

have been no dealings in this district. In the one case the Council readily agreed to carry out schemes proposed by Dr. Mason on his visit there.

*Rodney, Otamatea, Whangarei, Bay of Islands, Hokianga, Mongonui, and Whangaroa Counties* do not call for comment. With the exception of Whangarei all are sparsely populated. In Bay of Islands a number of cases of typhoid have been reported, chiefly among Natives.

*Coromandel County* (population, 4,169).—The township is being supplied with water from a good source in the hills. The nightsoil is removed by contract. Formerly this district was much affected by enteric fever, but no case has been reported this year. There is need of a drainage system, and more supervision in the matter of nightsoil-removal.

*Thames County* (population, 5,043).—The mining population militates against the sanitary condition of this county, as they are too nomadic to take much heed of such questions as pure water-supply and the proper disposal of filth.

That part of the country adjoining the Thames Borough was in a very bad sanitary condition, being without any nightsoil service, though thickly populated, so that the streams entering the borough were polluted by the filth of these settlements, nightsoil, refuse, and drainage being thrown into them freely. These defects are being in a measure remedied.

*Ohinemuri County* (population, 5,000).—Here, again, the presence of a number of mining communities makes sanitary matters difficult. In one of them—Karangahake, a very crowded township—the conditions were serious, owing to the lack of nightsoil-removal and the pollution of the river-banks. On my representation the Council have agreed to institute a nightsoil service, which shall be compulsory for the householders in the congested parts. This will shortly be enforced.

Pollution of rivers: A serious question, occurring in many country districts, but especially in Ohinemuri County, is the pollution of the rivers and streams. Here the pollution is partly by sewage and refuse from the various townships on the banks of the Ohinemuri River, but chiefly from the water-overflow, from the stampers, &c., of gold-extracting batteries. There is so much of this that the water is always of a pea-soup consistency, smelling strongly of cyanide. It is quite unfit for human consumption or for cattle, and the settlers lower down suffer in consequence. I do think it would be possible to stop this state of pollution without interfering with the mining industry, but I have been endeavouring to get the local bodies to put a stop to the practise of using these watercourses as sewers for drainage, and as convenient tips for refuse, nightsoil, and such filth.

At Te Aroha, Hamilton, Cambridge, Huntly, and Waiuku I have called attention to the matter, and shall not let it rest at that. Were it possible to have Conservation Boards appointed much good would result. The need for reform in this matter is illustrated by a case I have in hand at present, where the purity of the Waikato River (where it is proposed to obtain the water-supply for Hamilton Borough) is threatened by the drainage from the District Hospital entering a tributary stream. The Hospital Board are taking the matter up, and have appointed an engineer to report on the best remedy.

Of the remaining counties, in three—*Taupo East, Taupo West, and Kawhia*—the Counties Act is not yet in force. In the latter two, however, population is increasing rapidly, especially along the railway, and a local sanitary authority will be shortly required. Opotiki, Tauranga, Whakatane, Piako, Waikato, Raglan, and Waipa Counties do not call for special comment. In the latter the one bit of work I called on the Council to do—the completion of the drain at Ngaruawahia—has been carried out satisfactorily. Many portions of these districts remain unvisited, as also does the extreme north; but I have found more than enough urgent work in the more populous districts to occupy the most of my time so far.

#### SPECIAL MEASURES TAKEN BY THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT IN AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

##### *Precautions against Bubonic Plague.*

(a.) *Quarantine Work.*—The adoption of the quarantine regulations has thrown a strain on the limited resources of the Department. A special temporary clerk was appointed to deal with passengers and assist the Port Health Officer in the issue of licenses. Twenty-three medical men were appointed examiners in the Auckland District. Passengers on fourteen vessels arriving in Auckland from Australia have been licensed and examined up to the tenth day after leaving Sydney. In all, 1,223 passengers landing in Auckland have been dealt with, and 2,904 examinations made, exclusive of those arriving from southern ports. Defaulters have as far as possible been hunted up by the police, but generally four or five in each boat managed to evade one or more of the required examinations. Prosecutions have been undertaken in two cases—one for not reporting, and the other for coming ashore without a license. The police have given great assistance in carrying out this work, one constable being especially appointed to visit the addresses of those not reporting and bring them up for examination. Many cases might have been prosecuted had the Department wished.

Cargo-vessels from infected ports have been fumigated also, and deposits collected from the agents in eleven cases in Auckland.

At Kaipara and Hokianga Port Health Officers have been appointed, and vessels from infected ports subjected to fumigation and the crews examined, and arrangements made for collecting of deposits to cover expenses to the Department.

All this has entailed a vast amount of correspondence.

(b.) *Precautions on Land.*—Since February last the local bodies in the populous area, and those near seaports have been approached from time to time personally, or by circular, with a view of establishing special measures against the spread of plague.

A campaign against rats has been carried on by most of these bodies, 3d. per head being offered. The city authorities have been destroying from four to five hundred rats per week, and the suburban bodies have also done something in this direction, as have one or two of the county boroughs.