

1890.

NEW ZEALAND.

FEVER AMONGST THE NATIVES AT HEREKINO

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Mitchelson, with the Leave of the House.

No. 1.

Mr. J. M. GRACE to the Hon. the NATIVE and DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Grace Street, Ponsonby, Auckland, 25th February, 1884.

Although you were kind enough to invite me to suggest remedies for the present unsatisfactory sanitary state of Maori kaingas generally, which would prevent to a great extent infectious and contagious diseases, I was very diffident in doing so on Saturday night. On reflection, however, believing you desire to take advantage of any workable proposals submitted to you, and that you will kindly take them in the spirit they are offered, I have the honour to submit the following amendment to Native school code :—

1. Let this code be amended as follows : Let prizes be offered—(1) For the cleanest and best-kept and most roomy house or whare ; (2) for the cleanest and best kept and drained kainga, also for best-built and most roomy whare on best site ; (3) for cleanest boy and girl, either in all New Zealand or in each kainga (if Government funds will allow). (4) Let it be compulsory, as it is now in the Board schools, for Native-school teachers to instruct (it is now only optional, no provision having been made in the code for that purpose) all the children and as many of the parents who will attend, on the laws of health. For this purpose text-books such as Mrs. Buxton's "Health in the House," the Rev. J. Ridgway's "Rules on Health," and the Rev. D. W. Turner's "Rules for General Health," should be supplied to the teachers.

2. Papers should be written and printed in Maori on various infectious and contagious diseases, and sent round to all the teachers, to be given to the Maori adults. Also, they should receive papers printed in Maori, pointing out to the Maoris all the evils which come from dirty, undrained, and badly-situated kaingas, dirty narrow houses, dirty bodies, and the sickness brought on persons by not sleeping on bedsteads, and not having clean clothes.

3. The ordinary sanitary laws as far as possible should apply to the Maoris—*i.e.*, as far as is consistent with prudence. For this purpose legislative sanction should be had if necessary. All new kaingas should be built on high healthy sites as far as possible. Whares should be made according to legislative plan, and provision should be made for this purpose. Let it be laid down that there should be the usual number of cubic feet proved by medical science to be necessary for every person living in such whares.

4.* To carry out these laws there should be legal provision either for the election or nomination in every Maori kainga of a "Local Board of Health," the chairman to be the leading chief. Board to consist of Maoris at least twenty-one years of age.

5. In every village it should be provided that the Maoris erect at a good distance—say, half a mile from the houses or whares—a hospital, or *whare mo te mate*, of sufficient length, height, and breadth, according to the number of persons usually living in such village,† for proper isolation and treatment of the sick, and provide proper attendance—*i.e.*, women to nurse. This they can easily do, as time is not much object to them, and when working for their own people, although they do it spasmodically, still they never in sickness look for *utu*.

6. It would be necessary to appoint a "General Maori Sanitary Inspector," to overlook, direct, and instruct the Maoris on all these reforms—on building their houses and drainage, also on the evil of polluting water used for drinking and cooking. These duties might either be imposed on the Local Boards of Health or on the Civil Commissioners.

The Hon. John Bryce, Native and Defence Minister.

I have, &c.,

JOHN M. GRACE.

* In case this is considered unwise, because of being the thin end of the wedge of "local self-government for Maoris," let the Act impose these duties on the Resident Magistrates, who are or shall be also Civil Commissioners.

† That is, to build it large enough only to provide for a reasonable proportion of the inhabitants of each kainga who may be sick.