

The following table shows the growth of Rotorua and Hanmer, so far as the number of baths taken are concerned, for the last few years :—

Place.	1894.		1895.		1896.		1897.		1898.	
	Number of Baths.	Fees.	Number of Baths.	Fees.	Number of Baths.	Fees.	Number of Baths.	Fees.	Number of Baths.	Fees.
Rotorua	17,083	£ s. d. 313 4 6	23,196	£ s. d. 483 11 3	28,906	£ s. d. 502 17 0	33,158	£ s. d. 631 0 0	46,668	£ s. d. 747 0 0
Hanmer	6,923	217 18 5	6,306	202 17 6	7,781	240 4 8	9,627	290 4 9	11,436	354 4 7

At Mount Cook the "Hermitage" still continues to be a favourite resort for tourists on account of the fine alpine scenery to be found there, in close proximity to the highest mountain in Australasia. There were 105 visitors during the season, most of whom took advantage of the services of the guide—Mr. J. Clark—to visit places of interest near, such as the Ball Hut, the Tasman and Hochstetter Glaciers, &c. The road from Pukaki to the Hermitage has been improved during the year, and is used twice a week in summer by the coach service under contract with the Postal Department; but the two days' journey from Fairlie Railway-station by the present round-about road is longer than a great many tourists care to undertake. Several tracks have been formed to enable visitors to reach the glaciers, and a hut built on the Malte Brun Range. Some planting has also been done round the house. The expenditure in connection with the Hermitage last year amounted to £845, and the receipts to £536.

In Appendix No. 7 will be found a report from C. R. Vickerman, of the Public Works Department, giving particulars of the improvements effected at Te Aroha. At this popular place of resort, which is under the control of the local body, a fine new bath-house has been erected, 98 ft. in length by 28 ft. in width, which contains twenty-three rooms, nineteen of which are bath-rooms, all of which are furnished with the best porcelain baths. Two large reservoirs have also been constructed, to contain hot water as a supply to the bath-houses, their united capacity being 26,000 gallons. This popular resort is now well equipped, and will continue to attract more and more visitors as time goes on.

CHEVIOT ESTATE.

The new transactions within the estate were few in number; as a matter of fact the lands are practically all dealt with, excepting some few areas which come in from time to time. A sale of town lots in the Town of Mackenzie took place, a few only being purchased; but fifteen grazing farms of an area of 811 acres were all disposed of, as were three small sections on lease in perpetuity (85 acres), together with five pastoral licenses for temporary occupation, comprising 238 acres.

The Ranger reports to the Commissioner that the requirements of the leases were being satisfactorily carried out. The continued drought that has been experienced had affected both the crops and the pastures, and was much felt by some of the settlers. The dairy factory has been in operation during the year, and has afforded a market for the surplus milk of the settlers. The number of lessees and freeholders is 310.

The whole of the roads on the estate, about 120 miles, and the shipping-service, has now been handed over to the local body.

The following figures show the state of the Cheviot Account on the 31st March last, in continuation of last year's statement :—

Balance from previous year	...	...	...	...	£265,429
Road construction, surveys, &c.	...	...	...	...	3,274
Landing-service, administration, and contingencies...	...	...	...	...	1,267
One year's interest to the 18th April, 1898	...	...	...	...	8,866
					<u>£278,836</u>

From freeholds, &c., disposed of	...	...	...	...	£860
Rents paid and accrued to the 30th June, 1898	...	...	...	...	14,502
Rents paid in advance	...	...	...	...	8
Interest	...	...	...	...	231
Shipping and port charges	...	...	...	...	806
Balance to next year	...	...	...	...	262,429
					<u>£278,836</u>

It will be seen from the above that the rents are returning a percentage on the balance (£262,429) amounting to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The settlers in arrear on the 31st March numbered twelve, owing £235 16s. 8d., whilst the forfeitures were two, comprising 34 acres, at an annual rental of £13 4s.

LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACTS.

The total number of estates acquired under the above Acts to the 31st March last was forty-nine, of an aggregate area of 154,623 acres. Of these, two estates, Rangiatea, 4,004 acres, and Pa-waho, 51 acres 3 roods 18 perches, besides a small 20-acre block near Omihi, had not, at that date, yet been offered for selection.