

Samples of water from the majority of public water-supplies in the district were taken and submitted to chemical and bacteriological examination. These did not call for serious comment, with the exception of the water-supplies of Foxton and Marton. Analyses of these latter waters have shown in former years that they are of very doubtful quality. Marton Borough Council have been making some alterations to their reservoir, but the desirability of some form of treatment is realized. On visiting Foxton recently at the Council's request the question of purification of the water by means of filtration or chemical treatment was considered. As the supply is pumped direct from 300 ft. bores to an airtight concrete well, from which it is then pumped at a pressure of 60 lb. to the water-tower, it will be a costly matter to provide means for filtration or chlorination. An inflammable gas accumulates in the well when the pump is working. This was demonstrated by ignition. A flame about 4 ft. high burned for a minute or so. The Foxton residents do not appear to be affected injuriously by their water-supply, although visitors, particularly at the military camp on the race-course, have previously developed enteritis. All water used at the military camp is now boiled.

Palmerston North water-supply has given cause for uneasiness, not because of its quality, but by reason of the defective and insufficient mains. The Council was written to, and a reply was received stating that the incoming Council were recommended to place a loan proposal before the ratepayers for the purpose of improving the supply to the town. The reservoir is badly silted. It is proposed to include in the loan proposal a sum for cleaning it out.

Palmerston North Borough Council was also requested to state what steps it is proposed to take to deal with a nuisance caused by the backing-up of sewers in the vicinity of Boundary Road. Reply was made that the incoming Council would be recommended to place a loan proposal before its ratepayers to deal with this matter also.

Otaki Drainage.—The existing conditions in Otaki have caused much concern, and the Board of Health has had the matter of the completion of the sewerage scheme under consideration. An order requiring tests of the existing sewer to be made is being complied with by the Otaki Borough Council, but up to this date tests have not been made, owing largely to difficulties caused by the nature of the ground and the great flow of water. It appears to be doubtful, in view of present knowledge, if the existing sewer can be utilized.

FOOD-INSPECTION.

Samples of food products produced in the various parts of the district have been taken for the purpose of analysis from time to time, and the necessary action in cases of breaches of the regulations has been carried out.

Milk.—Samples are taken with fair regularity. The standard required by the regulations is reached generally as far as fats, solids, &c., are concerned, but I cannot say that in all cases a clean milk is produced.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Enteric Fever.—Owing to the development of several cases of enteric fever during the latter end of the year, particularly in the New Plymouth and Palmerston North districts, it was considered advisable that preventive immunization of Maoris should be undertaken. Earlier in the year some uneasiness as to the possible spread of enteric fever amongst the Ratanaites was felt, owing to the Hawke's Bay outbreak and the fact that the Maoris from the East Coast were visiting Ratana Pa frequently. The Maoris at Ratana Pa were given one inoculation, but refused to submit to the second injection owing to some aspersions being cast on the sanitation of their village.

In January, 1927, Dr. Rangi Hiroa, Director, Division of Maori Hygiene, inoculated the majority of the Natives at the Wanganui River pas and in the New Plymouth area. I had previously inoculated a large number of Maoris at Manaia and Puniho (Taranaki). The majority of the Maoris from Porirua, up to and including the Levin district, have now been given two inoculations of T.A.B., and it is hoped that the immunization campaign may be continued.

Scarlet Fever.—During the end of the year scarlet fever has been prevalent in the district, but has been of a mild type. Palmerston North and Wanganui had the majority of the cases.

Diphtheria.—This disease has been prevalent all through the year. The seasonal incidence is not so clearly marked as usual. Since December, 1926, there has been only a slight decrease in notifications.

Immunization of the boarders at the New Plymouth High School was carried out during the year, with good effect so far. However, most of the boys are over the most susceptible ages.

I wish to place on record my appreciation of the cordial co-operation of the staff of the District Health Office and the Inspectors in all parts of my district.

WAIRARAPA—EAST CAPE, NELSON—MARLBOROUGH HEALTH DISTRICT.

Dr. W. B. MERCER, Medical Officer of Health.

Part 3.

The administrative and inspectorial work has been carried out quite satisfactorily, despite the fact that the outlying parts of my district are some hundreds of miles from the District Office. This is mainly due to the faithful way in which our Inspectors carry out their duties and to the excellent staff work of the District Office.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The year 1926 has been an eventful year for infectious diseases. In the Wairarapa - East Cape Health District the incidence of the three infectious diseases, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and typhoid