

and Wairoa pheasantries to recommence breeding operations at a future date, the selected birds being of pure Mongolian (*P. mongolicus*), Chinese ringneck (*P. torquatus*) and blackneck (*colchicus*) species. The rearing and liberation of seventy-five birds were undertaken by the Department's ranger at the Wairoa pheasantry, and thanks are due to Messrs. Byford, Poyser, and G. Ormond for assistance given with their liberation in the following localities since the 1st April, 1926: Ruakituri (eight), Clydebank (seven), Mahia (ten), Whakaki (six), Nuhaka (twelve), Te Uhi and Waihua (ten), Whakamahia (four), Opouiti and Patanumu (ten), Mahurangi (eight). In addition to the foregoing, twenty-eight birds were liberated from the Rotorua pheasantry, making a total of 103 birds liberated during the year, and fifteen are still in the pens for liberation. The Department has allotted an amount for purchase of any pheasants offered for sale by private breeders. A total of 2,768 pheasants have been reared and liberated since the Department assumed control of acclimatization matters in this district.

*General.*—A new car has been provided for the ranger, which enables him to get over a greater area in less time.

*Rotorua Bath Buildings: Balneologist's Report.*

I am pleased to state that during the year under review the various departments—Sanatorium, baths, massage, &c.—have shown a healthy progress in their financial returns. The year on the whole has been a good one, and the many visitors who have passed through Rotorua have been delighted with our spa and its attendant attractions. There has also been a greater number of invalids under treatment, both in the Sanatorium and Bath House, who have derived considerable benefit from the waters and massage. The visits of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York, and many other distinguished visitors, have considerably augmented the knowledge of our attractions over a wide field, and I am sure that the advertisement incidental to such publicity will bring us considerable kudos from overseas. The receipts from all branches show an increase of £1,843 4s. 6d. over last year's returns.

The Sanatorium has been a very busy institution throughout the year, and, apart from the few winter months, has always had a long list of patients waiting admission. This fact indicates both the usefulness of the institution and the necessity for an early consideration in the direction of expansion.

The Bath House and other buildings have been maintained to the highest possible degree of efficiency, but the work of urgent necessity—viz., the rebuilding of the Pavilion and Blue Baths—remains as a contingency to be met as early as possible.

Massage, electrical treatments, &c.: During the year this Department has added considerably to its equipment, notably in modern diathermy apparatus, and the most up-to-date X-ray installation. A new annex for the latter has been built, and this will enable us to expand our activities along the most efficient diagnostic and treatment lines.

Summary: In reviewing the events of the year, apart from the satisfactory conditions of our financial returns, I have been greatly encouraged by the results of our therapeutic treatments. The majority of our patients have received benefit, and in a great number of cases permanent cures have been effected. At the present time I am preparing statistics of our work, for the period covering the past five years, for the International Society of Hydrology. These will be used as a comparative table in connection with the statistics of the Royal Commission on Rheumatism which has during the past year been investigating such conditions in Great Britain. In compiling these figures I am convinced of the value of our spas as an ally in the field of preventive medicine, and as the march of medical science progresses the importance of our work will increase in direct ratio.

WAITOMO CAVES.

The financial year just ended was ushered in at Waitomo Caves by record-breaking Easter crowds, and I am pleased to have to report that this popularity never waned, and as a consequence the season has been a record one. The cash receipts from the hostel and caves for the year were £9,946 4s. 4d., this amount being £1,289 19s. 6d. in excess of the previous year's record returns. During the year 13,331 visitors inspected the caves, as against 10,548 for the year 1925–26, an increase of 2,783 visitors. Before the commencement of the present tourist season the Department converted premises that at one time were used as a stable into a hostel annexe to accommodate sightseers. This building more than justified its erection, and was fully taxed during the season. The hostel male staff quarters were completed at the beginning of the year under review, and this building is satisfactory to everybody. Year by year the caves are becoming more renowned and visited by overseas visitors. Among the many opinions expressed of our "eighth wonder of the world" are those of Mr. Franklyn Petersen, of the London *Times*, who visited the Dominion in connection with the recent tour of the Duke of York. He expressed the opinion, as one who had been privileged to view all the caves open to the tourist world, that nothing finer in stalactite formation exists than Aranui Caves. Dr. Wetherill, of Lafayette, Indiana, a member of Mr. E. Allan Forbes's "Orient tour party" which visited New Zealand in February last, said: "After seeing those wonderful and mysterious sights I am astounded how inadequately I can describe them. I can only adapt the words of the Queen of Sheba to another setting—'Of their glorious beauty the half has not been told.'" Dr. L. D. Stoner, of Ohio, is even more enthusiastic: "I have never seen anything finer than your little heaven under the Southern Cross—Waitomo's glow-worm grotto."

Since the installation of the Horahora hydro-electric power in 1926 there has indeed been a great transition in the caves. Still pictures of ethereal beauty now reveal themselves everywhere in attractive Aranui. There has been some criticism of the lighting effects in the caves, and so it is in place to recall the words of Mr. R. L. Ellington, tours manager of Messrs. Raymond Whitcomb's "Carinthia" party: "The lighting effects are excellent, and certainly add to the fantastic beauty of the formations. That is my opinion after inspecting caves all over the world, including Cheddar and Jenolan."