

have been avoided. While at the General Conference of Village Councils at Rotorua, His Excellency Lord Plunket referred to the matter of training girls as nurses and afterwards employing them in different districts, as they are doing in Ireland. The suggestion was met with general approval by the Natives and a motion was passed to ask the Government to move in the matter of getting girls trained as nurses. Probably a change in existing statutes by giving the Government more control would be the first step in this direction, the next step would be to maintain the girls while they were being trained.

Tohungaism, I am sorry to say, is still rife, and not until the compulsory registration of deaths is required by law will this multi-headed Hydra be brought to bay.

Infant mortality is still as great as ever, and will continue to be till the suggestion of having good Samaritans in the form of hygienic lady missionaries is carried out and more instruction given to mothers on infant-management.

I am sorry to say that owing to numerous duties my time has been so occupied that I have been delayed in preparing pamphlets on infant feeding and management; but I am pleased to say that I have now completed several extracts from my lectures on infant-management for publication. It is hoped they will soon be in print and widely circulated.

I regret to say that ten outbreaks of typhoid occurred during the year in different localities throughout the colony, namely, at Waikawa and Croixelles in the South Island, Meremere, Patea, Kawhia, Waikato Heads, Maungatautari, Opotiki, Omarumutu, and Te Kaha in the North. In nearly all these cases the outbreaks were due to faults in the water-supplies, the supplies being more or less polluted. In some instances it was the household filth—in one a pig-sty, while in two of the cases it was due to direct contact. The majority of the affected were children of school age, and I want, Sir, to publicly thank the school-teachers, especially Mr. Cotton of Omarumutu and Mr. Hope of Te Kaha for the prompt assistance they rendered and the kindly interest they took in the welfare of their little patients. I am convinced that the thorough disinfection of houses, the burning of excreta, the instructions given to the Natives during these outbreaks, were the means of stopping a rich harvest in deaths. I am, therefore, thoroughly convinced that if we had a staff of Native nurses to draw upon in times of need a great many lives would be annually saved, and I hope the matter of training Native girls as nurses will be seriously considered by the Government and a start made in getting them trained.

Though educational matters are outside our jurisdiction, yet, knowing that the future of the race is bound by the future of the young Maori of to-day, I cannot help resuggesting that our youths be given every opportunity of pursuing something beneficial to themselves after they are educated, and that a room be left open for them at the Agricultural College, that a better system of finding them work be inaugurated, commercial and technical training be thoroughly carried out, and all Native-school masters be put on the same basis as the public-school teachers in the colony—that is, they should be compelled to show certificates and grades and be paid accordingly.

There is one matter which I would like to draw your attention to which I think has an all important bearing on the fertility of the race, and that is Maori marriages. The matrimonial arrangements of the Maori are not only deplorable but productive of much harm. Girls entering their teens are made to wed beardless youths, with the result that the first two or three children die prematurely and those who live are helpless weaklings, prone to consumption and other weaknesses. I would ask you, Sir, to bring this matter under the notice of the Minister so that an Act can be made compelling Natives to observe an age of consent the same as the European, and I would suggest that the age of consent be eighteen years.

I am glad to state that drunkenness is on the decrease. A number of prohibition orders have been taken out against some of the chronic inebriates, and several districts have been brought under the last Act preventing Maoris from obtaining liquor in bulk. It would be well if the Waikato and Poverty Bay districts were also included.

The lepers still enjoy rides on the railroad-carriages, thanks to the objection of some Auckland agitators who did not care to have them isolated safely on an island in the Auckland harbour, twelve miles from the city. Until an island is secured for them it is impossible to isolate these cases securely.

In conclusion, I may state that the work needs more workers. Death still reaps a great harvest from the sons and daughters of Tu. Over 420 have been examined and prescribed for by us, statistics of which I hope to present in my next annual report. Still forced into Micawberism, I exclaim, "Truly the harvest is great, but the labourers are few."

MAUI POMARE,

Health Officer to the Maoris.

Dr. M. Pomare,

Masterton, 7th March, 1905

FRIEND, salutations to thee in the works. I herewith send thee my report.

|  |    |    |    |    |     |
|--|----|----|----|----|-----|
| The number of pas I have visited is        | .. | .. | .. | .. | 45  |
| The number of houses occupied is           | .. | .. | .. | .. | 225 |
| The number of houses to be destroyed       | .. | .. | .. | .. | 9   |
| The number of houses to be renewed         | .. | .. | .. | .. | 21  |
| The number of houses to be painted         | .. | .. | .. | .. | 43  |
| The number of houses lacking water-closets | .. | .. | .. | .. | 75  |
| The number of houses I have passed         | .. | .. | .. | .. | 77  |
| The number of water-closets built          | .. | .. | .. | .. | 15  |

February has seen five out of the nine houses destroyed. Some of the houses are being painted, and, in my opinion, my district is commencing to work. Kohunui, Taueru, and Ohanga are in need of water-supplies.

8—H. 31.