

SHIPPING AND ANTI-RAT WORK.

During the calendar year 1926, 358 overseas vessels arrived at Auckland and were duly inspected by the Port Health Officer. From these vessels 137 prohibited or restricted immigrants were reported to the Customs Department. Eight vessels which arrived during the year were found to have cases of infectious diseases on board on arrival, and the cases and contacts were dealt with in accordance with departmental regulations.

The Department has long pressed the Harbour Board to institute a system of garbage-removal from vessels in port, and during the year this service was instituted, with very satisfactory results in regard to the improvement of conditions on the waterfront.

In connection with anti-rat work both the Auckland Harbour Board and the City Council have employed at least one full-time officer on this work throughout the year. Much of this work has been carried out along the waterfront, and traps have been set systematically and rat-poison laid. The catches of the City Council official have averaged approximately 125 a week, and in addition the Council have also issued free rat-poison to all householders making application for same.

GENERAL.

The Public Health laboratory at Auckland was closed down on the 31st March, 1926, and all equipment was handed over to the Auckland Hospital Board on the 1st April, all work now being concentrated at the hospital laboratory.

NORTH AUCKLAND AND COROMANDEL-OPOTIKI HEALTH DISTRICTS.

Dr. H. CHESSON, Medical Officer of Health.

Part 2.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The general position regarding infectious diseases has been fairly satisfactory throughout the year. The epidemic of influenza pneumonia which occurred in the Central and South Auckland Districts in July and August was experienced in a minor degree in the North Auckland and Coromandel-Opotiki Districts, from which twenty-five cases and four deaths, and thirty-seven cases and ten deaths, were notified during these two months. Ordinary mild influenza was also prevalent at this time.

A small outbreak of diphtheria was experienced in the Thames district in May and June, twenty-one cases in all being notified, principally amongst school-children. Extensive swabbing of contacts was carried out and four carriers were thereby discovered. In addition the diphtheria toxin, anti-toxin immunization treatment was made available to all those children whose parents desired same, and over six hundred were thus immunized, the work being carried out by Dr. Wilson, School Medical Officer, assisted by some of the school nurses.

There have been no pronounced outbreaks of enteric fever through the year, but three small outbreaks occurred amongst the Maoris—four cases at Tauranga, four at Whangaroa, and six at Te Kaha, in the Bay of Plenty district. Certain other suspected cases were also notified from Te Kaha, but diagnoses were not confirmed. All the cases were carefully investigated, and the districts affected were given a general clean-up and their sanitary condition was improved as a result of the special inspections made. The district nurses to Natives also carried out special typhoid inoculations of Maoris in the districts, especially of all contacts of the cases that could be traced.

In regard to other diseases little can be said, incidence of cases being fairly steady, and cases being more or less of a sporadic nature. It is pleasing to note that fewer cases of puerperal fever occurred. All cases of this disease were carefully investigated, and all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection were strictly enforced.

GENERAL SANITATION.

Considerable improvement has been noted in the sanitation of the two districts. The local authorities generally show keenness to effect improvements, and have to a great extent complied with any recommendations or requisitions issued by the Department. Clean-up weeks have been held in various parts, with beneficial results, and advice has been given and supervision exercised regarding rubbish-tips, nightsoil-dumps, and drainage schemes, &c.

WATER-SUPPLIES.

The usual supervision has been exercised over all water-supplies, and care has been taken to ensure that the gathering-areas should be in as sanitary a condition as possible.

A great deal of work has been done in connection with Lake Takapuna, which supplies the four northern boroughs. Considerable work has been done by the Lake Takapuna Board of Control in the removal of weed from the Lake.

During the year steps have been taken by the Dargaville Borough Council to obtain complete control of its watershed. Most of the farms have now been purchased, and the removal of stock from the area is in progress. This should effect considerable improvement in their supply.

A new water-supply has been provided by the Waitemata County Council at the Motutara Domain, and matters at the Muriwai Beach, where annual motor races are held, have been considerably improved thereby.