

APPENDICES.

AUCKLAND.

EXTRACTS from REPORT by Mr. C. MALFROY.

Rotorua, 6th April, 1891.

1. THE new sanatorium building was completed on the 22nd December last, and the term of maintenance expired on the 22nd March. It is a good substantial building, where the convenience and comforts of invalids are well provided for, and, having a nice appearance, it adds greatly to the importance and attraction of the place. It is calculated to give accommodation for twenty-one patients—viz., twelve males and nine females. It was open at the beginning of February, and has been well patronised, considering that it has not been advertised in any way, and it is therefore hardly known that such an institution is in existence.

2. The grounds have been improved by the extension of the clearing, formation of new footpaths, and planting of trees. The ornamental trees, shrubs, fruit-trees, flower- and kitchen-gardens all show a healthy growth. This is a subject of surprise to those visitors who saw the place in its early days, when it was thought that nothing would grow here.

3. The bath-accommodation has been improved by the covering in and the erection of dressing-rooms in the gentlemen's Rachel sitz-bath, and increased by the erection of a new Priest bath for the use of the sanatorium patients. This new building is 24ft. by 12ft., with 8ft. walls, built on the panel pattern, and specially grooved boards for roof, so as to use as few nails as possible, owing to the corrosive influence of the atmosphere. The bath proper consists of a piscine 12ft. by 10ft. and 3ft. deep, with broad flights of stairs and submerged seats around three sides.

4. The baths have been well patronised during the past twelve months. The number of baths taken was 10,442, and cash received £227 2s., besides hospital patients and free baths amounting to 762, showing a slight increase in the number of baths, and a decrease of £27 in the receipts. This, however, can be accounted for—First, there were 724 hospital patients' baths not paid for; and, secondly, last year was the Exhibition year. But the high reputation which this place is slowly acquiring as the health resort of the Australian Colonies is proved by the fact that, independent of the excursionists or sight-seeing tourists, there are quite a number of persons whose faces become familiar by their repeated visits and long stay in this place. Those from the Australian Colonies come here to spend a few months of the summer and thus escape the excessive heat of their own; whilst those from the south of this colony come here in winter for a milder and drier climate.

5. The number of visitors to the place from the 1st of April, 1890, to the 31st March, 1891, is 2,590. This number is only approximately correct, as several of the houses keep no record, and there is also a small number of visitors who put up with residents, as relations or friends, not included in the above.

6. Taking the foregoing into consideration, and the fact that the railway, which is being steadily extended, will in all probability be completed to this place in a couple of years, also that this district is now practically a public domain, I would most respectfully suggest that a substantial sum of money be placed on the estimates to lay out and form roads and tracks—these should be laid out at once before any of the land is disposed of—plant trees, &c., in the different public reserves, before the great influx of visitors—which the completion of the railway is bound to bring—actually takes place, for, in addition to its being much easier to protect young plantations now than it will be later on, any public money so expended judiciously and at the proper season of the year would so enhance the value of the land in the eyes of the public that the Government would be more than repaid in the increased rental they would receive.

7. The works proposed are:—Clearing, laying out roads and tracks, planting trees and shrubs. First, in the sanatorium reserve; second, in the Pukeroa Reserve; third, in the public reserve about Arikikapakapa: fourth, to lay out and form roads and tracks to the most important sights of this locality, which contain almost every variety of thermal phenomena, from bubbling hot springs to the terrifying geysers, hot and cold lakelets of various colours, mud volcanoes, mud puffs and boiling-mud holes of all colours, shapes, and forms. I feel certain that if the thermal wonders in the vicinity of Rotorua were known and made accessible, so that tourists could walk amongst them at their leisure, without the cost, weariness, and hurry-scurry of the present system of long journeys to far-off places, they would stay longer in the district, and be better pleased with it than they are under present circumstances.

8. As to expenditure or improvements to the baths, I have very little to say beyond what is contained in the report I gave on my return from visiting the European thermal establishments. The only pressing requirements to meet the increased patronage is the erection of more dressing-rooms in connection with the gentlemen's and ladies' Priest baths; also more accommodation with sulphur-vapour bath, which seems to be greatly patronised.

In conclusion, I would say that the more I become acquainted with the resources and natural wonders of this district, and compare the great climatic advantages which they possess over those of the same class which I have seen and read about in Europe and America, the more I am convinced that they are sure to eventually prove a great source of wealth to the colony; but, like many well-known rich mines, it is useless unless there is a proper plant with modern scientific knowledge to extract all possible good out of it; and, from what I saw, heard, and read on this subject during my leave of absence, I am confident that we are not affecting half the cures which might be done with better balneals and therapeutic appliances and knowledge.