

present the most popular sanatorium for invalids, and tourists seeking recreation in change of scene and air. A useful little guide-book by Dr. Alfred Wright, resident physician, Te Aroha, has been published by the Domain Board. It gives for Te Aroha and its surroundings "credible information as to the advantages it offers as a health resort, the accommodation it provides for invalids, and the nature and quality of its mineral springs."

Hammer Hot Springs and Baths.—The bridge over the dangerous Waiau-ua River was completed and opened for traffic some months ago. The road has also been improved, and there is daily communication between the Culverden Railway-station and Hammer, so that visitors can easily accomplish the journey from Christchurch in part of a day, the first seventy miles by rail, and the last twenty miles by road. There is abundant and growing testimony to the wonderful efficacy of the Hammer Springs in restoring to health those who have suffered from rheumatism and disorders of the digestive organs. The increasing number of visitors has quite outgrown the lodging-accommodation. An endeavour was made some time ago to form a company for the purpose of erecting an hotel on a large scale; but it came to nothing. Very shortly sites for houses will be laid off close to the baths, and an opportunity afforded of erecting accommodation-houses on favourable terms. Hammer Plain is becoming a place of great summer resort. It is 1,300ft. above sea-level, and is surrounded by high mountains rising to an altitude of 5,000ft. The air is most exhilarating and healthful to all who require change and rest.

The following statement gives the number of baths taken at each of the three Government sanatoria for the twelve months ended 31st March, 1888:—

			No. of Baths.		Fees.
Rotorua ...	...	...	6,660	...	£177 3 0
Te Aroha ...	...	...	28,598	...	489 16 0
Hammer ...	...	...	3,622	...	137 0 0

The number of baths taken at Te Aroha is, singular to say, just five greater than last year; at Rotorua 1,782 greater, and at Hammer 1,406 greater than last year.

ROTORUA SANATORIUM HOSPITAL.

			Patients admitted.	Cured.	Benefited.	Died.
European ...	...	...	48	34	14	...
Native ...	...	...	17	12	2	3
Totals ...	...	...	65	46	16	3

FOREST AND AGRICULTURAL BRANCH.

It having been decided to curtail operations under the State Forests Act, the services of nearly all the officers engaged in forestry have been dispensed with; but an arrangement has been entered into with Mr. T. Kirk, F.L.S., late Conservator, to complete the illustrated work on the forest flora of New Zealand which he began some time ago. It is now well forward, and should be ready for issue shortly. Regarding the planting operations begun at Whangarei, Waerenga, and Maniototo, it is proposed to continue the experimental nursery and foster the plantations already begun at Whangarei, and so utilise the work done, but otherwise no extensions will be entered on. At Waerenga 1,700 acres have been fenced in, and nearly half that area ploughed, harrowed, and sown with tree-seeds; but, with the exception of a few acres of wattles, which are doing well, all the rest so far are a failure. This may be accounted for by a poor soil, insufficient cultivation, and possibly bad seed. As there seems no reason for a Government entering into competition with private enterprise in growing bark for tanning, it will be advisable to dispose of this place, either by sale or lease, for what it will fetch. It is well fenced, and is intersected by the railway, and if laid down in grass would make one or two stock-farms. Maniototo: About 440 acres have been fenced in with rabbit-proof fence, of which 142 acres have been ploughed and subsoiled and portion disc-harrowed, and 20 acres sown with tree-seed, which proved a failure. In the nursery of an acre, half of which was dug and pulverised, there were a variety of tree-seeds sown, which also failed. Here also operations might cease; but, as the Maniototo Plain is a great treeless expanse—the centre of a district within which, for a radius of more than fifty miles around, there is not an indigenous tree growing—it might, for climatic reasons and as an experiment, be worth while to plant and sow the ploughed area. From the county nursery, a few miles distant, 50,000 young trees, reared and acclimatised at a higher altitude, can be obtained. The cost of planting should not be great, and might be done in co-operation with the county. It is certainly very desirable to have plantations for shelter and firewood and fencing in the interior of Otago, and, as the land there is nearly all Crown lands, the plantation, did it succeed, would enhance the value of the public estate.

Agriculture.—For the two years prior to October, 1887, the department had the services of the late Mr. W. de G. Reeves specially devoted to this branch. Although no appointment has been made since, the department has not ceased its endeavours to further those rural industries which will enable settlers to profitably occupy the Crown lands. Foremost in importance is the dairy industry. New Zealand is undoubtedly very well adapted to that industry, and the out-turn of butter and cheese has long since outgrown the colony's requirements. The market in the other colonies is uncertain and fitful.* If there is to be expansion, it must be in securing the English market, which has an annual import of butter, margarine, and cheese valued at fifteen millions sterling. Very satisfactory returns have been received during the year from London of New Zealand consignments of butter and cheese, sent both from private dairies and dairy-factories. But it is essential to gaining a permanent hold of the Home market that the quality be as uniformly good as

* Thus New South Wales, which in 1885 and 1886 imported butter from New Zealand in each year of a value of over £80,000, in 1887 imported only to the value of £21,432.