

It will prove of interest to place on record the areas of the colony still under forest at the present time. This is shown approximately in the following tables, in which Crown, private, and Native lands are included :—

Auckland Land District, north of Auckland						1,800,000 acres.
" " south "						3,420,000 "
Taranaki	"	...	...	...	...	1,850,000 "
Hawke's Bay	"	...	...	...	...	1,900,000 "
Wellington	"	...	...	...	...	3,400,000 "
Marlborough	"	...	...	...	...	400,000 "
Nelson	"	...	...	...	...	3,240,000 "
Westland	"	...	...	...	...	2,394,000 "
Canterbury	"	...	...	...	...	492,000 "
Otago	"	...	...	...	...	1,182,000 "
Southland	"	...	...	...	...	500,000 "
Total						20,578,000 "

The areas can only be an approximation, for without special inspection the exact amount of clearing made by settlers in the process of bringing the land into grass can only be guessed at.

"LANDS FOR SETTLEMENT ACT, 1892."

Under this Act, the Crown has the power to acquire lands for settlement purposes from private individuals, and the intention of the Legislature appears to be that lands so acquired shall be in localities where there is a demand for farms, and where the soil and other circumstances render the prospects of such settlement likely to be successful. There are many districts in the colony where such a demand exists, where settlement is likely to be successful if the lands were divided into small holdings, and in localities where the holders of such small farms could obtain employment for part of their time.

Offers of land were invited by advertisement in Canterbury and Otago, and in response thereto, and including all others, sixty-seven offers of land were received, covering an area of 169,266 acres, in various parts of the colony. The Board of Land-purchase Commissioners, to whom most of these offers were referred, held four meetings at which these offers were fully considered, and many of the properties visited by some members of the Board, whilst others were reported on by the Crown Lands Rangers. The lands offered were of varied character, town, suburban, rural, and pastoral all being included; the greater portion of which the Commissioners did not feel themselves justified in recommending to the Government for purchase. Up to the 31st March the Commissioners reported against the purchase of 56,493 acres which had been offered, leaving an area of 114,573 acres about which information was deficient or which it was not considered necessary to refer to the Board. The actual amount of land which the Board recommended for purchase was 1,026 acres, in southern Canterbury, which lands are of first-class quality, and offered at a price which, after adding the necessary expenses for administration, can be disposed of without loss.

THERMAL SPRINGS, ETC.

The reports given in the Appendix from the officers in charge of the sanatoria at Rotorua and at Hanmer Plains give details of the state of those establishments at the close of the year. From them may be summarised the following particulars as to baths taken, &c. :—

1891.	No. of Baths.	Fees.	1892.	No. of Baths.	Fees.	1893.	No. of Baths.	Fees.
		£ s. d.			£ s. d.			£ s. d.
Rotorua ...	10,442	227 2 0	Rotorua ...	17,521	277 13 0	Rotorua ...	17,838	288 7 0
Hanmer ...	6,437	228 12 6	Hanmer ...	7,311	258 17 8	Hanmer ...	7,530	242 19 2

At the Hanmer Plains Springs considerable improvements have been made during the year by way of increasing the bath-accommodation; two new tiled baths having been built, and the hot swimming-pool enlarged and concreted, which has had the effect of increasing the temperature of the water. This has become a very popular portion of the establishment, and relieves the pressure on the enclosed single baths. A comfortable waiting-room has also been added, to the great convenience of those visiting the baths. The grounds have also been much improved, and three new paddocks enclosed, and a good deal of planting done, all of which greatly improve the appearance of the place and make it more attractive to visitors.

At Rotorua six new dressing-rooms have been added, besides a new douche bath, and the sanatorium grounds have been much improved by the clearing of avenues through the scrub and the planting of trees. The grounds and gardens around the sanatorium, from the growth of the trees and flowers, now present a fine appearance, and are much used by the people of Rotorua. In the warm pool, in front of the hospital, Mr. Malfroy has succeeded in making a hot-water geyser, which throws the water up from 10ft. to 15ft., accompanied by clouds of steam. The growth of the trees in and around the sanatorium grounds is remarkable, and has added greatly to the attractions of the place.

In view of the near approach of the completion of the railway from Auckland, provision should be made for the influx of visitors, which is sure to be very great, and for whom there will not be sufficient bath-accommodation in the present establishment.