

The opening of the above new maternity hospitals marks a step forward in the provision of adequate hospital accommodation for maternity cases in New Plymouth. All three hospitals are well equipped and constructed in accordance with modern hospital requirements.

PORT HEALTH INSPECTION.

Twenty-one overseas vessels were inspected during the year and pratique granted in all cases. No prohibited or restricted immigrants were reported by the Port Health Officer.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

Ninety-eight samples of milk taken during the year resulted in two successful prosecutions for added water. No fines were inflicted, but total costs amounted to £2 1s. 6d. Four samples of butter and six of brandy were taken. Six samples of whisky resulted in one successful prosecution for substitution of bottled by draught whisky: fine and costs amounted to £22 1s. 6d. A large quantity of foods was seized during the year as being unfit for human consumption. In this were included 57½ dozen eggs, 64 tins of fish, 25 boxes dried peaches, 24 cases prunes, 79 bags of figs, 21 cases of pears, 24 cases of apricots, and 4 sacks of cauliflowers.

INSPECTIONS OF FOOD-PREMISES, ETC.

A number of eating-houses, butchers', bakers', and fish shops were inspected through the year. The standard of cleanliness appears to be improving, except in New Plymouth, where it was again necessary to call the attention of the Borough Council to the need for more adequate supervision of these premises.

The premises in which a number of offensive trades in the district were being conducted were found to be in need of rebuilding or remodelling, and notices to that effect were served on the individuals concerned.

Action taken against six butchers or their employees for allowing meat to be carried without a cover, or conveying meat without a cover, resulted in fines amounting to £10 19s.

PLUMBERS REGISTRATION ACT.

Towards the end of the year convictions were obtained against three unregistered plumbers and two of their employers in New Plymouth for breaches of the Act, but no fines or costs were imposed. The Magistrate took the view that, as these were the first cases of the kind in New Plymouth, the cases were to be regarded in the light of a warning that unqualified men must not undertake plumbing-work. In Waitara a similar prosecution resulted in fines and costs amounting to £3 8s.

CAMPING-GROUNDS AND SEASIDE RESORTS.

During the year the Inspectors of Health were instructed to make a careful inspection and report upon all motor camping-grounds and seaside resorts. In addition, personal visits of inspection were paid to the majority of these resorts. As a result of these visits the general standard of hygiene and sanitation was in most instances considerably improved. Advice was also given to certain bodies *re* the necessary buildings for a camping-site. Opunake and Ngamotu beaches experienced considerable trouble from inadequate sanitary systems, and on both beaches matters will require to be improved in order to cope with the very large number of summer visitors.

INSPECTORS' DISTRICTS.

On the 1st May Inspector Coleman was transferred to Whangarei, while Inspector Gooding took over the remains of his district. On the 1st April Sanitary Inspector Hunt took charge of Hawera Borough. From the 1st October Stratford County was taken over by Inspector Sayers, who was already inspector for Stratford Borough. This entailed a further division of the district between Inspectors Swindells and Gooding.

New Plymouth is still urgently in need of an augmented inspectorial staff for sanitary work, &c. I understand that plans are in train for the appointment of a combined building and plumbing inspector, who will act under the Borough Engineer's direction.

Senior Inspector Gardiner paid several visits to the district, and his experience and advice proved most valuable.

GENERAL.

The prolonged drought experienced in the summer of 1927-28 had no obvious effect on the health of the district, though several complaints of nuisances created by the effluents from dairy factories had to be investigated. These were practically all caused by the failure of the water in the creeks and rivers concerned.

The appointment of a Nurse Inspector to the district has already considerably diminished the clerical and inspectorial duties which had previously fallen to the lot of the Medical Officer of Health.