

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

No. 1.—REPORT OF GOVERNMENT BALNEOLOGIST.

SIR,—

Department of Tourist and Health Resorts,
Government Sanatorium, Rotorua, 24th May, 1903.

I have the honour to present my report for the year ending the 31st March, 1903. This must necessarily be somewhat incomplete, as I commenced my duties only in July, 1902. The first few months after my arrival were chiefly taken up by a general survey of the principal thermal districts, and with an attempt to gauge the social and economic conditions of the country generally as bearing on the special needs and requirements of my own Department. I soon realised that a magnificent field of work was ready to hand, that nature had provided healing springs with prodigal hand, but that this very luxuriance of gifts made my task all the more difficult. The springs of this country would suffice not for ourselves but for a continent, and to do them all justice would require an enormous and unjustifiable expenditure.

Two courses were open to me—either to advise the Government to develop at once as many spas as possible, thereby catering for each country district; or to concentrate the great bulk of its energy and expenditure on one spot, making a really first-class watering-place, and, while not neglecting the others, only spending sufficient money on them to meet local needs, leaving to future years the gradual and expensive task of thoroughly developing them all.

To the first course there were several and serious objections. To do anything like adequate justice to all the thermal districts, even if the development of each were attempted on only a moderate scale, would involve the immediate expenditure of at least £200,000, in addition to many thousands a year in wages and upkeep. To spend large sums of money on the springs for the benefit of the *locality only* is an injustice to those great tracts of country which have no springs. The whole country has as much a vested interest in the springs as has the locality; the waters are not a parochial but a national matter. To obtain the greatest possible value from the springs, not only must they be fitted with rough-and-ready bathing facilities to meet the not too exiguous needs of local bathers, but they must be made so attractive that visitors from outside the country must be drawn to them in ever-increasing numbers.

I think we may assume that at a very moderate estimate every tourist or invalid bather attracted to these shores spends £50 in the colony in hotel expenses, travelling-expenses, bath fees, &c. If by increased attractions we can draw a thousand extra of these visitors a year, we have the interest on a million pounds annually spent in the country. To attract these visitors we must make one spa thoroughly up to date, both as regards baths, amusements, and sanitation. The enormous expense that this involves precludes the possibility of developing many places simultaneously. How enormous this expense must be will readily be appreciated when we come to consider the necessities of a first-class watering-place. In the first place the baths must not only be places where one can bathe in mineral waters, but they must be fitted with the expensive apparatus of modern balneological methods; and there must be not only decent comfort, but a certain amount of luxury. If these things are lacking there are plenty of other places that possess both and invite the visitor. Then, in a town claiming to be a health resort, and which is liable to sudden influxions of large numbers of people, not only must all sanitary arrangements be above suspicion, but they must be so elastic in working as to be capable of meeting sudden and great demands. Finally, the amusements of visitors must be undertaken on a fairly extensive scale. From these considerations it will be seen that while it is only right and proper that every locality containing a thermal spring should have that spring so far developed as to meet its local needs, yet that some one spot should be selected for complete development. I would advise the selection of Rotorua as that spot, because, in the first place, it possesses a splendid mineral-water supply which in quality is almost unique and in quantity is practically inexhaustible; it has a bracing climate and plenty of bright sunshine; it has already a wide reputation; and, lastly, it is readily accessible by rail.

Then again, there are certain springs which, either from the superlative excellence of their waters or from their geographical position, require developing on a more extensive scale than the average. Such places would be Te Aroha for its drinking-waters, and Hanmer to cater for the needs of those invalids in the south unable to undertake the long journey to Rotorua. These would require the expenditure of a fair amount of money on their upkeep, but would not require the same lavish expenditure as a place designedly run to attract not only local invalids but visitors from overseas.

Lastly, there are springs which, either from their difficulty of access or from their being merely duplications of those at already "developed" watering-places, must be relegated to the third place. These, at a moderate expense, will serve local needs, and will also serve as pleasure baths for the tourist, but they cannot expect to attract the invalid from a distance. As population increases and traffic lines are developed, many of these third-class spas will necessarily and naturally advance to the position of second or even first-class watering-places. In the meantime, *festina lente*.

In the first- and second-class places, where invalids are catered for, skilled medical attendance must always be available; in third-class spas this—though, of course, desirable—is not essential.

For some months after my arrival in the colony I was engaged in a general survey of the more important thermal districts, including Waitapu, Wairakei, Orakeikorako, Taupo, Tokaanu, Oko-