

"Orient" with a case of small-pox on board, and the occurrence of measles and pneumonia of a very malignant type were the reasons for the holding of the inquiry. Some of the evidence tendered is most instructive, and worthy of consideration.

#### FOOD.

The purity or otherwise of the various foodstuffs, beer, spirits, &c., has been the subject of much consideration, and a committee is in process of being set up to inquire into the whole question. The various manufacturers all over the colony have welcomed the inquiry, and many have made most generous offers of help. It is intended to include in the scope of the investigation the setting-up of standards with respect to the preservatives in common use. Already a large number of analyses have been made, and important data has been collected, which will be submitted for the consideration of the committee.

#### SANITATION AMONG THE MAORIS.

The gospel of sanitation has been preached among our Native brothers, and in all parts of the colony there is evidence that the truths promulgated have been taken to heart. There is still much to be done, but a warm interest in the subject has been aroused, and already many chiefs have joined earnestly in the crusade. Drunkenness has in many parts entirely disappeared, and the reform mentioned in my last report has become more assured. The Maori is fast becoming one of the soberest of men. The recent appointment of several Native sanitary inspectors will, I am certain, be fraught with the greatest good. One most pleasing feature is that of their own free will an enormous number of Natives have been vaccinated. I have already had the honour of laying before you a report upon the sanitary and public-health requirements of our recently acquired possessions in the South Pacific.

#### ANTHRAX.

The occurrence of several cases of this disease in the Auckland Province emphasizes the necessity of the works now in hand for the sterilisation of imported bones being pushed on.

In this, as in all other measures taken for the general safety, the question of cost plays an important part. If, as is sometimes alleged, sterilisation after discharge means the addition of something like £1 per ton on what is an absolute necessity for those farming in certain parts of the colony, very careful consideration is undoubtedly required in order that this additional tax may not fall unfairly. That it should be admitted as a reason for a continuance of the present system I cannot acquiesce in. A few deaths and the loss of several hundred head of cattle would very soon balance the account, even putting the equation on the lowest basis.

The Stock Department is actively endeavouring to stamp out the disease wherever it appears, but the logical line of conduct is to endeavour, as the Government is now preparing to do, to prevent its further introduction into the colony.

Detailed reports as to the cases in man have been submitted to you. I am glad to say that so far only one death from the disease has occurred. The unfortunate man was one of three who skinned and ate portions of a bullock which they believed had killed itself. None of those who simply ate the flesh of the animal suffered. This, of course, is in consonance with what we know of the disease. Like leprosy, and in a measure plague, it is transmitted mainly by inoculation.

#### CONSUMPTION.

The public are gradually coming to view this preventable disease in its proper proportions. The unreasoning fear which assails a people when first a matter of this nature and moment is brought before them is giving way to an intelligent endeavour to grapple with the enemy. The fact that the disease which yearly claims over sixty thousand victims in England and Wales alone is spread almost entirely by means of the infected expectoration is now known by most, and, as a consequence, the strong efforts made to effect its destruction must soon tell. Householders are constantly asking for directions where a case occurs in their homes. Thorough disinfection is practised wherever a death from the disease takes place, and care in the tending of the sick is counselled in every instance. Despite repeated warnings there is still, I regret to say, a steady influx of persons suffering from the disease from other countries. As was pointed out before, this would not occasion any need for anxiety were such immigrants financially in a position to provide for the nursing, care, and expense entailed, but not a few of these unfortunates very soon after their arrival seek the help of our public hospitals and sanatoria. This is neither equitable nor is it necessary.