

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.

REPORTS OF DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICERS, ETC.

AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

Department of Public Health, Auckland, June, 1903.

Dr. Mason, Chief Health Officer, Wellington.

I HAVE the honour of presenting to you my second annual report on the sanitary work done by the Health Department in the Auckland District. I have included all the work done since the 1st April, 1902, and therefore certain items contained in my last report, which included April and May, 1902, necessarily are mentioned again.

It cannot be with any great feeling of satisfaction that one reviews the results of the work done in the past year. The labour has been great, and the outcome microscopic; indeed, in some directions there is a very distinct retrograde movement.

As regards the remedy for this state of affairs, I can only repeat what I said in my report last year—that until the subdivision of the province into so many small local authorities is discontinued no great improvement will take place.

There is an erroneous impression that the creation of a Health Department has relieved them of all such responsibility. It is evident that a local body to be of any service must have a permanent executive staff, able at all times to attend to the needs of the district, and large enough to deal adequately with the work; and it should command the service of experts in engineering and sanitary matters. Save in the city, I do not think any local authority in the province has a sanitary inspector with any special knowledge of his work whose time is wholly devoted to sanitary matters. Their resources are too limited for such a thing. All the present trouble over the Infectious Diseases Hospital would have been avoided if instead of fifty-two small bodies we had two or three large ones to deal with.

There is a movement at present in favour of creating a Greater Auckland—the abolition of the present ward system, and the merging city and suburbs into one corporate body. It has against it all the spirit of parochialism. Popular opinion is at present on the whole in its favour. But whether there is a sufficiently strong element making for reform to carry the matter through remains to be seen. There are, of course, a number of enlightened persons who favour proper sanitation and better civic government, but they do not seem to have as much vigour and influence as the magnitude of the work requires. The Press certainly support measures for sanitary improvement when the question happens to come before the public, but I venture to think that neither paper takes sufficient advantage of the opportunity they alone possess for keeping these questions prominent. A Greater Auckland is but one step towards placing local government on a sound footing.