

“November 1, 1907.—All the birds are going to have good times this year, as the flax, lawyers, broadleaf, and everything are loaded with blossoms. The kakapos are sure to breed this year, and visitors will hear the drumming that has not been heard for three years.

“December 3, 1907.—The rats are back again after an absence of six years. They came to Pigeon Island some time ago, and lately I found that they were all over the Sounds as well. The wekas' good times are over while the rats are here. The latter are so keen-scented that they always win in competing with the wekas for food. They robbed my duck's nest this year. They do not tear it up like a weka, but bore a hole in the covering and steal an egg. By that plan they keep the duck laying. I turned over a big flat stone, and there were the remains of about twenty eggs under it.

“July 24, 1907.—There was a family of paradise ducks reared in Goose Cove last season, the first I had seen there. There were six little ones, but they were evidently short of food, and gradually got fewer until there were only two left. When they were able to fly one of them used to come to my cove and swallow the pipefish like a shag, so that it must have had very hard times for a while. My drake thrashed the little visitor one day and drove it into a hole, where I caught it, and found that it was just skin and bone, and only a dwarf compared to others. A family of teal generally come here in the evening, and my new duck 'Sam Weller' is quite friendly with them, and will eat out of the same dish with them. He is not much bigger than the teal, through the hard schooling he has had. Now he goes away every morning and stays with a few others like himself, and then he comes here at dusk. At this time of the year the young males and females often keep separate, yet a few nights later he brought the little sister and taught her to eat wheat. Though the paradise do not feed at night, this pair do so, thus adapting themselves to circumstances to avoid the enmity of my tame ducks. She is shy, but he is so tame that I have to be careful that I do not walk on him. Somehow the old ducks know when they are here, and will sneak up and drive them away. Yet in a little while 'Sam,' at all events, will be back at the door again. No doubt all the real paradise have an inborn friendliness for man, like the wekas. May not that be evidence that the peaceful old 'pit-dwellers' of New Zealand farmed them? It could have been easily done by kindness, and by using a snare instead of hunting them. The same with the takahea, because its nearest relation, the swamp-hen, is the easiest bird in the world to tame and to keep tame. About the 30th July the two paradise and four of the teal disappeared.

“February 18, 1908.—The humble-bees are here now, which means that they are all over Fiordland—more useless honey-eaters, for they are the wrong sort to fertilise the red clover. It is also possible that they may sting the native birds that are fly-catchers and honey-eaters, the two things that would bring them into contact.”

APPENDIX II.

REPORT OF GOVERNMENT BALNEOLOGIST, ROTORUA.

Department of Tourist and Health Resorts,

Government Sanatorium, Rotorua, 4th June, 1908.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present my report for the year ending 31st March, 1908.

The event of most far-reaching importance in my section of the Department has been the practical completion of the new baths at Rotorua.

New Bath Buildings.—In regard to the new baths, with the exception of some of the machinery and some of the bath and douche fittings, the establishment is now complete, and should be in full working-order early in August.

Cost.—In view of the expenditure on these buildings and contents of some £30,000, the great bulk of which, by the way, was spent on New Zealand labour and material, a statement as to their earning-capacity becomes of importance.

In the first place, I advised that the whole scheme should not be proceeded with at once, but that the main block and three wings should first be erected, and the remaining wings added as the demand arose.

The part now completed includes all the more expensive portion of the building, and all the machinery necessary for the complete scheme, so that it will be possible in the future to very greatly increase the accommodation at comparatively small expense.

In regard to the utilisation of the buildings, two distinct functions have been kept in view. In the first place, provision has been made for all forms of mineral baths, both for medical treatment and simply for pleasure purposes, and for all the varied forms of physical treatment, including massage, vibration, and the most modern forms of electric light and heat treatments. One thousand persons per diem can thus be treated, provided that there were a proportionately equal demand on the various departments.