

PORT HEALTH AND ANTI-RAT WORK.

During the year the health inspection of all vessels entering the port has been the care of the Port Health Officer, Dr. Harker. He reports that 357 vessels were so examined, and that seventy-six prohibited or restricted immigrants were reported to the Customs Department.

The Shipping Inspector has exercised supervision over the sanitary conditions prevailing on all vessels in port and the fumigation of vessels. His report stresses the value of the refuse-removal system inaugurated by the Harbour Board, which is proving a boon not only in keeping the port clear of ships' refuse, but the barge also dumps fish-offal from the city, thus removing what was previously an almost constant source of complaint.

Constant war has been waged on the rat population on ships and the waterfront by the City Council and Harbour Board's rat officers, whose combined catches average about three hundred per week. The City Council also distributes rat-poison free to householders making application for it, and some one thousand baits per week were so distributed.

The inspection of overseas goods—*e.g.*, flock—and the disinfection of personal effects, and bristles and animal hair from the East have been carried out by the Departmental Inspectors.

GENERAL.

Co-operation has been effected with the Labour Department in the supervision of factories and food-sellers' premises, and certain inquiries were made in regard to occupational diseases, especially into the danger involved by workers in the "Duco" spraying process.

The control of cemeteries having recently passed into the hands of the Department, a great deal of work has been done in inspecting and arranging for necessary improvements in the condition and supervision of the various cemeteries and burial-grounds.

NORTH AUCKLAND AND COROMANDEL-OPOTIKI HEALTH DISTRICTS.

Dr. CHESSEON, Medical Officer of Health.

Part 2.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

In reviewing the notifications of infectious disease recorded during the year, it is pleasing to note that no large outbreaks were experienced, and that the districts have been fairly free of influenza pneumonia, which disease accounted for a fairly large number of cases and deaths the preceding year. There were experienced small outbreaks of enteric fever in the Bay of Islands and Whangarei districts, of diphtheria at Tauranga, and of food poisoning at Te Puke, but apart from these the notifications of other diseases were normal and more or less of a sporadic nature.

The enteric-fever outbreak consisted of about twenty-five cases, the infection being traced to Natives who had been visiting at Ratana and who arrived home ill. Unfortunately, one of these Natives was admitted to the Whangarei District Hospital as a "chest" case, and before his case was diagnosed as positive enteric fever the infection had been carried to the nurses in the institution, six of whom contracted the disease, one case proving fatal. As the cases occurred they were removed to hospital for isolation, and inoculation of all the contacts was carried out by the district nurses to Natives. About half of the cases were European and half Natives.

A small diphtheria outbreak occurred in the Bay of Plenty district during May and June, the Borough of Tauranga being principally affected, twenty-seven cases being notified therefrom. As the majority of these were school-children, extensive swabbing of contacts was carried out, several carriers being thereby detected and isolated. The diphtheria toxin anti-toxin immunization treatment was made available to those children whose parents desired it, and some six hundred received this treatment at the hands of Dr. Wilson, School Medical Officer.

The food-poisoning outbreak occurred in Te Puke in December, twenty-five cases being notified. As these occurred during the Christmas period, when the mails were slow, it was not possible to obtain specimens from the patients, but the notifying practitioner forwarded one sample of faeces, from which the *Bacillus suispestifer* (hog-cholera bacillus) was isolated. It is considered that infection in these cases was conveyed by infected ice-cream, as all the patients had partaken of ice-cream supplied by the one vendor.

Notifications of puerperal fever (ordinary) recorded during the year numbered—North Auckland, seventeen, and Coromandel-Opotiki, seven. Of the former, five were Maori confinements without skilled attention, seven occurred in private houses, and five in maternity annexes; and of the latter two were Maoris, two occurred in private houses, one in a private hospital, and two in maternity annexes. All these cases were strictly investigated, and all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection to other maternity cases were carefully enforced.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

A general improvement has been noted in regard to the sanitation of the two districts, and this matter has been directly under the supervision of the Medical Officer of Health, who has made many visits of inspection throughout the districts during the year. Matters which have been especially dealt with include drainage and sewage-disposal, nightsoil and rubbish removal services, water-supplies, food and drugs work, offensive trades, Native-health work, inspection of hotels, and the control of cemeteries, &c.