per cent. in comparison with the previous year's figures. These cases have all been carefully investigated, and the most rigid precautions have been imposed upon contacts in order to obviate the spread of infection.

GENERAL SANITATION.

Considerable improvement in regard to sanitation matters is noted throughout the two districts, and in addition to the supervision of such matters the Department has undertaken a certain amount of educational work by the circularizing through newspapers of articles of public-health interest ; and also Dr. McCreedy, Assistant Medical Officer of Health, has delivered lectures in most of the centres of population, particularly in the South Auckland Health District.

In regard to sanitary matters improvements have been effected in regard to the control of rubbish-tips, nightsoil-dumps, sanitary services, drainage schemes, and the administration of offensive trades. The Medical Officers of Health have also made many visits and issued the necessary condemnation-orders in regard to insanitary buildings in the city and suburbs.

WATER-SUPPLIES.

A great deal of work has been entailed in the supervision of the water-supplies throughout the two districts. Inspection of the various catchment areas has been carried out, and analyses of the supplies have been made. Whenever necessary, recommendations have been forwarded to the local bodies concerned in regard to the improvement of their supplies.

The Auckland City supply has received much attention. During the abnormally heavy rains experienced in May both the pipe-lines from the Waitakere and Nihotapu catchment areas were washed away by the floods. This necessitated the cartage of water in many parts of the city and suburbs, temporary supplies being obtained from the One Tree Hill and Onehunga supplies and a good deal of water being pumped from the Western Springs. Chlorination of this latter supply was carefully supervised, and in addition consumers were warned to boil all water before using.

Work has also been commenced in the building of a new dam at the Huia catchment area.

During the year a new supply was obtained from a bore for the Manurewa School. Examination of this supply reveals the fact that the water is of a high degree of purity.

Inquiry and investigation was made in regard to the provision of a new water-supply for the Cambridge Borough.

The following is a list showing the various bacteriological and chemical examinations made during the year :—

In the Central Auckland Health District forty-four bacteriological and thirteen chemical examinations, and in the South Auckland Health District thirty-two bacteriological examinations, were made during the year.

FOOD AND DRUGS WORK.

The supervision of food-sellers' premises and the control of the sale of food and drugs has necessitated a great deal of work by the Medical Officers of Health and Inspectors. A great deal of time has also been spent in the correction of labels and in advising upon labels submitted for examination. Various legal proceedings were necessary on account of breaches of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act. In the Central Auckland District twenty-seven cases were successfully determined, fines and costs imposed totalling approximately £185, and in the South Auckland District ten cases, with fines and costs amounting to £115.

The Medical Officers of Health have exercised direct supervision, and in many cases have made personal inspections of the milk-depots and bakehouses in the city and suburbs.