

THE MANAGER, MILFORD TRACK AND HOTEL.

The Manager reports that the resort has been well patronized during the past twelve months.

Homer Tunnel.—Access became available in April, 1940. Since that date visitors have been arriving each week. This access should bring quite a number of tourists when the Milford Track is closed. Arrangements have been made with the Public Works Department to allow tourists through the tunnel on Sundays between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Arrangements can also be made for tourists staying at Milford to return through the tunnel when the men are not working.

Milford Track. The Milford Track has also been well patronized during the past season; quite a number of tourists have made the round trip this year, returning through the tunnel. This has enabled them to spend extra time at Milford Hotel, which has been much appreciated by all. In past seasons the complaint was that the walk both ways did not give tourists long enough time at Milford Sound. There were two organized parties from Wellington during the season; both were well patronized.

Heavy floods caused delay to several parties this season. Much damage was done to the track on the Milford side of McKinnon Pass. The Arthur River broke its bank in several places, and the track suffered in consequence.

A new outboard boat was placed in commission on Lake Ada this season.

Hotel Milford: Winter Months.—Hotel Milford is open to receive tourists during the winter months, weather conditions permitting, access being through the Eglinton Road and Homer Tunnel. Winter conditions at Milford Sound are usually very good—moderate temperatures and more settled weather conditions than those experienced in the summer months being the usual occurrence.

THE MANAGER, THE CHATEAU TONGARIRO.

The Manager reports that, despite the generally unsettled conditions prevailing and the almost total absence of overseas tourists, there has been no falling-off in revenue, the total amount received being £34,286 7s. 1d., as against £34,094 6s. 9d. received in the previous year. The year under review had no Easter holiday period, whereas the previous year had two such periods. This would make a difference of close on £2,000.

The revenue received from the hire of equipment reached a new record of £2,610, so that this particular branch is an excellent source of revenue.

Buildings and Plant.—General maintenance work on all buildings and plant has been carried out over the year. A start has been made with the erection of a reservoir to enable the hotel to be supplied with water at all periods of the year.

Roads, Tracks, Mountain Huts, &c.—The mountain road has been completed during the year, and last winter, which was a poor snow year, the necessity and value of this work was proved.

The additions to the Salt Hut and ski-room on Ruapehu were completed early in the year and extra accommodation provided, while a big improvement was hardly adequate to deal with the record number of guests handled during the last ski-ing season.

The Ohakune, Waihohonu, and Mangatepopo Huts have been inspected during the year, and they are in reasonably good repair.

Golf-course.—The golf-course maintains its popularity and comes in for much favourable comment and is definitely a main factor in keeping visitors at the Chateau during the summer season. The usual annual tournament was held at Easter, and was won by Miss Shortt, of the Remuera Club, and Mr. Coggin, of the Feilding Club, the latter winning for the second year in succession.

Ski-ing.—Last winter proved to be the most popular one the Chateau has ever had, the revenue for the three months of July, August, and September being £17,326, as against the previous year's £15,669.

The usual racing was held in July and August, and in September a new race was inaugurated from the top of the mountain down to Ski Club Hut. Twenty-four runners started off the mark, and at some stages a record speed of a mile a minute was attained. The race proved very popular, and in normal times will prove to be one of the biggest events in the ski-ing world in this country, and the cup one of the most coveted prizes to be gained.

The winter was a poor one for snow, but the completed road up the mountain proved a boon, and the usual complaints about having to walk so far to the ski-ing fields were obviated.

The usual climbs of all three mountains have been undertaken and a satisfactory guiding service has been maintained. All guides, with the exception of one, have now joined the Army, and difficulty has been experienced in maintaining the usual satisfactory service through the winter.

Postal Branch.—This branch has had a busy year handling, as it does, all postal, banking, and licensing facilities similar to those of a city office, and full satisfaction has been given.