

APPENDIX No. 5.—THERMAL SPRINGS.

ROTORUA.

REPORT BY MR. C. MALFROY.

The Baths.

THE bathing-accommodation has been further increased during the past year by the addition of four baths, with two dressing-rooms to each bath, giving an additional capability of about 120 baths daily, or total capability of about 340 baths daily in connection with the Rachel Spring, 360 in connection with the Priest Bath, and 300 at the Blue Bath; grand total, about 1,000 baths per diem of ten hours. This should fairly meet the demand, provided there is a system to regulate the time of bathers. The great want at present is a ladies' swimming-bath. The present arrangement of giving ladies from 11 a.m. to 12 noon and 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. every day, and two whole evenings, from 7.30 to 9 p.m., at the Blue Bath does not, for obvious reasons, give satisfaction.

The total number of baths taken during the year has been 17,052, and the cash received £313 4s. 6d., being a decrease of 786 baths, and an increase of £24 17s. 6d. in the cash received upon the previous year, the decrease being in the hospital patients' baths, which is 2,248 less than last year. The sixpenny single baths have increased considerably, and the ten-shilling course of twenty-five baths decreased in about the same proportion, thus showing that bathers have been irregular in their attendance, a very large number of them patronising outside baths. This is specially the case in connection with a sulphurous acidic spring similar to the Priest Bath, situated on the south shore of the lake, and known as the "Postmaster Bath," previously reported upon by me; also to the large number of visitors who put up at Whakarewarewa, where the proprietor of the hotel has erected baths for the "free" use of his patrons.

The district is keeping up its reputation well as a sanatorium. During the year several former patients from Australia have returned here, perfectly cured, to spend their holidays, thus substantiating what I said in my last year's report respecting the growing popularity of the place and the desirability of improving the accommodation and appliances. Within the last month a professional "masseur" has been treating patients in connection with the baths; and, though the time is very short, he has already obtained certificates from invalids respecting the efficacy of his treatment combined with the baths.

Sanatorium Gardens and Grounds.

Beside keeping the gardens and grounds in good order, considerable improvement has been effected in what may be called the park; 4,000 trees were planted last season, and a couple of miles of roads, avenues, and paths were formed, which greatly contribute to the attractions of the place.

Town of Rotorua.

Since the sale of town and suburban lots (28th December last), it is surprising to see the great improvements which have been carried out by the different leaseholders in the form of clearing, ploughing, fencing, and building. Over a dozen new buildings have been erected, some being substantial and commodious, and would do credit to any township. There would have been still more buildings erected if it were not that people are waiting for the completion of the railway to the terminus, in order to avoid the heavy cartage charges on building and other material.

Fresh-water Supply.

The number of services now being provided out of main is fifty-seven—namely, four hotels and one boardinghouse, at £5; four boardinghouses, three stables, and one sulphur-works, at £3; seventeen private residences, at £1 10s. a year; besides seven public fountains, two bath-houses, and fifteen public buildings or residences free. The works are in good order; but the remarks in my last year's report *re* the necessity of constructing a "catch-pit" at the head of the pipe are still more applicable this year, and I think that it will be indispensable when the Railway Department take the necessary supply for the station, &c.

General Remarks.

The number of visitors (as collected by me) to the hotels, boardinghouses, &c., during the year ending the 31st March, 1894, is 3,880, or 1,320 in excess of previous year. This is a very large increase, but, though it is admitted that there was a large increase, I am led to believe, from personal knowledge and information received, that some of the returns handed to me have been exaggerated, with a view to boom certain hotels, and if we set the actual increase at 1,000 it will be nearer the mark.

I would again urge on the Government to take into consideration the desirability of compelling hotel- and boardinghouse-keepers to furnish the authorities quarterly with a correct list of the number of visitors to their respective establishments; also for the licensing of boardinghouses, for reasons explained in last year's report.

The cost of board and residence is from £1 10s. to £3 per week in hotels, and from £1 1s. to £2 2s. in boardinghouses, and there are a few cottages which may be rented at from 7s. 6d. to 15s. per week.