

The following is a list of the bacteriological examinations made :—

North Auckland Health District.—Lake Takapuna, 1 ; Devonport, 2 ; Northcote, 2 ; Birkenhead, 3 ; Dargaville, 8.

Coromandel-Opotiki Health District.—Paeroa, 1 ; Thames, 4.

FOOD AND DRUGS WORK.

The supervision of the sale of food and drugs and the inspection of food-sellers' premises have entailed a great deal of work on the part of the departmental Inspectors. The condition of premises retailing foodstuffs has been considerably improved as the result of action by the local authorities in the matter of their registration, which has been modelled on the departmental regulations. Various samples have been weighed and obtained for analyses. As a result of the sampling and analysis of foodstuffs various breaches of the regulations under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1908, were detected. In many instances where minor offences occurred warning notices were issued, but it was necessary in quite a number of cases to institute legal proceedings. In the North Auckland District twenty-six and in the Coromandel-Opotiki District six persons were so proceeded against, and fines and costs imposed upon the offenders totalled £174 13s. 6d. and £58 5s. 6d. in the two districts respectively.

SECTION 2.—CENTRAL WELLINGTON HEALTH DISTRICT.

Dr. FINDLAY, Medical Officer of Health.

Part 1.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending the 31st March, 1927.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Scarlet Fever.—Number of cases, 484. As predicted in my report for 1923, and on the basis of an increased prevalence five-yearly, there has been a decided increase in the disease in Wellington City ; 383 cases were removed to isolation hospital. No deaths were certified.

Influenza (Pneumonic, Septicæmic, and Fulminant).—Thirty-two cases ; thirteen deaths. The majority of the reports upon notified cases showed the grave consequences of not lying up for a sufficient period. Complete rest for three days after the subsidence of temperature appears really necessary. Although few serious cases were reported, influenza of a mild type was very prevalent in the district. The 1925 wave in New Zealand was first felt in Wellington. Towards the end of December a form of what was thought to be mild gastric influenza made its appearance. This continued for some two months or more. It was not serious.

Pneumonia.—Fifty-nine cases notified, and nine deaths.

Diphtheria.—246 cases notified ; six deaths. Reports on these cases bear out the danger of delay. Medical men should carry out the advice of Sir Arthur Newsholme in a recent address, in which he stressed the possibility of a saving of life by the immediate administration of anti-toxin without waiting for the delay of several hours before the removal of the case to hospital.

Puerperal Fever.—Full-time cases : seventeen cases notified. Of the seventeen full-time cases notified last year, twelve occurred in maternity hospitals, four in their own homes, and one in which one case was allowed at a time. The majority of these cases were mild, prompt notifications being required in hospitals.

Of the total births in the Wellington metropolitan area (2,309 for 1926), 1,474 took place in maternity hospitals, 390 of which were in St. Helens. All cases of puerperal fever in hospitals were personally investigated by the Medical Officer of Health. One case occurred which tended to show the necessity for medical men exercising control over maternity nurses of the older type in making P.V. examinations.

Measles, German Measles, and Whooping-cough.—These diseases were very prevalent during the year, especially German measles. The attendance of several schools was very considerably decreased. Two deaths occurred from measles, and eight from whooping-cough. Five infants under one year died from whooping-cough in Wellington. One of the deaths from measles occurred in an infant under one year. Sixty-five deaths from whooping-cough occurred in the four large cities last year. The necessity for the greatest care with regard to infants suffering from this disease is indicated.

CHRONIC LEAD POISONING.

Of four cases which were notified, two occurred in a paint-factory, one an employee in a battery-repair shop, and the other a painter who had been some years at the trade. The cases occurring in the paint-factory almost certainly developed through inhalation. Prompt measures under the regulations were taken with regard to these men.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND HEALTH CONDITIONS.

Wellington City.—City Council Organization : In November the new City Engineer commenced his duties. During the year rearrangement of Sanitary Inspectors' duties and districts was adopted, with improved results. I have had various interviews with Councillors and members of the Council's staff *re* increased efficiency. Throughout the year frequent inspections were made by the Medical Officer of Health in company with officers of the Council.