

made a public matter. The outlay at Rotorua since 1882 has been about £11,727, and the water-supply and other liabilities entered into will cost a further sum of £8,000.

At Te Aroha the total outlay has been £1,900, and the Local Domain Board, which manages for the department, requisition for a further sum to extend bathhouses and ornament the grounds.

At Hanmer the total outlay has been £2,255, and if more baths are erected this will be increased by several hundred pounds.

The number of baths taken at the several places are as follow :—

| | No. of Baths. | Receipts. | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|----|----|
| | | £ | s. | d |
| Rotorua, six months ended the 30th September, 1885 ... | 2,137 | 64 | 5 | 0 |
| Rotorua, six months ended the 31st March, 1886 ... | 4,113 | 132 | 14 | 0 |
| Rotorua, 1st April to the 23rd June, 1886 ... | 1,201 | 41 | 15 | 0 |
| Te Aroha, twelve months ended the 31st December, 1885 ... | 23,224 | 381 | 17 | 6 |
| Te Aroha, five months ended the 31st May, 1886 ... | 18,686 | 324 | 8 | 10 |
| Hanmer, twelve months ended the 31st May, 1886 ... | 1,794 | 80 | 0 | 0 |

FOREST-TREES PLANTATIONS.

In terms of the regulations under the Forest Trees Planting Encouragement Acts of 1871 and 1872 land-orders to the value of £945 were issued during the year to seven landowners. This and former issues make a total of eighty-four land-orders, of a value of £18,161, up to the 31st March, 1886, representing an area planted of 4,540 acres. There are still before the department 177 unsatisfied claims, representing 8,086 acres planted, to satisfy which, supposing all are approved, will require a further issue of land-orders of a value of £32,344.

The operations of the Planting Board of Canterbury are given in the report of Mr. E. G. Wright, Chairman (see Appendix No. 1). The Board has done some very valuable work, as noted in the annual Crown lands reports since 1881. The Board was constituted in 1879, and up to date has planted about 2,100 acres. As it is proposed to transfer the functions of the Board to the several County Councils, the most cordial acknowledgments of the department are due the members of the Planting Board for their onerous and skilful services, freely and gratuitously rendered.

The report from Mr. McCullough, Chairman of Maniototo County, Appendix No. 2, is a record of satisfactory progress in the county nursery: 141,806 tree-plants, in a healthy state, growing at an altitude of about 1,700ft. above sea-line, in a district naturally treeless, is the prelude to many clumps arising around the homesteads on the Maniototo Plains.

The report, Appendix No. 3, of Mr. Robert McDougall, Chairman of the Lake County Forest Committee, on the Cardrona Nursery, is a record of satisfactory progress for the year, and is valuable as giving some of the results of his observations as to the kind of trees best able to withstand heat and drought, and the superiority in hardiness of plants reared at high altitudes over those brought up from the coast.

AGRICULTURE.

It has been one of the aims of the department for several years to further successful settlement of the country by disseminating information bearing on rural economy both in respect of increasing the number of products from the soil and the better management of those already more commonly produced. This has hitherto been done principally by engaging experts to lecture and write on particular subjects, such as dairy management, silk, olive, and orange culture. In addition to this method, which is still pursued in the employment of Mr. Thos. Mackay on the preparation of a work on grasses, and Mr. G. A. Schock, of Auckland, in furthering silk-culture, the department has had, since May last, the advantage of an officer specially appointed to the charge of agriculture in Mr. W. de G. Reeves, whose attention was first directed to reporting on the agricultural machinery of the New Zealand Exhibition, Wellington, and, subsequently, to the stock and implement shows at Christchurch, Dunedin, and Oamaru. These reports are printed—H.—5, 1886—and are well worthy of the perusal of settlers for their practical observations.

More recently Mr. Reeves has been engaged in making investigations according to the following instructions: "It would be well if you would take up the statistics of the colony for the years 1884 and 1885, and extract in tabular form the imports and exports of alimentary substances, with the view more particularly of showing, in a succinct form, what articles are being imported that might, or indeed should, be produced in the colony, such as green fruits, jams, tinned fruits, and olive and linseed oils, also fish, bacon, hams, cheese, flour, honey, biscuits,