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REPORT ON THERMAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN EUROPE.

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Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

I HAVE the honour to report that, having procured circular letters of recommendation from the French Government, also from the English Embassy in Paris, to the directors of the thermal establishments of France, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, and England, I visited a good many establishments; but I shall mention only the most important, and principally those which, like Rotorua, are under Government or municipal corporation control.

Vichy (France) is one of the most important thermal stations of France. It has many thermal establishments in the town and district, the principal ones being Government properties, farmed out to the *Compagnie Fermière des Eaux de Vichy*. It is managed on a purely commercial basis. A very great business is done in the extraction of the salts from the waters by evaporation, &c. to make pastilles, and a compound of the different salts is sold for baths, called "*Vichy at Home*."

During my stay I heard great complaints (which may or may not be legitimate) that the *Compagnie Fermière* were sacrificing *Vichy's* interest to their own pecuniary gain, and that it would be much better for the place if the Government would resume control and manage the establishment, the same as is done at *Aix-les-Bains*.

Aix-les-Bains.—This is the most important thermal establishment of France, if not of the world. The water resembles those of Rotorua in so far that it is slightly sulphurous. There are many bathing-establishments in the town and district, the principal one being the Government establishment, having at its disposal every appliance for hydro-mineral medicament: 1,200 baths, 2,000 douches, and 200 inhalations can be administered daily; and it is said that it treats more actual patients than any other establishment in the world, and amongst them is now inscribed in their Golden Book the name of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen of England and Empress of India. I am specially indebted to Mr. C. L. Livet, the director of the establishment, for his kindness and courtesy, and for the very valuable information which he gave me.

Baden-Baden (Germany) possesses several bathing-establishments, the principal, newest, and most complete being the *Friedrichsbad*, justly celebrated for its therapeutic appliances of the latest designs, amongst which is the mechanico-therapeutic establishment, wherein the special gymnastic apparatus of Dr. Zander, of Stockholm is erected, providing active and passive mechanical movements for every joint of the human frame; all these appliances can, with mathematical precision, be regulated to suit the individual case to be treated. This mode of gymnastic exercise seems to be greatly appreciated by those who use it, but it is rather costly to be introduced into a place with small population, such as Rotorua.

Wiesbaden.—This is also a very important bathing-resort. Many tourists and invalids visit the place, but it possesses no special bathing-establishments. The thermal springs are owned by the Government, or Municipality, who provide luxurious drinking fountains and halls (*Trinkhallen*), and supply the different hotels with thermal waters for their respective bathing-places, none of which are of sufficient importance to compare with those of *Aix-les-Bains* or *Baden-Baden*.

Aix-la-Chapelle possesses some very valuable mineral springs, the property of the Municipality, who have built several convenient bathing-establishments, which they let or lease at a high rental to responsible tenants, subject to the inspection and supervision of a specially-appointed Government inspector. Four of these establishments being now in the hands of Mr. Dremel, a large hotel-keeper, it enables him, by judiciously dividing them into classes, to afford accommodation to suit the taste and circumstances of all classes of visitors.

Spa (Belgium).—There is a nice little establishment here, the property of the Corporation, and under their immediate management and control. The installation being recent, it is well supplied with all modern balneal and medical gymnastic appliances, and possesses a good reputation throughout Europe.

Bath (England).—Owing to the inclemency of the weather (December) this is the only establishment I visited in England. It was recommended to me because it is the most recent and complete installation in this country, the works being still in progress.