

Natives resident in Sydney, and making investigations on behalf of the Land and Income Tax Department. In addition to the foregoing, miscellaneous services have been rendered on behalf of nearly every Department of State in the Dominion. The large sum of approximately £120,700 was expended on behalf of the Government for sundry services. The following summary may be interesting: Expended on behalf of—Public Works Department (approx.), £38,810; New Zealand Railways Department (approx.), £74,267; Post and Telegraph Department (approx.), £4,336; Tourist Department (approx.), £3,231; Internal Affairs Department (approx.), £56: total, £120,700.

General.—In conclusion I am pleased to state that the usefulness of the offices, both as a tourist agency and as a general inquiry office, has been recognized and largely availed of by both Australia and New Zealand. As hitherto, every endeavour was made to render the fullest possible service both to the Government and to the public. In this connection I am very pleased to report that I had the loyal co-operation of each member of the staff.

Reports have also been received from the Department's Agents in the other Australian States, Vancouver, South Africa, and India, which all go to show that these gentlemen are doing their utmost to put the attractions of this country before residents in their territories.

LITTLE BARRIER.

The following annual report has been received from Mr. R. H. Nelson, the manager, and will be of interest to the many enthusiastic lovers of New Zealand bird-life:—

"In presenting my annual report to you for the period ending on 31st March, 1929, I beg to state that a large part of my time has been spent in travelling over the island. I have covered a lot of new ground, and am pleased to report a fairly large increase in the numbers of native birds, especially in those species which are counted rare, such as the North Island robin, the stitchbird, the yellow-fronted parakeet and the bush-wren, and also the native pigeon. The kingfisher, the ground-lark, the white-eye, and the fantail, are to be seen everywhere.

"There seems to be any amount of feed for the birds. Last season and this also there have been heavy crops of fruit on the trees. The native birds were feeding on them in scores, especially the figs and grapes. The blackbird and thrush take a large share of the fruit, and so do the rats.

"Many of the birds are coming about the house, the tuis and bell-birds predominating. Last year they came down in large numbers and we fed them on sweet foods, as well as porridge and sweet milk. We have had them this season, but in smaller numbers. They will likely increase, as they did last season. We had them until well into August and September last season, when the mating-time commenced. It is very interesting to watch the bell-birds and the tuis feeding out of the tins, also coming into the house. Even the bell-birds sing sweetly on the table while we are having our meals. The tuis are not so tame, although they also enter the kitchen. They are singing the whole day.

"During the last twelve months I have seen many of the kiwis. During the very dry weather they came much about the house; we put out dishes containing water, and the kiwis came about every evening, and we could see them drinking. On two occasions I saw one close at the kitchen-door; one walked through between my legs. I have not seen the white kiwi for some time.

"During the last twelve months I have shot many rats, as well as three cats. I have also destroyed many of the noxious weeds. I have also gone far along the beach every month and found everything clear. Twice I have been right round the island in the mail-carrier's boat. There were no signs of any one having been trafficking on the island.

"On the 5th February this year three members of Parliament visited the island, again leaving on the 8th—i.e., Hon. Sir Thomas Mackenzie, Hon. F. Mander, and Hon. G. Garland. On the 18th February, the Rev. Lionel B. Fletcher and Mr. G. Woodhams visited the island, and left again on the 21st. On the 4th March Mr. Oliver, Director of Wellington Museum, with Mr. Osborne and Mr. Lindsay, visited the island, and left again on the 11th."

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