

Four specimens of water were sent in, one of them from a tap connected with a well supplying Ross and Glendining's factory in Roslyn. The water showed, under a low power, numerous very minute crustacea of the lobster species, about the size of a cross-section of a large pin. The other three specimens were ordinary town water from various places. They were found to contain a good deal of clay, and plenty of the same minute crayfish and shell-fish like extremely small periwinkles. As I thought these might interest Professor Benham, and that he might be able to give me a reason for their appearance, I went to see him, but unfortunately he was away from home for a time.

We have made examinations of rats several times, but have observed none with any disease of any kind about them. One of the lots we examined was from one of the Union Steamship Company's steamers which had come from Melbourne, and was about to be docked for general repairs. The rat crusade has been vigorously prosecuted, both in this neighbourhood—some fifteen hundred to two thousand having fallen victims—and in Invercargill and the Bluff, where eight hundred to a thousand have been caught.

As the new law-courts are not yet ready for occupation, we have still to wait for our office. They are to be formally opened about the end of this month, so we may get entry to our office in the beginning of July. I shall be glad of this, as our work is hampered to some degree from want of room and shelves, &c., for papers and suchlike.

In concluding this summary, I have to express my satisfaction with Inspector Gunn. He has shown zeal, intelligence, and tact in the work he has had to perform. His work, too, has been of a high order, far surpassing that to be expected from the class of man which his small salary might be expected to attract to the position. Indeed, he has had to do, and has done, especially since the initiation of quarantine, work which should only be demanded from a first-class clerk. The quarantine regulations have given him so much work of a clerical nature, which the usual type of sanitary inspector would have been incapable of, that he deserves either to have his salary raised or to have a bonus for his extra duties. I should be glad if you could see your way to this.

Inspector Cameron appears to be full of zeal, but would be better with more supervision than I have been able to give him since quarantine has tied me so much to Dunedin. When this is over I shall perhaps ask to have him transferred for a time to this centre, where I can train him and have control of him; but till that is over he would be of little use to me, as he has not the aptitude for clerical office-work which at present forms so much of Mr. Gunn's duty.

I am inclined to think that, instead of an Inspector, the work would be better done by a doctor, who would work under me, with a small retaining salary, and should act as referee in sanitary matters for the local authorities, who have their own Inspectors. As the doctor could do private practice as well, the cost might be not more—it might even be less—than by the present system. But, of course, it is for you to judge of this matter.

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#### REPORT OF DR. POMARE, HEALTH OFFICER TO THE MAORIS, TO THE CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER.

I have the honour to submit the following general report of my work since my appointment as Health Officer to the Maoris. The detailed sanitary inspection of the villages which I have visited you have: it is the report of the general condition of the Maoris and their attitude towards the new Health Bill that I will now endeavour to present to you.

It was with a heart full of fear and trembling that my mission was undertaken. Fear and trembling, did I say? Yes, for the deeply rooted superstition of ages—the strongholds of tohungaism, the binding laws of tapu, the habits and practices of centuries, the mistrust of the pakeha—these were the Goliaths in the way of sanitary progress amongst the Maoris. For what did all this mean? It meant the dissolution of time-honoured customs, the tearing-down of ancestral habits and teachings, the alteration of Maori thought and idea; in fact, a complete change in their socialistic, communistic, and private life. It meant more; it meant the gentle persuasion, the authority not of force, but of clear convictions of the evils of the present system of half-European and half-Maori ways of living, and the benefits of a better, more sanitary, higher, and nobler way of life. Yes; it meant the introduction of things entirely new and foreign to the Maori mind and life. Who can change the customs of a nation in a day? No; not in a month, nor a year, nor a generation could they be changed, for progress is a plant growing. But the change must come; it will come; it has come. The Maori will yet bloom with the fairest of the Anglo-Saxon; and why not? And yet can we make men clean by Act of Parliament?

Who cares to have a stranger poking around his back door, condemning his favourite nooks, the ash-heaps resulting from his laziness, the hundred and one things which sanitarians know are detrimental to the public health? Who cares to have his habits disturbed, the pet meeting-house of his ancestors pulled down? And yet it was because of the utter hopelessness of his sanitary condition, the thorough knowledge that unless the flagrant infractions of Hygeia's laws were quickly stopped the Maori would surely disappear with the moa, that gave me courage and hope to fight the cobwebbed customs of the past and to introduce the new.

You can imagine my complete surprise and joy when upon my first lectures I found that the Maori mind was not altogether unteachable; in fact, he was anxious and willing to better his condition. In many places I was welcomed with song and dance and speech. We will listen to the words of some of the most noted chiefs:—

“My heart is made light at last. Our ancestors adopted Christianity, but their lands went from under their gaze: it was death. We signed the Treaty of Waitangi, but went to war: it was death. We sent members to Parliament: it was the same thing. We have been gradually disappearing with our lands. At last, at last, there is life!