

afford to pay for a doctor, and what is the result? They either do nothing, or sneak off to a tohunga, which is the only alternative. I am glad that the Department has now taken the matter in hand, and I am certain that the appointment of good medical men throughout the colony for Maoris will prove well worth the expense the State is put to.

Drains.

We have been successful in many instances in persuading the Maori of the benefits of drains, with what results the future census will enlighten us.

Closets.

A much-needed adjunct to Maori homes and pas has had its share of lectures; though reluctant in some instances to put up these necessary houses of convenience, yet after receiving proper explanations the Maoris have coincided, and shown their willingness by constructing them.

Kautas.

These Maori kitchens, or *kautas*, as they are called, I have condemned wholesale. I have found them veritable death-traps. It is strange, and yet true, that many of the Maoris who live in elegant pakeha homes have these miserable *kautas* at the back.

Let us visit one of these whares. We enter the place where the Maori loves to pass away his time in the evenings in the society of his wife, children, and friends, and to enjoy the fire—*mahana* (warmth), the Maoris' great god. We stoop as we enter (the door is not made high), and find ourselves in a place anything but inviting—perhaps all kitchens are that way if we but knew—ignorance, after all, is bliss. Not only our noses, but our eyes, in more ways than one, testify to the fact that surely this is not a place for human beings to live in. There the poor housewife plies her wearied lungs in trying to fan into flame the carbonaceous gases which are making our eyes weep tears—yes, tears, dear housewife, for thee and thine, for death lurks within the very walls of thy realm—in fact, within the very atmosphere you are daily, hourly, breathing in; but at last lung-capacity prevails, and we have a light. We see in one corner a flax mat, a roll of blankets, and perhaps a bed (not a bedstead) on the bare ground. Our kitchen has no floor. Mother Earth does homage by caressing the bootless foot of the housewife as she plies to and fro getting the *maruhiri* (strangers) their evening meal; for with all our faults here is one of our redeeming qualities, our cause of poverty, our cause of praise, and—Aroha, thou monster!—our cause of decay. Liberal to a fault—yea, liberal to our death! Let us follow our benefactress. She goes to the potato-heap, and soon returns with a basket of potatoes, which are peeled, the skins being thrown outside for the pigs and poultry—like all the other refuse. Soon she opens a wooden cupboard, generally made from some old dry-goods box. Ye Goddess of Health! what a smell; and no wonder, for this is made the receptacle for anything and everything eatable that is not eaten. It has a cheesy smell without the cheese. It is redolent of putrefaction, obnoxious, teeming with bacteria, covered with a blooming forest of mould and full of death. Here we are—the meal is ready. We may eat with knives and forks; we may not. No discredit so long as the hands are clean. What is that chilly sensation stealing up and down our spines? Ah, we find our kitchen at least is well ventilated, for there are many cracks and crannies in its walls, especially between the posts through which the air may find ingress. Though good to have ventilation, yet it can stand the application of the universal law of temperance. When ventilation becomes a direct draught, then it is detrimental.

We soon find that our *kauta* has been gradually filled with neighbours from across the way. There is Hare, the lazy man, and his wife, who smokes. The baby has to come: it might die if left at home. There is the gossip of our village just dropped in to see how things are; in fact, the small and great are there, and the house is full of smoke. Every one smokes, or nearly every one does: smoking is nearly universal with the Maori. "Lend us your pipe," is a common phrase. Some have deep coughs, some are asthmatic, some on the verge of tuberculosis—some have it, and some will have it. Listen to that cough, and see that nice, sweet-looking girl with the pinched face and glistening eyes. She has consumption—and watch, she expectorates beneath the mat, and what a high old carnival those germs are having, soon to pluck away some unsuspecting flower of the race—so young, so fair; but, alas! through ignorance, to go before her threescore and ten years.

The above picture, though a little exaggerated perhaps, gives a good idea of these *kautas*, and the same would hold true for the small whares. I am glad, however, that several of the Councils have made spitting about in houses a finable offence. I once condemned a *kauta*, and the lady of the *kauta* was highly indignant; when I started on the microbic life, she simply laughed and pooh-poohed the idea of any one dying with such things. At last I did not know how to convince her of the necessity of building anew, and as I said, "How old is this *kauta*?" "Eighteen years," she replied. Now, the *kauta* (as nearly all *kautas* are) was without a floor. "How many times has the *kauta* been scrubbed?" I asked. "Scrubbed!" she screamed; "why, no one thinks of scrubbing a floorless house." "Well," I said, "what would you think of a pakeha whose house stood eighteen years and was never washed?" That was enough. I got a kitchen properly floored, and a chimney added to her home.

The overcrowding of these chimneyless and floorless dwellings is in a very great degree responsible for the great mortality in young children, and the lung-complaints, asthma, consumption, and allied troubles of the older ones.

The Maori is learning to live separately, and when he does his salvation is sure; but until that is done his doom is sealed.