

I visited Motueka to make inquiries as to the question whether there was any truth in the report that the library had been the means of spreading cancer among those most in contact with the books. A strong feeling exists in the neighbourhood that this was the case, and since the library was not being used it was no hardship on the borough when Cabinet directed that the library be closed officially by the Health Department. The question of the disposal of the books remains unsettled. A full report on the circumstances has been submitted to Head Office.

The Nelson District generally has been fairly free from infectious disease—a fortunate circumstance in view of the inaction of the Hospital Board in the matter of providing accommodation for such cases.

MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

Since Dr. Anderson's resignation as Acting District Health Officer, our representative in this district has been Mr. Johnston, Sanitary Inspector, who has done some good work.

The district has been, fortunately, fairly free from epidemics of infectious disease.

I have been able to pay but one brief visit to Blenheim. Here, there is arising much need for a drainage system for the centre of the town. The low-lying parts being subject to floods, some difficulty will be experienced at this time in keeping sewers clear. The lagoon which caused much offence from the stagnation of the water has been reclaimed.

Picton adopted a nightsoil service during the year in preference to installing sewerage, the latter scheme proving, perhaps, somewhat too costly for the size of the town, especially as it is evident that a treatment system would require to have been adopted before discharging sewage into such confined waters as the harbour affords. The nightsoil-depot has been approved by the Department, and a set of model by-laws for a nightsoil service has been supplied to the Council.

The necessity for adopting building by-laws has been demonstrated by the primitive efforts of some builders within the borough. It is to be hoped the Council will not continue to allow so much latitude in the matter.

The septic tank at the Hospital has given some trouble. Arrangements have now been made for the provision of a properly constructed filter-bed.

R. H. MAKGILL, M.D., D.P.H.

NELSON.

Department of Public Health, Nelson, 25th April, 1906.

Memorandum for Chief Health Officer.

THE following is the public health report for the District of Nelson for the year ending the 31st March, 1906 :—

During the year 73 cases of infectious diseases have been reported to the Nelson Office :

Diphtheria.—17 cases. Nelson City, 1 ; Riwaka, 7 ; Motueka, 8 ; Wakefield, 1.

Scarlet Fever.—33 cases. Nelson City, 3 ; Riwaka, 1 ; Motueka, 6 ; Ngatimoti, 5 ; Appleby, 1 ; Blenheim, 1 ; Lower Moutere, 4 ; Neudorf, 3 ; Richmond, 1 ; Murchison, 4 ; Westport, 1 ; Waka-puaka, 3.

Tuberculosis.—15 cases. Nelson City, 11 ; Lower Moutere, 1 ; Motueka, 2 ; Croixelles, 1 (Maori).

Enteric Fever.—6 cases. Nelson City, 5 ; Belgrove, 1.

Measles.—2 cases reported from Denniston.

The year may be considered to have been a fairly healthy one. Scarlet fever and diphtheria predominating in the Motueka district, and typhoid and tuberculosis in Nelson City. With regard to the latter, however, a goodly percentage were visitors from other parts of the colony. There has been no epidemic of any severity during the year.

DRAINAGE SCHEME (FOR THE CITY).

This is now fairly in hand. The money for the loan has been raised. Mr. Mestayer is at work on the plans, and several thousand pounds' worth of plant has been ordered from England. No actual work has, however, as yet been commenced in the town.

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

We have had no Sanitary Inspector since Mr. Middleton left us last June. Negotiations are being undertaken for the appointment of one, and I trust one will soon be sent to the district ; for the provisions of the Public Health Act cannot be properly carried out without a qualified Inspector.

WATER-SUPPLY.

The new dam gives an abundant supply, and during the year the water was analysed by Dr. Makgill and found quite satisfactory.

GENERAL REMARKS.

It may be remarked that the scarlet-fever epidemic which commenced in Nelson by an imported case about October, 1900, has now almost entirely ceased in the town ; it is gradually dying out in the remote country districts, which of course contracted it much later than Nelson.

There has been very little diphtheria in Nelson City for several years. One case died at an hotel during the year ; this was an imported case and did not spread. It is, however, rather too prevalent in Motueka and Riwaka.

Enteric fever is below the average in the town ; it is almost non-existent in the country districts. Tuberculosis is more prevalent in the city than in the country. This is as might be expected.