

There have been outbreaks of diphtheria in some cottages near the railway-station that were traced to defective drainage by Dr. Finch. This has now been remedied on his recommendation.

*Ormondville (Population, 459).*

Local body, the Ormondville Town Board.

The houses are scattered, and there is no common system of nightsoil-removal. There is a box drain chiefly for the removal of storm-water, but the kitchen and bed-room slops of a few houses drain into it.

*Dannevirke Borough (Population, 2,315).*

Weekly removal of house-refuse and nightsoil in single open pans.

The borough has provided itself with an ample supply of excellent water of unusual softness. This is collected into a reservoir from the hills above, and is brought into the town by gravitation. The water is available for all the houses in the borough. Prior to the introduction of this high-pressure water-supply the water was derived from rain-water tanks and shallow and improperly constructed wells. As a consequence of the impurity of the water available, infantile diarrhoea was a scourge in Dannevirke. Since the water-supply has become an accomplished fact this disease is conspicuous by its absence.

There is no scheme of drainage in Dannevirke at present, but Mr. Leslie Reynolds, having had instructions from the Council, has prepared a scheme, which I hope will be adopted. Some cases of typhoid fever have occurred in Dannevirke during the present year, and the town has previously been free from the disease. I attribute these cases to the want of drainage—that is, proper drainage—for some of the houses are draining into a stream that runs through the town and will serve excellently for carrying off storm-water. The people of Dannevirke seem to be very keen on the question of drainage, and I am very sanguine that in my next annual report I shall be able to speak of the drainage as being in course of construction, and am confident that when it is completed it will be found that the introduction of proper drainage has done the same for typhoid as the water-supply has done for infantile diarrhoea.

Dannevirke presents many natural advantages. It lies high, about 600 ft. above sea-level; is well swept by the natural scavenger—wind; and obtains a fair amount of sunshine. It has a light, porous soil, with good natural drainage. It is a rising town, with a fast-increasing population. It will be observed that Dannevirke has the lowest death-rate in the district. This may be attributed partly to the natural conditions I have mentioned, and is also attributable in a great measure to the fact that, Dannevirke being a recently settled town, most of the residents are young and middle-aged, and there are few old people to swell the mortality bills.

*Woodville Borough (Population, 926).*

Nightsoil is removed weekly in single, open pans. House-refuse is also removed weekly. There is a box sewer, with box branch drains for the purpose of carrying storm-water, household slops, and the drainage of some creeks. The high-pressure water-supply alluded to in the last annual report by Dr. Finch as being in contemplation is now an accomplished fact. The waters of the Mangapapa Creek are collected into a large, well-constructed, and covered reservoir, situated about 200 ft. above the highest portion of the town, and brought down by gravitation. The daily supply is 200,000 gallons, a sufficient supply for a town with upwards of five times the population of Woodville. The water is pure, pleasant to taste, and of unusual softness, the total hardness being less than 2°. This water would act readily upon lead, and I have warned the Borough Council against the use of leaden pipes in the house-connections, &c. The cost of obtaining the water-supply was £10,000. I consider that for such a small community to tax itself to such a large amount for such a purpose deserves the highest commendation.

The Mayor informed me that Woodville contemplates further taxing itself at an early date for an up-to-date drainage scheme, which will do away with the nightcart altogether. The present box drain will be used for the carriage of storm-water only, for which purpose it is quite suitable. For this reason I did not press upon the Council the necessity of an alteration in their method of collecting nightsoil, but I am told that in the event of the drainage scheme being dropped they would be quite ready to adopt it. Dannevirke is in a like case.

Though no death from zymotic disease, cancer, or tuberculosis has occurred in Woodville during the past year, the death-rate—18·36 per 1,000—is the highest in the district. This does not, in my opinion, point to any insanitary conditions or unhealthy influences in the neighbourhood. There has been a large number of deaths from accident during the year, and vital statistics in small communities are apt to be fallacious, and abnormal fluctuations from slight causes readily occur.

Up to the present there has been no case of typhoid fever or diphtheria recorded in Woodville. As the chief industry is dairying and the manufacture of butter for export, this fact is very satisfactory.

*Porangahau.*

The local body is the Porangahau Road Board.

This is a small, scattered township. It has no public water-supply nor disposal of nightsoil. The houses are for the most part well built and in good repair. Some of the settlers have considered the advisability of treating the sewage from their houses by means of septic tanks, and have obtained plans from me.

*Gisborne Borough (Population, 2,737).*

Weekly removal of nightsoil and house-refuse. The nightsoil is buried in a light, sandy soil that lends itself readily to rapid nitrification. At one time it was the practice to bury the filth rather deeply, but on my recommendation it is now buried in shallow trenches, and this has been found to be more effectual in bringing about the desired result. For some years past a recom-