

Under the heading "*Miasmatic diseases*" whooping-cough accounts for over one-third of the total, while the number of cases of measles also appears high, but we have no statistics as to the incidence of these diseases in the white population with which to make a comparison.

Diphtheria, strangely enough, seems practically unknown, but as each year some 50 cases are shown under such heads as "tonsillitis," "pharyngitis," and "sore throat," it is possible that this includes a good many cases of diphtheria.

Scarlet fever appears to be also a rare disease amongst the Maoris, the case incidence of 0.085 per 1,000 of population contrasting markedly with the figures for the general population of the Dominion, among whom during the last five years the case incidence has been roughly 1.5 per 1,000 of population per annum.

Typhoid fever, on the other hand, would appear to be more prevalent among the Native population, the yearly case incidence being 0.536 per 1,000 for Maoris, and about 0.486 for the whole population on an average during the last five years.

Constitutional Diseases.—Among the diseases so classed phthisis, as one might expect, takes leading place, while "other tubercular diseases" is also high. Together these give a yearly case incidence per 1,000 of 2.46. The notification of tubercular conditions among the general population is so incomplete as to render the figures unreliable, therefore the average of 0.7 per 1,000 during the past two years cannot be taken as a fair contrast to the Maori returns. At a rough estimate, the whole population, including Maoris, would show a proportion of a little over 2 per 1,000 of tubercular cases, somewhat under the incidence among Natives alone. A large number of cases of chronic suppuration of glands appear in Class VIII. Probably the majority should be placed under the heading of "Tubercular complaints."

Cancer, on the other hand, appears to be a rare disease among Maoris, as, indeed, it is among all primitive peoples. Even if we regard the 32 cases recorded during the six years as deaths, we have a death-rate from this disease of only 0.097 per 1,000 living, as contrasted with the rate of 0.69 per 1,000 which the Registrar-General's returns show to have been the proportion among the white population of the Dominion during the past five years. Thirty-seven cases of tumour are recorded in the six years. If we regard these as non-malignant, the proportion is also very low for such growths.

Local Diseases.—In this group we find that diseases of the respiratory system, more especially bronchitic troubles, account for nearly one-quarter of the total cases of sickness. It would be interesting could we learn whether this were the case in bygone days. It is more probable that respiratory weakness is an outcome of the partial adoption of civilised habits by the Natives, who are losing their former hardihood with the relinquishing of the ancestral open-air life and activity. Males suffer considerably more than females from respiratory troubles.

Diseases of the digestive system are common, especially those of an acute inflammatory type. If to those so recorded we add the cases classed under the term "diarrhoea," we get an incidence of 5.6 per 1,000, next, therefore, in frequency to bronchitic troubles. The peculiarities of Maori diet are doubtless the cause of these digestive disturbances.

Integumentary troubles are common, as might be expected. Dr. Pomare's table shows that 7 per cent. of the total are so classed, but as scabies and ringworm are placed under "parasitic" diseases, and form about 80 per cent. of this group, it would seem that skin-disease should really be represented as comprising about 9 per cent. of the whole.

GENERAL SICKNESS RATE.

During the eight years 1901 to 1909 there were 27,408 cases of sickness among Maoris which came to the notice of the medical men. This gives an annual rate of about 6.2 per cent. of sick, or 1 in 16, if we assume the Native population to be 55,000. The actual rate is probably much higher, as many Natives never see the doctor when ailing. The calculated proportion of "illness such as would require medical relief" in England and Wales in 1897 was also about 1 in 16. When we consider that the Maori proportion is probably a good deal higher than that of a population largely composed of persons living in the crowded insanitary conditions found in the large towns at Home, it is evident that there must be a lack of resistance to disease in the constitution of the Natives, living as they do in satisfactory climatic conditions.

The only returns showing ratio of illness relating to New Zealand which are available are those of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, who shows that during 1906 and 1907 the average incidence was about 20 per cent. per annum among the actual members. This is very high, and cannot be taken as representing the ratio for the general population. The definition of an illness among these societies relates only to the actual or assumed inability of a member to follow his usual occupation. Thus a comparatively slight injury or illness not necessitating medical attention from its actual seriousness would place a member on the books of his society. Moreover, the majority of the members are following occupations which expose them to special diseases and injuries incident to their trade, and probably have a specially high rate of illness in consequence. We cannot, therefore, use such returns for purposes of comparison.

PART 5.—SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

Much preliminary work remains to be done before this Act can be carried out in its entirety. Many standards have yet to be fixed, and, as it is unwise to attempt this till the regulations in force in other countries have been obtained and compared, the process is necessarily a slow one.