

*Water-supply.*

The fees collected for water-supply for 1903-4 amounted to £236, as against £132 12s. 6d. for the previous year. The usual maintenance-works in connection with cleaning flumings and settling-tanks have been satisfactorily carried out.

A new 8 in. and 6 in. main, as mentioned elsewhere, was laid in Fenton Street to give increased supply to the Aix bath.

The present water-supply is found to be quite inadequate to the growing demands of the town. A better supply is absolutely essential for the purposes of the new drainage system now being installed, and for the maintenance of the health of the town. As the drainage system is being rapidly relaid it is important that an improved water-supply should be put in hand at a very early date. Estimates for this work have already been placed before you.

*Drainage.*

The extensive work of repairing the defects and completing the system is now in the hands of the Public Works Department, and the work is being pushed on as rapidly as possible.

*Maori Museum at Rotorua.*

Through private generosity an additional attraction for visitors is to be provided at Rotorua in the form of a Maori Museum, illustrative of Native art and workmanship, and including Maori weapons, utensils, implements, carvings, and historical relics. Mr. T. E. Donne has offered to establish a museum with his own valuable collection of Maori curios—the result of twenty-five years' collecting—and to house the articles in a large carved whare, on a site adjoining the Government Tourist Office in Rotorua. To the tourist this will form a most interesting feature of the town. A number of Arawa chiefs have expressed their willingness to assist in making the collection a representative one by depositing some of their own heirlooms and historic relics for safe-keeping, and for the mutual benefit of visitors and residents, an example it is hoped other Natives will follow when the museum is opened.

*Maori Villages at Rotorua.*

Travellers expect to find many of the picturesque elements of Maoridom at Rotorua, and they are seldom disappointed, except in one particular—viz., the Native dwellinghouses in Ohinemutu and Whakarewarewa. Some of the houses are typically Maori, but the majority are obtrusively ugly little weatherboard cottages, often unpainted and quite disfiguring what would otherwise be pretty kaingas.

While the Maori Councils have done excellent work in many Native districts in improving the sanitary condition of the dwellings and villages, it seems a pity that in carrying out reform the old-style whares are being swept away only to be replaced by the most unsightly of pakeha-built houses. The old whares were no doubt insanitary and unwholesome in many respects, but their plan of architecture, though simple, was effective and highly picturesque. A compromise between the old and the new order of things could be made by modelling the weatherboard houses on something of the plan of the whare, with its peculiar pitch of roof, frontal bargeboards, or *maihi*, wide side posts and projecting porch with supporting pillar, surmounted by a decorative finial in the form of a *tekoteko*. There are one or two dwellings of this sort already in the district, notably, one in Ohinemutu, which combines the picturesque Maori exterior with a comfortable interior. A village consisting of clean and neat buildings of this sort, with a pa-palisade surrounding the *marae* and the carved meeting-house, "Tama-te-kapua," would be an immense attraction to visitors and a decided ornament to the foreshore of the lake. The Maoris would, no doubt, take up the idea very readily, and in this district, where the assistance of the Native wood-workers and artists is to be had, much could be done to decorate the dwellings in the way of carving and painting after the ancient designs. At present Ohinemutu and Whakarewarewa are, to a large extent, collections of the ugliest of European shanties, the presence of which considerably discounts the natural beauty and novelty of the surroundings. These remarks apply with even greater force to the settlement on Mokoia Island. I am of opinion that some properly constituted authority should be empowered to veto the erection of unsightly buildings at these resorts.

*Forest surrounding Rotorua Lakes.*

A number of the lakes in the Rotorua district are fringed by beautiful forest vegetation, which adds considerably to the attractiveness of the various tourist routes, and which it is desirable should be preserved intact. At the eastern end of Rotoiti there is a very fine tract of bush, covering the Tahuna Flat for about one mile and a half, extending towards Lake Rotoehu and clothing the adjacent mountain of Matawhaura. The Rotorua-Rotoma-Matata Main Road traverses this bush, which is one of the prettiest bits of forest scenery in the thermal district. Portions of the shores of Rotoehu and Rotoma are also well wooded. On the Rotorua-Waimangu round tour *viâ* Tarawera the traveller passes through the Tikitapu Bush, which has regained much of the luxuriance of which it was bereft by the Tarawera eruption. In the vicinity there is some forest-growth on the slopes of Moerangi Mountain, overlooking Lake Tikitapu. A short distance away, but not seen from the road, is the beautiful little lake of Okareka, surrounded by forest-covered hills. This lake is not yet visited by tourists, being off the ordinary track; but in time to come it will no doubt become widely known as a favourite pleasuring-spot. The same remark applies to Lake Okataina, which is a larger lake completely shut in by wooded and shrub-grown hills. The whole of the forest region hereabouts extending from the vicinity of Tarawera Lake to Rotoiti should be preserved.