

## NELSON.

## No. 5.

The CHAIRMAN, Central Board of Health, Nelson, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.  
 SIR,— Office of Central Board of Health, Nelson, 22nd May, 1876.

I have the honor to report that the general health in all parts of this province during the past year has, on the whole, been satisfactory, and that nothing has occurred to call for any special action on the part of this Board.

I have, &c.,  
 OSWALD CURTIS,  
 Chairman.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

## CANTERBURY.

## No. 6.

The CHAIRMAN, Central Board of Health, Canterbury, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,— Superintendent's Office,  
 Christchurch, Canterbury, N.Z., 8th June, 1876.

In reference to your request that I would furnish you with a report upon the working of the Public Health Act in this province, I have the honor to inform you that, at a recent meeting of the Board, the following resolution was adopted by the Board:—

"The Board having heard read a letter from the Colonial Government declining to sanction the expense of printing and circulating 'Precautions against the Spread of Typhoid Fever,' is of opinion that the absence of funds to give effect to the Board's decisions, as well as the urgent want of definition of powers of the central and local authorities, render the Act less useful than it might be, and recommends that the Government be moved to introduce an amended Bill in the next Session."

I may state that since the commencement of the year 1875 the dealing with ships which have been placed in quarantine has been the principal work of the Board, and that in every case their instructions have been carefully and effectively carried out by the Health Officer in Port Lyttelton, and by the Superintendent of Quarantine, Mr. March. These instructions have related chiefly to the regulating of the time during which the ships and passengers were to be detained in quarantine; to the fumigating of the ships; to the careful washing and disinfecting of clothes; and to the separation and isolation of those who have been subjects of infection.

The ships so dealt with have been—

The "Rakaia," in the month of February, 1875;

The "Jessie Osborne," in the month of February, 1876;

The "Countess of Kintore," in the month of May last.

On the 21st December last, the Board was called together to consider reports which had been received of the existence of scarlet fever in the Christchurch and Heathcote districts. From the reports of the medical practitioners which were then forwarded to you, the Board came to the conclusion which the subsequent progress of the disease has proved to be mainly correct—that the fever was not of a sufficiently dangerous character to render any very stringent measures advisable. The following precautions were, however, adopted:—The intercolonial steamers were ordered to be inspected on arriving in the harbour, to ascertain whether they were free from disease; and the Central Boards of the neighbouring ports were requested to keep the Central Board of this province advised of any suspicious cases which might arise in their respective districts.

On 8th January, the following instructions for the guidance of medical officers of Local Boards were issued and published in the *Provincial Gazette*:—

"The medical officer appointed by any Local Board of Health under Section No. 14 of 'The Public Health Act, 1872,' in any district shall, whenever he shall be informed by the Chairman of the Local Board of the existence of any epidemic, infectious, or contagious disease, inspect and report to the Chairman of the Local Board as to the circumstances attending any such case, giving information as to the locality in which the disease has appeared, and its sanitary condition, and other facts that may come to his knowledge which may tend, or appear to tend, to the better or more full comprehension of the disease, together with such recommendations as he shall think fit to make as to the best measures to be adopted to prevent the spread of the disease."

Clause No. 17 of the Public Health Act, directing medical practitioners to give notice of infectious cases under their charge to the Local Board, and clause 18, compelling householders to give like notice of dangerous diseases within their houses, were also published in the *Provincial Gazette* and public newspapers for general information.

As previously stated, the Board was anxious that greater publicity should be given to a valuable paper suggesting precautions against the spread of typhoid fever, and directed that it should be printed and circulated, with a heading to the effect that persons receiving a copy should keep it in such place that it would be easily accessible. As, however, the Colonial Government declined to place any portion of the vote of the General Assembly at the disposal of the Board for this purpose, no further action has been taken in the matter.

With the exception of the spread of this mild type of scarlet fever, the Board has not been made aware of the existence of any infectious epidemic in the province, and believe that the attention to drainage, and other sanitary precautions consequent upon the constitution of a Drainage Board having charge of the main drains and sewers in Christchurch and the neighbouring district, will be attended with great benefit to the maintenance of the public health in this part of the province.

I have, &c.,  
 WM. ROLLESTON,  
 Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.