

The Maori having been an active race, and having always been kept in a state of excitement by wars and the rumour of wars, can now only find vent for his feelings on the racecourse, gambling, and billiard-playing, with an occasional bout in the Land Court. If we could find an employment for him that would satisfy this craving it would benefit him to a great extent. Perhaps if he was employed in the permanent army of the colony it would satisfy his craving for excitement, and it would also keep him a great deal out of doors, thus placing him somewhat nearer the same condition as he was in when we found him.

The suggestion contained in our annual report for 1904, that a Home should be established for old and indigent Natives, will come into the general scheme outlined by the Native Department. It is proposed to use the pensions of the old-age pensioners to maintain them at the Homes. It is also suggested that a nursing-home be connected with these establishments. I think it will be satisfactory in every way to have the old people looked after properly instead of having their pensions squandered by their thoughtless *mokopunas*.

TOHUNGAISM.

The Maori, being a Polynesian, is a great fatalist. "What the gods have decreed must be." Fatalism hangs over the race like a funeral pall. In the far North a little while ago a father told his son that he (the son) was bewitched. The boy went to bed and within a week he was dead—fatalism. At this time I visited the village and was told that the father was ill. All unsuspecting of what had taken place, I examined the old man and found him perfectly healthy. I found also that he had refused all food for some days, consequently he was weak. After examining him and finding that there was nothing the matter, it suddenly dawned upon me that perhaps the old man thought he was bewitched, consequently I had a bowl of chicken-broth prepared, and then I went to him and said, "Your ailment has been revealed unto me. Take this bowl of broth. The ceremony has been performed. Eat and live, thanking the gods for their gifts." He ate, and, after polishing off the broth, said that he could feel the light of life circling through his veins. It is needless to say that man is still living. Had he been a European, an Elijah Dowie or a Christian Scientist would have cured him. It is the fatalistic idea that drives the Maori to his *tohunga*, for all diseases which cannot be accounted for are considered *mate maoris*, and no one can cure a *mate maori* except a *tohunga*. It is pleasing to report that some Councils have blankly refused to grant *tohunga*'s licenses, and yet in one district nearly all the members of the Council are followers of a *tohunga*. It is hard to know what to do without interfering with the liberty of the subject too much. Of course, as long as we allow crystal-gazing, fortune-telling, spiritual mediums, and a host of other quackeries to thrive in our midst, we cannot very well see clearly to take out the mote in our brother's eye; but nevertheless we cannot help recognising the greatness of the evil of *tohungaism*, and that it must be grappled with at once. The only solution of the problem that I can see, and that has been pointed out years ago both by you and myself, is the compulsory registration of every death. The fear of gaol and a few *post-mortems* will bring them into line quicker than anything I know.

TUBERCULOSIS.

While there would seem to be some justification for the statement that tuberculosis was known among the Maoris before the advent of Europeans, there is no doubt the introduction of European clothing, altered diet, and customs accelerated the trouble. Then, again, the ancient Maori lived on mountains, which in itself was a cure; further, his habit of living out of doors made him hardy and able to withstand the inroads of this disease. Now, however, he has left the higher altitudes and lives in overcrowded, badly ventilated, squalid whares, reeking with smoke and disease.

Smoking has a tendency to spread this malady, not only in causing frequent expectoration, but it has also become a common thing for Maoris to borrow each other's pipes, thus conveying germs.

We have encouraged the use of spittoons in meeting-houses, and discouraged expectorating under the mats. The meeting-houses are frequently disinfected.

Isolation has not been attempted, but a thorough knowledge of the spread of this malady and its evils has been diffused throughout the islands; but isolation must be attempted before long.

From the returns of medical officers to the Maoris I have found that fully 22 per cent. of diseases the Maori suffers from are pulmonic; thus you will see that practically one out of every five of the sick Natives is suffering from pulmonary affections alone.

A crusade against this mighty foe must be instituted. Lectures illustrated with lantern-slides must be given, and all cases encouraged to go to the sanatorium.

During the past year we have examined and prescribed for 845 cases, and operated on 57.

Attached you will find reports from some of the Sanitary Inspectors, which will give you a fair idea of what is being done, also a statement from Dr. Buck, whose appointment has filled a long-desired want. He has done valuable service along the west coast, and his report echoes our reports of previous years. You will also find attached my report on the Cook Islands.

MAUI POMARE,
Health Officer to the Maoris.

Department of Public Health, Wellington, 19th July, 1906.

Dr. J. M. Mason, Chief Health Officer, Wellington.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report on the Cook Islands for your consideration.

Upon reaching Rarotonga in February last, I found that I had to wait a week for the "Countess of Ranfurly," but I found that during the week I had more than enough to do in examining and prescribing for cases, together with Dr. Gately, so that I postponed the sanitary inspection of the island until I returned from the northern islands of the Group.