

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

BOTANIC GARDEN BOARD, 1878-79

(TENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

FOUR meetings of the Board have been held during the year—namely, on 4th September and 10th December, 1878; 23rd January and 17th May, 1879.

The following is an outline of the work done during the past year :—

A much-needed improvement has been effected at the entrance to the Gardens from Sydney Street by the erection of a gate and close fencing. The plot of ground lying to the left of the new road at the main entrance has been levelled and laid down in grass, and is now ready to be plotted out into beds for specimen plants, as indicated in last report, for the instruction of botanical students.

The borders on either side of the main road have been planted with choice shrubs and trees, chiefly native, and the road itself gravelled and properly drained.

The alteration made in the entrance last year necessitated the moving of a large number of trees, which have been placed in positions where they will show to greater advantage.

About twenty chains of new paths have been cut in places hitherto inaccessible to visitors. Many of these walks open up beautiful gullies of luxuriant native bush, and command extensive views of the Gardens.

Nearly all the old paths have been repaired and in some cases widened, and several small bridges or crossings erected in places where the flow of water in wet weather damaged the paths and rendered some parts of the grounds difficult of approach.

Extensive slips of earth have taken place and caused much extra work, but they have all been cleared away, and the sidings sloped to a greater angle, so that they are not likely to give further trouble.

Three new entrance gates have been put up in convenient places, giving access from Karori and from the Te Aro end of the city, and the fencing generally enclosing the Gardens has been put in order.

Large patches of ground have been cleared of gorse and scrub, thus affording additional space for planting, which will be commenced as soon as the suitable season arrives.

The shrubberies have all been underbushed, and the ground around the young trees throughout the Gardens cleared of rubbish and the earth loosened.

The nursery-ground has been enlarged and improved, and new seed-beds formed, and the whole protected by turf walls. The large collection of pine seeds received through the Government in March last, from California, have been sown in these beds, and give promise of a large crop.

A short distance from the main entrance, and near the nursery beds, a batten house has been built, 33 feet long by 16 feet broad, with 10-foot walls, into which it is proposed to collect specimens of native plants that require a certain amount of protection. Batten houses of this description are largely used in Australia, and for most purposes in this climate they will, it is believed, prove superior to an ordinary glass greenhouse, while the expense is very much less.

The old shade-house has also been greatly enlarged for the reception of all kinds of native ferns, and in a short time will be fully stocked with a valuable collection which is being obtained from all parts of the colony.

There were 1,087 plants of various kinds distributed to public gardens and reserves upon application to the Board, 1,290 plants disposed of by sale to private persons, and 450 young trees planted out in the grounds.

The number of young trees now in stock is 3,000.