

1904.

NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT

(15th September, 1904.)

BY THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH, THE HON. SIR J. G. WARD, K.C.M.G.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

MY LORD,—

Department of Public Health, Wellington, 24th August, 1904.

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the fourth annual report of the Chief Health Officer of the Colony.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

J. G. WARD,

His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand.

Minister of Public Health.

IN presenting this report may I be permitted to offer my congratulations upon the speedy and effectual manner in which the outbreak of small-pox was combated. Our greatly increased trade with the outside world necessarily lays the colony open to the possible introduction of many of the so-called dangerous diseases; but, if we may measure our safety by the way in which the recent epidemic was handled, we need, I feel assured, have no fear or uneasiness. The demands on the part of the public for protection against small-pox by means of vaccination, the whole-hearted way in which the people of their own free will sought the help of the departmental officers in this matter, emboldens me to assert that in New Zealand, at any rate, there is little need for anything in the shape of compulsory legislation with respect to this.

With regard to that other and greater enemy of our people—consumption—your advisers cannot be accused of want of interest. The Sanatorium at Cambridge is now in full working-order, and already in the short time it has been established great good has resulted. Despite the fact that many unsuitable cases had to be admitted, the average of cures is equal to that of the best continental institutions. The officers of the Department have done much by way of lecturing and writing to bring home to the people the power of this enemy, and at the same time the methods by which the disease can be checked. When the scheme which I outlined at Dunedin has been brought into force—the establishment of annexes in connection with our country hospitals—the colony may in this matter fairly challenge the other members of our great Empire.

By the distribution of the modern and expensive sera free of charge to all unable to pay, an important step has been taken towards securing for the poor the same advantages as the rich in times of sickness and trouble.

The constant application to the Department by the public at large for advice on all that pertains to sanitation and health is one of the most pleasing features; this, while it emphasises the confidence reposed in the officers is also a measure of the tact, discretion, and skill which they have exercised in the carrying out of their onerous and responsible duties.

I have pleasure, therefore, in putting on record my appreciation of the work done by the Chief Health Officer in establishing the high standard of efficiency which characterises the whole Department; and I desire to record that at all times the various officers have conducted their difficult duties with firmness, tact, and good judgment. The demands made upon them are many, varied, and of a nature which requires the highest standard of scientific knowledge.

I attach to the Chief Health Officer's statement the reports of the District Health Officers, together with those of the Pathologist and Public Analysts.

I have, &c.,

J. G. WARD,

Minister of Public Health.

The Hon. the Minister of Public Health to His Excellency the Governor.