

generally handicapped by a nucleus of the original shacks and shanties from which it developed. A very simple remedy would be the addition of a clause to the Public Health Act wherein it is laid down that, pending the adoption by the local authority of by-laws dealing with overcrowding, it shall not be lawful to erect a dwelling on any section of land of less area than a quarter of an acre, and the definition of "dwelling" should include hotels and residential shops. This clause would afford a most necessary basis for any later town-planning scheme. The reports of the country Inspectors show that already the Plumbers' Registration Act is bearing good fruit in the country districts by securing a better standard of sanitary plumbing.

*Thames.*—There is good reason to hope that the handicap from which the Thames has suffered—the division of authority as regards water-supply—will soon be removed. A Commission is now dealing with the matter. When this matter is decided a sewerage scheme will be possible. Great improvements have been effected in the Karaka Creek by the formation of a concrete invert.

The Thames-Paeroa district generally has suffered less this year from typhoid than formerly, a result doubtless of the improved sanitary conditions which Inspector Franklin reports have been established among the Natives.

*Hamilton.*—This town is growing to such an extent that it should get rid of the last relics of its primitive days, and adopt the usages which become necessary where large numbers of persons live in one community. A municipal abattoir is one of its chief needs, and the removal from the midst of the town of the cattle sale-yards. With the object of improving the sanitary condition of these yards the expenditure of £1,500 was proposed, and much indignation was aroused by my protesting against this course on the ground that the yards should be removed altogether instead of patching them up. It is to be feared that the supposed interests of a few persons have received undue consideration in this matter.

*Te Awamutu.*—This town is now a borough. During the year an excellent water-supply from Pirongia Mountain was introduced, thus paving the way to general progress and improvement.

*Te Kuiti.*—The borough sewers have been extended, and a weekly system of refuse-removal in the central part of the town introduced.

*Taumarunui.*—Here also a refuse-removal scheme has been adopted.

*Rotorua.*—The septic-tank system of treatment for the town sewage has hitherto been somewhat primitive. This year it has been overhauled and placed on a more modern basis, especially as regards the filtration-beds. The keeping of poultry in small yards has given rise to much trouble. Unfortunately, the Tourist Department did not see fit to adopt the by-laws dealing with this matter suggested by the Health Department. The adoption of by-laws limiting the area for building-sections to a quarter of an acre in unsewered parts of the town has been productive of beneficial results.

*Tauranga.*—The sewerage scheme for the town is now almost complete. The sewage received treatment in a septic tank, the effluent from which is discharged into the sea at ebb tide only.

*Whangarei.*—The extension of the sewer to the southern end of the town is an important sanitary advance. The difficulty as regards the disposal of the Hospital drainage will now be removed. The question of refuse-disposal has engaged some attention, and a suitable spot for dumping this has been secured. It is desirable, however, that a destructor should be provided as soon as possible.

*Dargaville.*—A suitable water-supply has been secured, and will before long be installed, unfortunately at considerable expense for a town of this size. A scheme for drainage has been prepared and approved by the Department.

*Helensville.*—The work of connecting the houses to the sewer is proceeding. Unfortunately the Board have been very lax in the matter of by-laws, with the result that much of the plumbing-work is extremely bad and will require to be removed, thus causing the unfortunate householder needless expense.

The District Health Officer, Wellington, reports:—

*Wellington.*—At Miramar good progress has been made in connection with premises with the drainage scheme. Nearly all the houses on the flat portion of the borough have been connected.

*Onslow.*—No progress has yet been made with the water-supply and drainage scheme.

*Petone.*—Good progress is being made with the drainage-works, the contract of which is rendered difficult owing to the high level of the subsoil water and the sandy nature of the ground. The estimated cost has been exceeded.

*Upper Hutt.*—The water-supply has now been completed, and about half the houses are connected. The porous nature of the subsoil facilitates the disposal of drainage.

*Martinborough.*—The water-supply has now been completed.

*Greytown.*—The ratepayers have approved by a two-thirds majority of a loan for the installation of a water-supply and a drainage scheme; estimated cost, £20,000. Material has been ordered from England.

*Masterton.*—The water-supply mains are in course of duplication.

*Eketahuna.*—An extension of the drainage scheme is under consideration.

*Havelock North.*—The new water-supply is nearing completion. Some 3½ miles of drainage has been laid. It is expected that these works will be completed early this year.

*Gisborne.*—The drainage from the freezing-works which flowed into the Tarahura River has now been piped direct to the sea. Considerable defects were found in the methods adopted for the laying of the house drains, and in certain points in connection with plumbing-work. It is not easy to find out how this condition of things arose, but in order to put an end to it I offered to send Inspector Middleton there for one month at the expense of the Council, in order to put all such details of construction of all sanitary work on a proper basis. This offer the Borough Council accepted. It is, unfortunately, only another instance of a local body spending large sums of money—in this case £200,000—