

How much the sections quoted are wanting in intrinsic worth is again shown by the inability to prevent the adoption of a scheme to eke out the scanty water-supply for street-watering by the use of sea-water. Every one admits that the inner-harbour waters are polluted to an unenviable extent, yet it is proposed to pump up this dilute sewage, and diligently spread it on the streets by water-carts in time of drought. A recommendation under this section, that instead of pumping up the sea-water from a point near the Auckland Dock, the influent pipe should be taken to the end of one of the wharves, and that pumping should be done at high tide, only drew the reply that "... after giving the matter careful consideration, the Council has referred the whole question of obtaining salt water for street-watering and baths to the incoming Council, with a strong recommendation that the report of the City and Waterworks Engineers thereon be adopted. In the meantime, however, the water required will be taken from the dock entrance." It is to be sincerely hoped that no such scheme will be adopted, unless, if at all, under the conditions above specified.

The Waitakerei water scheme is now well under way. Your report in 1901 says, in regard to the Western Springs: "In respect to the water supplied, she (Auckland) is unquestionably far behind all other large centres. It is neither adequate in quantity nor is the quality above suspicion," and again, "An absolutely new source of supply must at once be obtained to insure that the people of Auckland may be provided with an ample supply of pure and wholesome water."

The contemplation of what becomes of all the disintegrated and liquid sewage which falls upon the surface of the County of Eden and does not reach the harbours loses some of its uncanniness as the eventful day approaches when the Western Springs water, of so doubtful an origin, shall be no longer available for drinking purposes or for the dilution of milk.

Analyses of city water in connection with the manufacture of mineral waters make it evident that the Nihotupu supply cannot well be continued unless sufficient filtration is provided.

No longer can Auckland be reproached for the present production of plumbing samples which, for example, twenty years ago were made impossible under the Christchurch Drainage Board. Though at first opposed by many, both plumbers and public, through lack of being educated to a modern standard, the sanitary by-laws now in force are being well received. Sound plumbing and drain-laying is now noticeable on all sides. The influence of the classes at the Technical School is making itself felt towards this desirable and none too early result.

The Council for the year have had a slight passage of arms with Mr. Gilruth, Chief Veterinarian, as to with whom lies the fault of the failure to provide proper abattoirs. It suffices to say that the matter stands at the end of the year much in the same position as at the beginning. There is no doubt that many of the butchers would prefer to continue at the present abattoirs, but from the food-supply standpoint, the statistics of condemned animals at the present city abattoirs, as far as I can learn, allow only of either of two conclusions—(1) that the animals slaughtered there are freer from disease than any others in the whole of New Zealand, aye, even in the whole world; (2) that carcasses of diseased animals are permitted to pass on for human consumption, which under other and proper conditions of inspection would be numbered amongst the condemned.

Mr. R. L. Mestayer, M.Inst.C.E., has laid before the Council a comprehensive scheme of sewerage for the city. At the end of the year the Council are "obtaining a further report from Mr. C. Midgley Taylor, of London, who has been recommended by the Agent-General for New Zealand, on the advice of his consulting engineer, as a high authority on the subject of drainage."

#### AUCKLAND SUBURBS.

The greater Auckland movement would seem to be as far from realisation as ever, and that is very far. Last year amongst suburban bodies an effort was made to combine to secure a Sewerage Bill for the settlement of the Arch Hill Gully open sewer. That project was "ignominiously wrecked." This year it was my scheme for a sanitariously conducted nightsoil service: success was not mine. Next year the annual combination event would seem to be likely to take the form of placing a septic tank somewhere near the above-mentioned gully, and the partners to the scheme may be the Arch Hill, Eden Terrace, and Mount Albert Road Boards.

To return to this year's abortive effort. By means of their new by-laws to regulate the conduct of the nightsoil services, the Point Chevalier Road Board have at last succeeded in preventing their district being made a dumping-ground for the convenience of the various suburban bodies. The local bodies had had ample warning from this Department, but the shutting of the Point Chevalier outlet found them still unprepared. For a time the services were in abeyance. It was proposed by the Department that a uniform sealed-pan service should be adopted, with conveyance by rail to the disposal ground. With the exception of that of the Grey Lynn Council, no live effort was made to render the conference effectual. Each local body seemed interested rather in ascertaining how to temporarily slip out of a pressing difficulty than in seriously entering into amicable combination to permanently safeguard the public health of their own and their neighbours' ratepayers. The nightsoil services for the suburbs are therefore as bad, in some cases worse, than last year, and the suburban bodies, generally speaking, will not move. If the glorified phoenix of a Greater Auckland is to arise from the ashes of inept suburban bodies, it is at least certain no one of these bodies will start the conflagration to provide the rejuvenating ashes.

#### GREY LYNN BOROUGH.

It is remarkable that in this borough, the most progressive of suburban districts, the desire to further the Greater Auckland scheme would seem strongest.

The Council were forced to make provision for the disposal of nightsoil within the borough precincts. The work has been done so satisfactorily that no exemption can be taken to the procedure as a temporary measure. It is now proposed to instal a septic tank at the termination of the present borough sewer