

STATISTICAL APPENDIX.

NEW ZEALAND.

New Zealand, a British colony in the South Pacific Ocean, consists of three principal islands, called respectively, the North, South, and Stewart Islands. There are several small islets—mostly uninhabited—dependent on the colony; the chief of these are the Chatham Islands and the Auckland Islands. The New Zealand group is situated about 6,500 miles west of South America, and about 1,200 miles east of Australia. The entire group lies between 34° and 48° south latitude, and 166° and 179° east longitude. The three principal islands extend in length 1,100 miles, but their breadth is extremely variable, ranging from 45 miles to 250 miles, the average breadth being about 140 miles. The North and South Islands are separated by Cook's Strait, which is crossed by steamer in about two hours.

The total area of New Zealand is about 100,000 square miles, or 64,000,000 acres.

According to a census taken March 31st, 1874, the population (exclusive of the aborigines), numbered 299,514 souls. It is estimated that the present population (April, 1876), is about 400,000. The Maori population, according to an approximate census taken on June 1st, 1874, was 45,470.

The aborigines, called Maories, who formerly caused much trouble, though a large number have always sided with the British, are now peacefully settling down to agricultural pursuits, and, since 1871, permanent tranquillity appears to be established.

The New Zealand Islands, are of primitive rocks and tertiary plains, but a great portion of the entire area is occupied by mountains, among which are many extinct and a few active volcanoes. The mountains are mostly clothed with evergreen forests of luxuriant growth, interspersed with fern-clad ranges, and occasionally with treeless grassy plains. Extensive and rich valleys and sheltered dales abound in the North Island, and in the east of the South Island there are many extensive plains of rich land, admirably adapted either for agricultural or cattle-breeding. Water and waterpower are found in great abundance in the colony, and the numerous rivers are subject to sudden floods from the melting of the mountain snows. As a rule, however, the streams are shallow, and none are navigable for more than 50 miles above their mouths. The chief is the Clutha, in the South Island, and the Waikato river, in the North Island; which latter, issuing from the Taupo lake (30 miles long by 20 broad), flows in a northern direction for 200 miles, and reaches the sea on the West Coast.

In the North Island, around Lakes Rotomahana and Rotorua, are a number of grand and beautiful geysers, which throw up water heated to the boiling point. The south-west coast of the South Island is indented with a number of deep sounds, of which Milford Sound is the chief. In this sound the water is unfathomable; the only way of securing a ship being to moor it, stem and stern, to the trees which overhang the water. Steamers of 2,000 tons have been thus moored. The geology of New Zealand is remarkable and varied in a high degree. The mountains, which are of every variety of outline, are chiefly composed of schist and slate rocks, primary sandstone, and limestone. Extensive beds of coal and lignite exist. The former have been to some extent worked, and are at present being largely developed by the construction of railways and harbour works in their vicinity.

Of the whole surface extent of New Zealand, one-fourth is estimated to consist of dense forest tracts, one-half of excellent soil, and the remainder of waste lands, scoria hills, and rugged mountain regions. Nearly 40,000,000 acres are supposed to be more or less suitable for agriculture and cattle-breeding. The soil, though often clayey, has, in the volcanic districts, more than a medium fertility, but the luxuriant and semi-tropical vegetation is perhaps as much due to excellence of climate as to richness of soil. Owing to the prevalence of light and easily worked soils, all agricultural processes are performed with unusual ease. The climate of New Zealand is one of the finest in the world. The country contains few physical sources of disease; the average temperature is remarkably even at all seasons of the year, and the atmosphere is continually agitated and freshened by winds that blow over an immense expanse of ocean. In the North Island the mean annual temperature is 57°, in the South Island, 52°. The mean temperature of the hottest month at Auckland, in the northernmost province, is 68°, and at Dunedin, in the most southern province, 58°: of the coldest month, 51° and 40° respectively. The air is very humid, and the fall of rain is greater than in England, but there are more dry days. All the native trees and plants are evergreens. Forests, shrubberies, and plains are clothed in green throughout the year, the results of which are that cattle, as a rule, browse on the herbage and shrubs of the open country all the year round, thus saving great expense to the cattle-breeder, and that the operations of reclaiming and cultivating land can be carried on at all seasons. The seasons in New Zealand are the reverse of ours; January is their hottest month, and June the coldest. All the grains, grasses, fruits, and vegetables grown in England are cultivated in the colony with perfect success, being excellent in quality and heavy in yield; while, besides these, the vine is cultivated in the open air, and maize, the taro (*Caladium esculentum*), and the sweet potato are cultivated with success in the sunny valleys of the North Island.

The temperature, it will be thus observed, is very equable, for, while the summers are as cool as those of England, the winters are as warm as those of southern Italy. The mean annual temperature of Auckland is nearly the same as at Rome; at Wellington, nearly the same as at Milan; at Dunedin, nearly the same as at London. The official reports of the British Army Medical Department show that, when the annual mortality from all diseases out of every 1,000 British soldiers quartered in the United Kingdom was 16, it was only five out of every 1,000 troops quartered for more than 25 years in New Zealand. In other words, this colony appears to be peculiarly favourable to the duration of human life.

In connection with this it may be mentioned, in order to show the redundancy of the population in New Zealand, that in 1874 the births were 40·05 per 1,000 of the population, and the death rate was only 12·97 per 1,000, while the marriages were 8·81 for every 1,000 people.