

though they all fell just short of it, the check sample coming to 4.91 per cent. Again, calculating by the amount of piperin, of which the average should be 5.60, one was at 0.9 under, and 9 over the standard. The two worst, which only came to 4.1 and 4.2 respectively, are noted by Professor Black as containing from 12 to 15 per cent. of starchy matters. Lastly, taking the percentage of resin as the standard, 2.05 per cent., only one reached the standard, and the others were under it, ranging from 1.44 and 1.51 per cent., in the two noted as containing from 12 to 15 per cent. of starchy matter to just under the mark. And the three check peppers were all slightly under par. On taking an opinion with a view to prosecution, the Crown Solicitor thought that, as the peppers were in some part of the packages marked "blended," the case would fail, so no further action was taken in the matter.

PROSECUTIONS UNDERTAKEN, AND RESULTS.

Selling bread deficient in weight : At the instance of the Inspector of Weights and Measures, seven prosecutions for selling light bread were undertaken, with the result that a conviction was obtained in every case, and a small fine was inflicted, with expenses.

By the Inspector under the Dairy Industry Act.—Two persons were prosecuted for carrying pigs' feed in carts used also for the carriage of milk : one was fined 5s., and one £1 and costs. One was prosecuted for leaving his milk-cans too long without cleaning them : this case was dismissed by the Magistrate. In the former a conviction was obtained, and a fine, with all expenses, was incurred. In the latter the case was not sustained.

By the Dunedin local authority prosecutions were undertaken.—For keeping dirty premises : fined 10s. and costs. For polluting Ross's Creek (city water-supply) : fined £2 and costs.

MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATIONS.

Twenty-two specimens were sent me for examination microscopically during the year. Among these, 18 were sputa from the lungs, of which 11 were found to be decidedly tuberculous, 1 doubtful, being small and dried into paper, 5 judged to be bronchitis, and 1 of pneumonia. Two swabs from the throat were examined, both containing *B. diphtheria*. Serum from a blister, when examined, contained cocci and *debris*, and was diagnosed as probably erysipelas. A chop, from a butcher, contained an enlarged gland, suppurating. This was the result of a wound from a retained thorn, and it contained no tubercle bacilli.

I had also submitted to me a sample of mixed animal and vegetable matters in a fermenting condition, which was being carried in a cart used to bring milk into town, and which had been taken by the Inspector of Dairies from the cart on its way home. This formed the basis of a prosecution in which I appeared to give evidence as to the character of the stuff.

The above report, though it contains no record of any sensational occurrence, such as a fight with plague or small-pox, shows that our public is more and more appreciating our Department and coming with greater frequency as time goes on, for our assistance, while it also demonstrates that local authorities are waking up to the duties which our public-health laws assign to them.

I must not omit to mention that my staff are working diligently and well with me, and that the other Departments of the colony which have come in contact with us are co-operating harmoniously in the duties which we have in common.

I have, &c.,
FRANK OGSTON,
District Health Officer for the Otago-Southland District.

WESTLAND DISTRICT.

The Chief Health Officer, Wellington.

Greymouth, 14th June, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report for the year ending the 31st March, 1905.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There has been remarkable freedom from infectious diseases during the year, especially in comparison with the number of cases reported for the preceding twelve months.

A few isolated cases of diphtheria have been reported, but the disease was generally of a mild type.

Scarlet fever was practically non-existent.

Tetanus.—A girl, thirteen years of age, was admitted to the Greymouth Hospital on the 19th January suffering from this disease. Ten days before admission she had wounded her foot while playing in the vicinity of the slaughterhouses, and she died on the 22nd.

Four ships from Clarence River, laden with timber, were boarded, and although nothing suspicious of plague could be detected, fumigation and other precautions were carried out. I wish to express my thanks to the harbour officials for their ready assistance.

WATER AND DRAINAGE.

These matters remain in much the same state as last year. Hokitika has not yet entered upon its proposed scheme, though the plans were approved some months ago. It is to be hoped that the Council will soon be in a position to make a start. The Greymouth water-supply was put to a severe test towards the end of summer when during a long period of hot weather (about ten weeks) the service met the greatly increased demand, and the water remained perfectly wholesome.