

STAFF.

I regret very much to record that Inspector R. J. McKenzie met his death as the result of losing control of his bicycle at Lyttelton while engaged on departmental duties. This officer was a very painstaking and well-tried officer. He was held in high esteem not only by the staff, but by the public with whom he had to deal.

In conclusion, I would again thank my staff, one and all, for their loyalty and zeal throughout the year, it being through their co-operation that the year now ended has proved successful from a departmental point of view.

NORTH AND SOUTH CANTERBURY.

Colonel DAWSON, Assistant Medical Officer of Health.

Part 2.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Those for the year 1927 have been fully dealt with in Dr. Telford's report.

SANITATION.

The work of connecting houses with the sewer at Temuka is proceeding steadily. In the reticulated area the majority of the houses will shortly be connected up. The Borough Council are considering the extension of the scheme in the country districts.

The Borough of Rangiora requires a water and drainage system. As the poll to raise the necessary loan was defeated, a requisition was issued by the Board of Health to carry out the work which was considered the minimum requirements. The Borough Council appealed against the requisition, and after considerable negotiation have decided to take a poll on the modified scheme.

CAMPING-GROUNDS.

Marked improvement, particularly in the northern beaches. A septic tank at Selwyn Huts has been installed, certain minor initial difficulties have been dealt with, and the majority of the huts are connected with the sewer. Work is being done with a view to making improvements in the lay-out and siting of these beach camps.

SETTLEMENTS.

There is a tendency for settlements to spring up in county areas close to the border of a borough. The occupiers of the dwellings therein enjoy most of the privileges of the borough, but escape the heavier borough rates. The sanitary conditions of these dwellings are generally unsatisfactory, and not up to the borough standard. Such places are liable to become a menace to the health of the borough. In dealing with the problems of a settlement the Borough Council is better organized than a County Council. Where the size of the settlement warrants it, every endeavour is being made to include it in the nearest borough.

SPRAY PAINTING.

A regular watch has been kept on the employees in these works during the process throughout the year. None of the workers have shown any signs of illness, and some of them have now been employed three years.

COUNTIES.

For the convenience of counties, a set of model by-laws has been drafted and will be shortly submitted to the Counties' Association for their final approval.

SECTION 4.—OTAGO-SOUTHLAND HEALTH DISTRICT.

Dr. CRAWSHAW, Medical Officer of Health; Dr. McLEAN, Assistant Medical Officer of Health.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

During the calendar year 1927 the notifiable diseases recorded numbered 632, as against 867 in 1926 and 883 in 1925, being a decrease of 235 as compared with the 1926 figures, and also a decrease of 251 in comparison with the figures for 1925. It is pleasing to report this satisfactory decrease in comparison with the previous years.

The following diseases showed an increase in 1927 as compared with the previous year: Scarlet fever, 152 (138 in 1926); erysipelas, 32 (22 in 1926); eclampsia, 13 (9 in 1926); tetanus, 4 (none in 1926). A decrease was apparent in the following: Diphtheria, 43 (234 in 1926); enteric, 3 (5 in 1926); pulmonary tuberculosis, 244 (277 in 1926); cerebro-spinal fever, 3 (8 in 1926); puerperal fever, 23 (29 in 1926); ophthalmia neonatorum, 1 (3 in 1926); influenza, 20 (40 in 1926). No cases occurred of poliomyelitis during the year.

Scarlet Fever.—In common with the rest of the South Island, the district showed a distinct increase in scarlet-fever notifications during February and March. The increase was not confined to the towns, as isolated cases were reported from country districts over the whole area, with the exception of Otago Central. Ten cases in Invercargill and twenty-three in Gore were definitely traced to infected milk-supplies. In the former case infection from this source ceased after isolation of a child of the dairyman who was suffering from a septic throat, and in the latter the milk was pasteurized until throat-swabs had been taken from all persons handling it and found to be free from pathogenic organisms.