

“*Drainage.*—The tank was pumped out in ninety-five minutes, and discharged its contents into the settling-pond at the filter-beds. I went into the tank and examined it carefully, and found it intact and particularly free from leakage, which is very satisfactory considering it had to be built on a substratum of boiling springs and some 12 ft. below the permanent water-level. The sewers were all scoured out from the flushing-tanks, and are all clear and in working-order, with the exception of a section in Whakane Street that had to be built below water-level, and a hot spring has evidently penetrated the pipes in this locality. I have instructed Mr. Beale, with the consent of Mr. Corlett, to strip these pipes and examine the joints, which should be made good and the leakage stopped.

“*Connections.*—These can be gone on with,” &c.

The Inspector of Works was instructed to proceed with repairs of the Whakane Street sewer reported leaky by the Engineer, with the result that this sewer was opened up and found to be in an exceedingly bad state. After the repair of this section—which occupied several months—had been completed further tests were made, and the Inspector of Works reported as follows on the system generally:—

“Repairs were commenced on the cross-section, Hinemaru Street, when it was found to be in such a state that it had to be renewed with 12 in. cast-iron pipes bedded in cement concrete, including the building of a manhole, at the cost of £315. The Engineer also gave instructions that the receiving-tank and the main central drain at the filter-beds be re-formed in cement concrete at a cost of £31. On the 12th May 60,000 gallons of water were pumped out of the collecting-tank and barely 5,000 reached the filter-beds through the carrier-drain, and again on Monday a test was made of the first 24 chains of carrier-drain (out of a total of 74 chains). The pumps discharged 60,000 gallons in two hours and a quarter, the whole of which percolated through the pipes in the said 24 chains as fast as it was delivered by the pumps, so that we were unable to use the pipes. One centrifugal was purchased and a second hired to carry out these repairs.”

Subsequent tests point to the conclusion that the leakage is general throughout the system, and the Inspector of Works estimates that at least £2,500 must be expended to place the system in working-order. As it is most urgent that the sewers should be in working-order and private connections made before next November, I have to recommend that a competent civil engineer be obtained to report on the present state of the existing sewers, and at the same time to give an estimate of the cost of the sewer-extensions, which have become necessary owing to the growth of the township since the system was laid down in 1899. Until the system is quite free from leakage it would be very dangerous to make any use of it, as serious damage may be caused to the springs by their being polluted by drainage-leakage.

Hospital.

In December last a building outside the Township of Rotorua, and formerly used as a Native schoolhouse, was taken over from the Telegraph Department and fitted up by the Health Department for use as an isolation hospital. It was placed under the charge of the Sanatorium Medical Officer. Fortunately, it has not so far been required, owing to there not being one known case of fever in Rotorua since its preparation.

As I previously reported, I am very much impressed with the necessity for establishing a small hospital at Rotorua. This township is the centre of a very extensive district, throughout which medical skill is not obtainable excepting at Rotorua. Cases of injury have occurred in the vicinity of Taupo, fifty-six miles away, and the sufferers were taken to Rotorua. There temporary medical relief was afforded, and they were kept there one night, being sent to Hamilton (eighty-six miles) by rail next day. Instances of disease which required surgical skill have occurred in the Sanatorium, but owing to the want of proper facilities for dealing with such cases the patients could not be treated there, but had to be sent to Hamilton Hospital. Apart from the hardship entailed in individual cases such as I have quoted, I consider that on general grounds a hospital should be provided in the vicinity of such a popular resort for invalids. If such an institution were provided, medical attention to Natives which is now given at the Sanatorium could be obtained at the hospital, thereby relieving the Sanatorium Medical Officer from a great deal of work, and enabling him to devote more attention to his balneological duties.

Recreation.

During summer, visitors reside for weeks, and sometimes months, at Rotorua, and there is a very general demand for additional amusement and entertainment. A great majority of those who go to Rotorua are in good health, and visit that district to see its thermal wonders, and the more recreation and amusement that is afforded them the longer they will stop there.

Golf-links would undoubtedly prove a source of pleasure to many of the visitors, and inquiries are being made with the view of establishing them. There is a proposal afoot amongst the residents to have a Maori war-canoe built and placed on Lake Rotorua, it being anticipated that this would lead to competition and the establishment of regattas. No provision is made in Rotorua for supplying afternoon-tea to visitors, and I recommend that a tea-kiosk be erected in the Gardens. In my opinion, such an accessory would prove popular and self-supporting.

The Rotorua Brass Band is subsidised to play in the Sanatorium Gardens bi-weekly, and open-air concerts are frequently held there. These performances and entertainments are very much appreciated by visitors and residents.

The Department has to acknowledge the receipt of a present of gold-fish from Messrs. H. Crump and Hawthorn, of Wellington, for the ponds in the ornamental grounds of Rotorua and Hanmer.