

Waimate Borough.—The house connections in the sewerage area are almost completed, only twenty remaining unconnected, and of these some contracts are let. The siphons at the septic tanks have never given satisfaction, and repairs are being carried out at present to improve them, and a new sewer extension is being laid in Cameron Street to take the sewage from the Catholic Presbytery, Catholic School buildings, and the Convent.

Temuka Borough.—The new high-pressure water-supply system was completed early in the year, and a large number of connections are being made. The source of supply is the Waihi River at a point above Winchester, the water being conveyed to the borough by iron pipes, and is giving satisfaction.

Geraldine Borough.—Owing to the Road Board posting up notices prohibiting the dumping of refuse on the river-bed, some difficulty is being experienced in householders getting rid of their refuse; but the Borough Council are corresponding with the Land Board officials to secure a vacant suitable site near the town for the purpose, which will considerably improve the position.

Gore.—Sewering of number of outlying streets now completed.

Mataura.—Drainage scheme for the borough now completed, with exception of small section of 30 in. outfall sewer to river.

Winton.—A system of collection of household refuse has been commenced here, rubbish being tipped in gravel-pit some distance from town.

Nightcaps.—A nightsoil service has been inaugurated (sealed-pan system), and is working satisfactorily.

Invercargill.—During the year splendid progress has been made with the Invercargill central drainage scheme, which is rapidly nearing completion. It is hoped to commence house connections within the next four months. Over twenty miles of cast-iron water-mains have been put down in the suburbs and outlying parts of Invercargill Borough. The bore for increased water-supply is now nearing completion. The drainage and sanitary appliances of Southland Hospital, Invercargill, have been completely remodelled.

Greymouth.—There is steady improvement in the general sanitation of Greymouth, house drainage receiving thorough inspection and supervision. The Borough Council has cancelled all drainlayers' licenses in the borough, and has appointed one man to do the whole of the drain-laying. The effect of this has been that there are no "jerry" drainlayers in the town, and the work is easier to supervise.

A new sewerage scheme is urgently required for the borough, as the present sewers are badly laid and are practically useless, consequently sanitary progress is by no means what it ought to be, the want of finances in the borough being the primary block to such progress.

The installation of a nightsoil-tank is a decided improvement on the old system. The tipping on to a paddock near the Hospital was a great nuisance, and a breeding-ground for flies. This has been done away with, and all the nightsoil is tipped into the tank at night and discharged into the river at half-ebb tide, being afterwards flushed with water and sprinkled with disinfectant. There is not the slightest smell.

Cobden.—During the year the Labour Department has erected several workers' dwellings in Cobden, the drainage for which was inspected and supervised by me at the request of the Labour Department. Owing to the absence of a sewerage scheme in Cobden the household wastes are collected into a 6 in. main and discharged into a small watercourse, and will cause trouble in the future, I am afraid. At the conclusion of the work I certified to the Department that the work had been carried out to my satisfaction, although I did not necessarily approve of the scheme by the issue of such certificate, but only in respect to the manner in which the work had been done. It is a matter for regret that the Labour Department did not submit the plan of the estate to the Health Department for a drainage scheme. If this had been done a septic tank could have been installed on the estate and each section loaded with their proportion of the cost, which would have been little more than the present scheme has cost. Water-closets could then have been installed in each house instead of the pan system.

Reefton.—There has been a decided improvement in the general sanitary condition of this town, which is likely to be maintained in the future. One condemned building has been removed and replaced by an up-to-date shop. Other substantial buildings have been erected, and altogether the prospects are very encouraging.

(5.) SANITARY CONDITION OF THE NATIVES.

The District Health Officer, Auckland, reports:—

The welfare of the Maori has occupied the principal share of the Department's attention in the Auckland Province during the year, owing to the epidemic of smallpox, which singled out these people in a most remarkable manner. It is pleasing to be able to put on record the fact that the Natives—backward as they are to take up sanitary matters on most occasions—showed a most exemplary willingness to comply with every requirement made on them in dealing with smallpox. Their willingness—indeed, eagerness—to undergo vaccination was a pleasant change from the indifference and opposition of the European, and the patience and thoroughness with which they observed the restrictions as to travelling and isolation was an object-lesson to their white neighbours. That the disease was got in hand in four months must to a great extent be accredited to the whole-hearted co-operation of the chiefs and leading men in the various settlements.

I am glad to take this opportunity for recognizing with gratitude the voluntary help the Department received from various persons interested in work among the Maoris. Among these the Rev. Archdeacon Hawkins stands out prominently, who by personal influence did much to encourage the Natives in observing the sanitary laws. At his own suggestion he received instruction in the method of vaccination, and on his travels in outlying parts of the districts was able to operate on Natives who otherwise would have been difficult to reach.