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NEW ZEALAND.

THE HANMER PLAINS SANATORIUM

(REPORT ON PRESENT CONDITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF), BY A. GINDERS, ESQ., M.D., OF ROTORUA.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave of the House.

SIR,—

The Sanatorium, Rotorua, 31st August, 1891.

I have the honour to report that, in accordance with your instructions, I left Rotorua on the 13th ultimo, in order to visit and report on the Hanmer Plains hot springs, and their surroundings. I arrived there on the 23rd ultimo.

The route is from Christchurch to the railway terminus at Culverden, a distance of sixty-nine miles, and thence by coach to Hanmer Plains, a distance of twenty-four miles. The journey is accomplished in ten hours, allowing an hour at Culverden for luncheon.

The physical features of the country passed through are in marked contrast to that of the North Island. The level alluvial plains of Canterbury, dotted with smiling homesteads, and bounded only by bold snow-capped mountain-ranges, form an agricultural paradise when compared with the rudely broken and barren areas of the North. Nor are the geological features less remarkable and distinct. Isolated volcanic cones and igneous rocks cropping out in every direction are conspicuous by their absence, and are replaced by sedimentary formations, chiefly sandstones and clay-slates.

I interviewed the hotel-proprietor at Culverden, with a view to getting some knowledge of the extent of the tourist traffic between that place and the Hanmer Springs. He informed me that the two coaching establishments were fully engaged during the season; that the boarding-accommodation was frequently overcrowded, and failed to meet the demand, visitors having frequently to wait a week or ten days before they could secure a bed; and that the distance between the hotels and the springs was a serious inconvenience to invalids.

The coach-road to Hanmer crosses the Culverden Plains, thence along the valley of the Waiau River, until the Waiau Gorge is reached, near the position of the old ferry. This gorge is now crossed by a handsome viaduct, which leads into a rocky cutting—a work of considerable magnitude—emerging from which you enter the Hanmer Plains. The twenty-four mile drive is accomplished in three hours, thanks to the excellence of the roads, which are well formed and maintained, and no doubt at a very moderate cost, as the bed of the Waiau River furnishes, and will continue to furnish, shingle enough to keep it in repair until the crack of doom. The winter landscape presented by the Hanmer Plains is very magnificent. A complete amphitheatre of mountain-ranges, snow-clad from summit to base, with here and there a lofty peak rising to an altitude of from 2,000ft. to 3,000ft., each with a history accounting for its name—Mount Percival, Mount Captain, Mount Ethel, Mount Isabel, &c. The loquacious coach-driver will tell you how a certain Mr. Anderson rode his horse “Captain” to the summit of the loftiest peak of that grand amphitheatre, and, believing in Nelson’s motto, *Palmas qui meruit ferat*, preferred to immortalize the name of his horse rather than his own. In these days of self-aggrandisement, of personal log-rolling, and individual axe-grinding this story is refreshing.

The Government reserve at Hanmer Plains is four square miles, four miles long by one mile in width. Part of this is leased to the proprietor of Jollie’s Pass Hotel, and part to W. A. Low, Esq., of St. Helen’s, a gentleman whose residence is within a mile and a half of the springs, and to whom I am indebted for much valuable information and courteous hospitality. The springs themselves, with their appurtenances, are comprised within an area of 5 acres on the north side of the plain, and are at an elevation of 1,200ft. above sea-level—Dr. Hector says 1,360ft. This area has a seven-wire fence round it, within which is a well-grown and neatly-trimmed *Cupressus macracarpa* hedge, and a triple row of ornamental trees. The ground is grassed, and laid out in walks and flower-beds. A plot of 10 acres adjoining the bath enclosure is cultivated by the custodian, Mr. John Rogers; he has 5 acres of grass and 5 of oats, and is able to keep a cow and a horse. The neatness, order, and cleanliness of the entire establishment do Mr. Rogers the greatest credit.

The springs are ten in number; their chemical character analysis shows to be one and the same, the fixed salts in each varying slightly in quantity but not in quality. Nos. 5, 6, 9, and 10 are cold, and, having no outflow, are valueless. Nos. 2 and 3 are small holes without overflow, having temperatures respectively of 94° Fahr. and 114° Fahr. Nos. 1, 8, 4, and 7 are the springs utilised. Nos. 1 and 8 are converted into tanks, having the respective areas of 15ft. by 21ft. and 18ft. by 25ft.; they are connected by a 3½in. galvanized-iron pipe, after the manner of the subjoined