

Scarlet Fever.—There has been a very considerable increase in the number of cases notified during the year. The disease has been mild in type, and the incidence has been greatest in the larger centres of population—Wanganui and Palmerston North.

The incidence of cases in relation to the age groups has been roughly—Ages 1–5 years (pre-school age), 21·5 per cent.; 5–15 years (school age), 49·5 per cent.; 15–20 years (adolescents), 10 per cent.; over 20 years, 19 per cent. Of ninety-nine cases over the age of 20, eighty-one were females. The incidence of cases in institutions, boarding-schools, and hospitals has not been so marked as during the previous year. Outbreaks in the Collegiate School and the Technical School Hostel, Wanganui, however, called for some attention.

Owing to some overcrowding at isolation hospitals, the discharge of cases somewhat earlier than the usual six-weeks period was allowed, provided that the consent of the parents to such procedure was obtained and that our Inspector was satisfied that a reasonable measure of further isolation and supervision of the patient could and would be carried out.

Diphtheria.—There has been a very marked decrease in the number of cases notified during the year. Palmerston North continues to furnish the largest number of cases; Wanganui shows a considerable decrease. Outside of these two large centres the other cases have been spread over the whole district, with nothing in the nature of an epidemic showing.

Enteric Fever.—The two deaths reported are attributable to an outbreak which occurred at a Native pa in the vicinity of Taihape late in 1927. The eight notified cases were found after inquiry to be either of an indeterminate nature or due to infection contracted prior to their coming into the district. They occurred in various parts of the district.

Cerebro-spinal Meningitis.—All four cases notified occurred in Wanganui City. Isolation and swabbing of contacts was carried out.

Pneumonic Influenza and Pneumonia.—The number of cases notified shows a slight decrease on the previous year, as does the death-rate. The rates of deaths and notified cases is 24 per cent. An outbreak of influenza and pneumonia was notified during the year at the Huntly Boys' School, near Marton. During inquiry into the outbreak an inspection of the school buildings was made, and requisitions for improvements to the sanitary conveniences and for better bed-spacing in the dormitories were made. These improvements have been erected.

Dysentery.—The cases notified were young children under the age of ten years, living in the Palmerston North and Wanganui-Marton districts.

SANITATION.

Wanganui City.—During the year the balance of the works included in the loan authorized by the Board of Health have been completed, and the Council has sought authority to spend some surplus moneys from such loan on improvements to the various sewer outfalls, sewer-extensions in outlying portions of the borough, and renewal of some defective sewers in the inner residential portions of the city. The necessary authorities have been granted and much of the work has been completed.

The water-supply has undergone a thorough survey; a series of chemical and bacteriological examinations have been made from the present supply and some other sources which were under consideration to augment this supply. The whole question as to how best to conserve the present supply or to so augment it as to meet the increased summer demand is under review.

The provision of a new morgue for the city will be proceeded with as soon as legislation empowering the City Council to make use of a site is put through.

A site for the disposal of the refuse by dumping and covering to serve the Castlecliff-Gonville area of the city was approved of after inspection and is now in operation.

The provision of a boiling-down works at the abattoirs to deal with both butchers' refuse and any by-products from the abattoirs by the Iwell process is fulfilling a very useful function.

Palmerston North.—During the year a contract was let for the laying of an intercepting sewer to serve the north-western portion of the borough. This work, which has been completed, comprised the laying of 144 chains of sewer-pipes. A further contract for the laying of two miles and a half of new sewer has also been let, of which 20 chains has already been completed.

The main reservoir on the water-supply at Tiritea was emptied during the spring and cleaned out, 40,000 cubic yards of silt being removed by sluicing. The town reticulation has been extended by the laying of 180 chains of new 4 in. mains.

OFFENSIVE TRADES AND CATTLE-SALEYARDS.

Registration throughout the district is now general, and these places are well kept. Three new offensive trades have been established, and in each case it has been possible to secure that the premises were built in such a way as to provide that the trades would be carried out with a minimum of nuisance. As many local authorities have no by-laws dealing with the construction of buildings to be used for offensive trades or governing the operation of such trades, it might be advisable that some regulation under the Health Act be made as a guide to local authorities.

POLLUTION OF WATERCOURSES.

Complaints are frequently received by our Inspectors of nuisances caused by the pollution of streams and watercourses other than those of "the water-supply of the district of any local authority." The source of pollution is most frequently from the waste water of a dairy factory or industrial plant, such as a freezing-works, fellmongery, or boiling-down works, or occasionally sewerage-treatment works.