

As before, Mr. Symons has compiled the statistical figures in this report; I have to express my sincere thanks for these and for the careful production of the Charts A and B made by him upon my suggesting the statistical value of a mean-line chart.

Our Department is in its most effective *role* an educational body. Certainly in the Auckland Province, before its advent, little or no attempt had been made to inculcate even the simplest rudiments of sanitation. The "infant-school stage"—if I may term it, has now been passed; but we recognise that there are many "standards" yet ahead of the Auckland people before they can claim to be well educated in the worship of the goddess Hygeia. To a large proportion of the community the preservation of human life by the prevention of disease is still a matter of little consequence. That it "pays" is not clear to them. An Irish ditty has it,—

"Fourteen children, Pat," says she,
 "Heaven to me has sint."
 "But children are not pigs," says he:
 "They do not pay the rint."

Thanks to the skill and able work of my colleague and predecessor, Dr. Makgill, the field for public-health activity in the Auckland Health District has been well cleared, it now but remains for me to plough along the lines he has so carefully marked out.

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HAWKE'S BAY DISTRICT.

SIR,— Department of Public Health, District Office, Napier, 1st April, 1905.
 I have the honour to lay before you the fourth annual report of the Hawke's Bay Health District.

I am pleased to be able to report an advance in sanitation in the whole district, especially in the more important centres. The number of deaths from all causes in the district is rather in excess of last year, but less than when I framed my report for 1903, and the district has an augmented population. I do not propose to give the vital statistics in this report, as the increase of population, which I am unable to accurately determine, would render the calculations fallacious. The notification of infectious diseases shows a marked diminution since last year, and the deaths from these diseases have been fewer, though tuberculosis is somewhat higher, and the deaths from cancer have decreased. The notifications of typhoid are rather more than half—forty-three this year as against fifty-seven last—and the deaths are exactly half.

I am pleased to report that many of the local bodies in the smaller centres are waking up to their responsibilities, and are more ready to give effect to the requirements of the Department than was the case in former years. I repeat what I stated in my former report: "The numerous small local bodies that exist, from the confusion that they create in the mind of the District Health Officer, tend rather to clog than to aid him in his efforts to conserve the public health"; and I reiterate that "It would tend to efficiency and smoother working of the Act if in the country and outside the boroughs and Town Boards the County Councils were the only local bodies that the District Health Officer had to approach."

The diseases notified in the principal centres during the year are:—

Scarlatina.—Woodville, 6; Dannevirke, 8; Gisborne, 12; Napier, 1; other districts, 11: total, 38.

Diphtheria.—Woodville, 4; Hastings, 19; Gisborne, 9; Dannevirke, 2; Napier, 7; other districts, 3: total, 44.

Measles.—Hastings, 1; Napier, 2; Woodville, 2; other districts, 1: total, 6.

Blood-poisoning and Erysipelas.—Gisborne, 3; other districts, 3: total, 6.

Typhoid Fever.—Hastings, 2; Gisborne, 12; Dannevirke, 5; Napier, 6; Woodville, 2; other districts, 16: total, 43.

Tuberculosis.—Gisborne, 4; Woodville, 1; Dannevirke, 2; Napier, 5; Hastings, 2; other districts (of which 49 are accounted for by Wairoa, chiefly amongst the Maoris), 53: total, 67.

The deaths registered during the year are:—

The whole of the District.—Total from all causes, 432, against 414 in 1904, and 452 in 1903: tuberculosis, 56; cancer, 26; septicæmia and erysipelas, 3; typhoid, 2; other zymotic diseases, nil.

Napier.—Total from all causes, 140—one more than last year. Tuberculosis, 20; cancer, 14; septicæmia, typhoid, and other zymotic diseases, nil.

Hastings.—Total from all causes, 61, as against 65 in 1904; tuberculosis, 8; cancer, 3.

Dannevirke.—Total from all causes 31, as against 38 last year, and the population has increased: cancer, 1; tuberculosis, 1; septicæmia and erysipelas, 1.

Woodville.—Total from all causes, 15, as against 23 in 1904; the population remaining about stationary: cancer, 2.

Gisborne.—From all causes 115, as against 91 in 1904, but the population has increased: cancer, 6; tuberculosis, 22; septicæmia and erysipelas, 2; typhoid (the only deaths in the district from this cause), 2.

During the past year the district has been fairly free from zymotic disease, only 38 cases of scarlatina have been reported in the whole district, and most of these cases must have been mild, as is evidenced by the fact that there have been no deaths. The prevalence of scarlatina depends rather on segregation than absence of sanitation; but it is a fact that as a rule this complaint is more virulent in insaniary localities, and the absence of mortality from this complaint in the district is evidence of healthy surroundings. After the widespread epidemic two years ago, we are not likely to have many cases