

I had two consultations with Mr. Parata, M.H.R., *re* provision for consumptive Maoris, and exchanged letters with Dr. Pomare *re* same.

Our record-book of specimens of various kinds does not show much work. We have had occasion to submit for examination to the Government Analyst only some twenty-six substances. Eleven were of colonial beer to ascertain if they contained lead. Eight of these were reported by the Analyst to have more or less of this substance in them, mostly as traces, one as very strong traces, while two contained none. On investigating this we found that the lead had got access to the beer from the lead pipes which connected the casks in the cellars with the draw-off taps in the bar. It was also found that it was the first beer drawn off in the morning which was contaminated with lead, and it was therefore concluded that the beer lying in these pipes overnight had taken up the lead. As the lead contamination was evidently the result of accident, and the hotelkeepers expressed themselves anxious to do anything we suggested to avoid its occurrence in future, I judged that a prosecution was unnecessary, and obtained a promise—which has been carefully carried out—that the pipes should be emptied of beer each morning, the beer thrown away, and the pipes carefully washed out before any beer was served to customers. This subject was touched on in my last year's report, but I advert to it again this year to inform you that we have been following up the matter, and that we are keeping the subject still in view.

I have had several samples of whisky examined on more than one occasion, in response to complaints, but have been able to obtain no evidence of contamination sufficient to warrant further proceedings.

At your request I obtained samples of jams from several sources, but though slightly suspicious evidence was found of foreign substances having been added to the fruit from which they were professed to be manufactured, it was not sufficient to warrant prosecutions.

Only two specimens of water were sent to the Analyst for examination, one of them being from Winton, which might have been the origin of a case of typhoid fever, and the supply was ordered to be disused as it was suspicious. The second was Dunedin water taken from a tap. This was found to be so very bad that further examinations are now being made, which are not yet complete.

Only two specimens were sent me for microscopical examination, both of which were pronounced phthical.

RETURNED TROOPERS EX "ORIENT" QUARANTINED FOR SMALL-POX.

Perhaps the chief event of the year was the having to collect and keep under supervision over three hundred troopers returning from South Africa by the "Orient," in which vessel a case of small-pox had been detected at Wellington, as it put to the test the fitness of the Department generally to prepare for and meet at short notice an epidemic of considerable magnitude. For, though the disease did not spread beyond the single case with which it originated in the colony, the precautions we had to take were such in every respect as we should have had to observe had the disease really been found in many of the centres of population. So far as this district was concerned, the time given for preparation was of the shortest. And what made the task more difficult was the fact that the next day was a close holiday throughout the colony on account of the coronation of His Majesty the King. But by dint of working pretty hard, though the telegram ordering me to collect and provide for between two hundred and three hundred troopers who might be in my district only came into my hands at 2 p.m., I was able to wire to you at Wellington that every preparation had been made for one hundred and fifty men or more by 5 p.m., and that all that might turn up later could be received in good time as they came from the more distant parts of the district.

Realising that there was only one place near Dunedin which could be used on an emergency for an isolation camp, I requisitioned the show-ground known as Tahuna Park, which being used only at times, and being enclosed in a high impervious fence, was, as it were, already prepared. The Military Department did all they could to assist, giving me the use of all the tents they had in stock; but, as these were not enough to house all the men we expected, I made use of the stalls in which horses were generally put during show times, had them cleaned down to the sand, filled up with new straw, covered in front and sides where necessary with corrugated iron and tarred paper, thus converting them into very comfortable sleeping-rooms. With these we were able to accommodate over three hundred men, and could have easily taken in a hundred more.

The catering was taken in hand by a Mr. Treacey, who generally caters for the Volunteers when they are in camp, who had prepared dinner for some one hundred and fifty men on Friday evening, the day we got orders to prepare camp. With only one little hitch, which was got over by preparing a second dinner for some of the men, everything worked smoothly in this matter.

We had 286 men in this camp, besides nineteen who had been taken to Quarantine Island suffering from measles, and the whole of these were vaccinated, showing in time more or less good marks.

The camp was put in charge of Dr. Falconer, who had himself returned from Africa with the "Orient," and was by him most efficiently managed, offences against discipline being very few and only trifling, though, of course, it was not possible to keep strict military discipline.

We had very little sickness in camp, and that of a trivial nature; but one of the men on Quarantine Island developed a rash on the forehead, which was a little suspicious at first, though it later resolved itself into a manifest herpetic rash, extending over the backs of the arms. As, however, it did not involve the wrists, was not shotty, and as it was accompanied by a smart attack of articular rheumatism, the case was clearly enough one of rheumatic herpes, and nothing more.