

condition has been seriously considered by the Borough Council. Several methods of dealing with the matter have been suggested, but I have strongly opposed the spending of one penny in this direction until a report has been obtained from a sanitary engineer of approved reputation. Acting on this, the Council took advantage of the presence of Mr. Midgley Taylor, in Auckland, to make arrangements for him to visit Napier, report on our sewerage, devise a scheme for its completion, and where necessary reconstruct. The result is that the town has been put in possession of a plan that will complete the sewerage in an up-to-date manner, provide for all time, and is so designed that the future residents in Napier South (the reclaimed swamp land) will be able to take full advantage of it. The estimated cost of Mr. Midgley Taylor's scheme is £40,000. This is a serious expense for the ratepayers to face, but sooner or later they will have to do it, and for their sakes and the good of the town the sooner the better.

*Olive, Meeanee, and Taradale.*

The first two of these townships are very much *in statu quo ante*; the last continues to progress, especially in the direction of Greenmeadows, which is fast becoming a township itself.

*Havelock.*

This pretty township continues to attract people. There is very little sickness at present, and until it becomes congested it is likely to retain its salubrity, for fewer towns could be more healthily situated. No effect has yet been given to the scheme for water and drainage obtained from Mr. C. D. Kennedy some years back. When the business site of the town becomes more built over, water and drainage will become an absolute necessity. At present the Hawke's Bay County Council is the local authority, but there is some talk of forming a Town Board. When this is done it is probable that a scheme for drainage will be more seriously considered.

*Hastings.*

This town continues to increase rapidly, and has outgrown the sanitary scheme that was designed for it by Mr. Rochefort upwards of twenty years ago, and the ideas of many of the older residents of the town, from whom the members of the Borough Council are chiefly drawn. Many seem to think that what was good enough for Hastings when it was a sheep-run or an unimportant country village is good enough for it now that it has become a progressive and important town. Hastings, with half the population of Napier, has the same number of cases of enteric notified, and one more case of diphtheria. It may congratulate itself on the small amount of sickness in the face of its defective sanitary arrangements. This immunity from sickness is largely due to the extended area of the borough, which permits so many open spaces even in and around the more congested area, and the high winds which so frequently sweep the Heretaunga Plains, in which it is situated. It is necessary that Hastings should now seriously consider the question of installing a proper system of drainage, and take warning by the experience of Napier, which has not yet completely lived down the evil reputation it earned by the severe epidemics of enteric with which it was scourged in 1880 and 1881.

I regret to have to record that the Hastings Borough Council is more apathetic in the cause of sanitation than the best friends of the town could wish. The Mayor has actually delivered himself of the extraordinary statement that the by-laws should not be strictly administered. The consequence is that many of the residents have taken to regard the notices served by the Council as so much waste paper, and it is not until proceedings are actually in progress that attention is paid and nuisances abated. One of the papers published in Hastings, when referring to the relations that existed between the Department and the Hastings Borough Council, stated, "The local authorities in Hastings cannot flatter themselves that they have assisted the Department as they might have done; in fact, in many cases they have put obstacles in the way of reform."

It is only by persistently pegging away that I am able to get anything done, but there are signs that a better state of public opinion is arriving.

There have been thirty-seven houses connected with the sewer during the past year. This is, so far, good. More would probably have been connected, but, owing to the rise in the Ngauroro River and consequent drowning of the outlet, coupled with the blockage of the sewer from all sorts of extraneous articles which are tipped into it with the nightsoil, the sewage was backed up, and until the matter was remedied it was not advisable to augment the fluids entering the sewer. The Council should think seriously of abandoning the practice of tipping the nightsoil—plus other matter which find their way into the pans—into the sewer, and a suitable piece of ground should be secured as a nightsoil-depot.

In my last report I mentioned, "Hastings has now increased to such an extent that the duties of the Borough Engineer and Inspector of Nuisances, which have hitherto been combined under one head, have become too arduous for one person to carry out effectively, and the necessity of appointing some suitable person to give his whole time to the inspecting and reporting of nuisances is becoming acute." I am glad to say that this state of things has been recently remedied. Mr. Cook, the holder of multiple offices, resigned, and in his place the Council has appointed one gentleman to carry out that portion of Mr. Cook's duties combined under the head of Borough Engineer and Road Overseer, and another as Inspector of Nuisances. Both gentlemen appear to be competent, take an interest in their work, and good results have already accrued from their labours. The resignation of Mr. Cook, the former holder of combined offices, is regretted by many, and most of the ratepayers in Hastings, in common with myself, would have wished to see his services retained for a portion of the duties he had to perform. But the duties he undertook had become too great for one person to perform satisfactorily, and though he did his best