

WELLINGTON, HAWKE'S BAY, AND NELSON-MARLBOROUGH HEALTH DISTRICTS.—REPORT BY THE DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICER (DR. CHESSON).

I have the honour to submit my annual report for the above districts for the year ending 31st December, 1913.

The outbreak of smallpox in the Auckland Health District rendered it necessary to put section 18 of the Public Health Act into operation, conferring special powers on the District Health Officer for the more effectual checking or preventing the spread of this dangerous infectious disease in the Wellington and Hawke's Bay portions of the district. Several orders were issued by me under this section, in consequence of the existence of actual or suspected cases of this disease, for the quarantining of premises or places, and the restriction of travelling or congregation of persons in places where such would be likely to cause a spread of infection. It speaks well for the tact of the Inspectors entrusted with the carrying-out of these orders, and for the law-abiding character of the community as a whole, and especially of the Maori race, who were particularly affected thereby, that though always effectively enforced, in no case was it necessary to take legal proceedings.

I would also desire to draw attention to the willing and able assistance rendered by the officers of the Police Force in every instance when asked to co-operate, and for assistance rendered in many cases on their own initiative. A vaccination crusade was vigorously pursued, special attention being devoted to the vaccination of Maoris as being the more susceptible to the disease, and in whom it would naturally be expected that the disease might manifest itself. Special Medical Officers were employed for this work, who travelled through the various Maori settlements vaccinating everybody and looking for any cases of a suspicious nature. In some of the larger towns public vaccination stations were established in order to give all persons an opportunity of availing themselves of the protection from the disease to be derived from this simple operation.

Particulars of the four cases which occurred in the district will be found under the heading of "Dangerous Infectious Diseases" in the appendix.

Owing to the quarantine restrictions imposed by the Australian authorities all passengers proceeding to that Commonwealth had to be provided with a certificate of successful vaccination endorsed by the District Health Officer, and this work practically monopolized all my time for at least two days in each week prior to the despatch of the regular steamers, and, in fact, there was a fairly continuous stream of prospective passengers to and from the office during the period that these restrictions were in force. Many persons were vaccinated in the office by members of the staff.

This work, together with the necessity for keeping in touch with and directing operations in all parts of the districts during the prevalence of the epidemic in the north, kept me practically confined to headquarters from July to the latter part of October, and attention to routine work was considerably interfered with. The concentration of all available officers in the affected parts of the Auckland District left me somewhat shorthanded, Inspector Middleton having been lent to the Auckland Office for smallpox duty.

No cases of smallpox occurred in the Nelson-Marlborough District, and only one suspect—which soon proved negative—came under notice.

During the latter part of the year, owing to a petition from Mr. Greville, a parliamentary Committee investigated the conditions connected with the milk-supply of the City of Wellington, before which I was summoned to give evidence. The report of this Committee favoured the establishment of a municipal depot, a scheme which this Department has advocated for many years. It is to be hoped that this will now eventuate.

During the year the Nelson Hospital Board agreed to the appointment of an Inspector for its district, and Inspector Coltman, recently employed in the service of the Public Works Department as a plumber, and the holder of the certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute, was appointed to the position, and much useful and long-needed work has already been carried out by this officer in that district.

Inspector Miller retired from the service of the Wairarapa Hospital Board for the southern portion of its district, and Inspector Keay was then appointed as assistant to Inspector Cairns, who was then made Chief Inspector for the entire Wairarapa.

The camp established in Buckle Street in November for the accommodation of the special constables and their horses during the strike was inspected daily by Inspector Middleton, and advice on sanitary matters offered to the responsible authorities.

Attached hereto are appendices, being tables and data on the following matters relating to this district: Notifiable infectious diseases, dangerous infectious diseases, provision for infectious diseases, sanitary condition, sanitary condition of Maoris, sanitary inspections, offensive trades, insanitary buildings, by-laws, legal proceedings, quarantine, disinfection of oversea goods, Immigration Restriction Act, medical examinations, Midwives Act, and Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

HERBERT CHESSON, M.R.C.S (Eng.), L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Lond.).

CANTERBURY, WESTLAND, AND OTAGO HEALTH DISTRICTS.—REPORT BY THE DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICER (DR. FINCH).

I have the honour to submit the following report for this district for the year ending 31st December, 1913.

During the first four months of the year I was mainly occupied with the inspection of hospitals in the district, and for the last four months I was transferred to Auckland to take charge of the Auckland District owing to the smallpox epidemic and Dr. Makgill's absence on leave.

Apart from routine work the most important matters dealt with were the inspection of hotels and reports to the Licensing Committees; the administration of the new regulations under the