

1948  
NEW ZEALAND

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# DEPARTMENT OF TOURIST AND HEALTH RESORTS

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE)

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*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency*

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The Hon. the MINISTER IN CHARGE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURIST AND HEALTH RESORTS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Wellington, 28th June, 1948.

I HAVE the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts for the year ended 31st March, 1948.

W. E. PARRY,  
Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts.

His Excellency the Governor-General of New Zealand.

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## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURIST AND HEALTH RESORTS

SIR,—

Wellington, 24th June, 1948.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the organization and work of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts for the year ended 31st March, 1948.

I have, &c.,  
L. J. SCHMITT, General Manager.

The Hon. W. E. Parry,  
Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts.

# ANNUAL REPORT

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## INTRODUCTION

From the viewpoint of cash receipts the activities of the Department over the past financial year must be regarded as very satisfactory. The gross turnover amounted to £1,423,000.

Maintenance and developmental works at major resorts under the Department's control have proceeded in pace with the availability of labour and materials. Progress made has been conditioned by certain factors in current national economy, such as various important public works and the pressing urgency of housing that necessarily call for preferential treatment.

As in the past, every effort has been made to implement the Department's plans and functions in the best interest of all concerned and to render the best possible public service within its sphere.

## THE GENERAL POSITION AND OUTLOOK

### (1) THE OVERSEAS FIELD

The operation of additional steamship passenger services from Australia and North America is in prospect. Reconditioning or reconversion of the "Wanganella," "Monowai," and "Aorangi," when completed, will mean an influx of overseas tourists to this country. It is possible that the existing pressure on New Zealand internal transport and accommodation services will be relieved simultaneously by the movement of residents on long-deferred tours abroad.

*The United Kingdom.*—There is ample evidence that a profitable tourist traffic from the United Kingdom to New Zealand is held in check by insufficient steamship facilities to meet all the demands for passages to the Dominion. Inquiries received in the Department's London Tourist Bureau are sufficient in themselves to indicate that this "tourist flow" will commence just as soon as the steamship companies are in a position to cope with it.

There is every likelihood that for several years to come the choice of British tourists in search of extended holidays abroad will be restricted to the sterling area. Dollar funds must necessarily be conserved, and New Zealand, possibly the most attractive of the Southern Hemisphere countries to prospective visitors from Britain, will undoubtedly receive consideration.

The greatest single factor pressing upon the resources of the shipping companies is the provision of accommodation for migrants. It must also be remembered that by pre-war standards the companies are still operating with diminished fleets, and some time must elapse before normal conditions return.

The capacity of the airlines continues to expand, they are well patronized, and to a certain extent they have eased the pressure on the shipping companies.

*Australia.*—The year in review has been a difficult period for the Department's Bureaux in the Commonwealth. The tourist traffic from this territory has not yet reached pre-war proportions, but those who have travelled have used the services of the Department's Bureaux in Australia to the extent that tour sales exceed in value any pre-war figure. Present-day travel difficulties make it essential for tours to be pre-planned before departure for New Zealand.

Chief restriction on the increase of tourist travel has been the inadequacy of trans-Tasman transport facilities. Uncertainty of transport between both countries was such that frequently visitors found it necessary to travel at short notice, and consequently it was often difficult for the Bureaux to finalize suitable arrangements for extensive tours.

For about six months of the period there was no regular surface transport, and traffic was confined to occasional overseas vessels. There were comparatively few opportunities for tourist bookings on these ships, and preference was given to urgent and compassionate cases. The uncertainty of return passages also had its effect on tourist business. When the t.s.s. "Wahine" entered the trans-Tasman service in September, 1947, the position improved immediately, and by the end of the following November the projected sailings to April, 1948, were fully booked.

The trans-Tasman airways have been utilized to the fullest capacity, and, although the service has been extended, the unsatisfied demand was not eased greatly. Additional trips up to 31st March were booked out quickly.

The priority system that operated on the air service up to the end of September reacted somewhat adversely in the case of tourists. The possibility of off-loadings due to weather conditions has been a source of trouble in tourist bookings where New Zealand reservations are affected, as delays involve extra work and cause some embarrassment to the Bureaux responsible, under existing hotel and transport difficulties, for the best possible rearrangement of itineraries.

Suspension of the flying-boat service at the end of February caused temporary confusion, but the subsequent use of charter Skymasters was quite helpful. Few passengers were inconvenienced seriously. It was noticeable that during the period the Skymasters were used there was no off-loading. In every case passengers with firm bookings were able to travel on the scheduled dates.

Several conducted parties were operated, all proved popular, and an extension this type of business is being arranged for the coming season.

*South Africa.*—Owing to transport difficulties tourist traffic from South Africa has been irregular. With the exception of a party of visiting footballers who arrived via Australia under the auspices of the Department, the volume of tourists and others dealt with by the Bureaux has been small.

Inquiries received indicate that as soon as adequate transport facilities are initiated the tourist movement from this territory will probably be of some importance to New Zealand.

Mr. H. Middlebrook, Honorary New Zealand Government Agent at Durban, who for many years was an able representative of the Department, died last year, and promotional activities in the Union and the Rhodesias now devolve upon the Honorary New Zealand Government Agent at Johannesburg. Further representation in this territory must receive consideration as soon as travel conditions make such action appropriate.

*North America.*—Prior to the outbreak of war a national advertising campaign in North America had resulted in a most encouraging number of inquiries, and up to the middle of 1939 an increasing number of North American tourists were visiting New Zealand.

With the outbreak of war our tourist promotional activities ceased and it had been hoped that early in the post-war period the Department's representation would have been re-established.

During the past two years there has been increasing evidence of the promotional work of other countries seeking American tourist traffic, and consideration has been given to a resumption of New Zealand's activities in this connection. The agency arrangements and goodwill which were developed prior to the war period are still available as a basis for developmental work in anticipation of future returns. Experienced officers are available within the Department for this phase of activity when it is considered that the time is opportune.

## (2) THE DOMESTIC FIELD

A prime difficulty to-day is the provision of hotel accommodation for tourists. Travel by New Zealand residents within the country has increased tremendously in recent years. Hotel-proprietors have been confronted with problems in obtaining adequate staff, and their difficulties have been intensified by being obliged to rely more and more upon untrained staff. In the case of licensed hotels, the maintenance of the accommodation activities of establishments is becoming increasingly unattractive.

In general, the Department has received good co-operation from hotel-proprietors, but it is apparent that the time has come when action is necessary to make the supply of guest accommodation a more attractive proposition. Such action will encourage the necessary improvement in and expansion of this important service.

The Chateau Tongariro, which is again under the control of this Department, will be reopened shortly, and this will augment available tourist accommodation. Progress in renovating the Hotel Wairakei has been very slow owing to higher priorities for material and labour. Nothing definite can yet be stated regarding the date of its reopening.

There has been some difficulty also in obtaining tourist transport within New Zealand.

These travel difficulties make it more necessary for tourists and travellers to seek the expert advice of the Department's Tourist Bureau and Agents to a greater extent than ever before. Provided sufficient notice is given, careful planning of tours by the Department usually overcomes these difficulties.

A feature of travel in pre-war days was that the tourist could at most times of the year make day-to-day arrangements. This is now no longer possible, because of the greater numbers travelling and because of the handicaps already mentioned.

The most outstanding post-war development has been the operation of conducted party tours.

*Auckland.*—Passenger-booking sales advanced by 20 per cent. During the year 10,073 tours were sold, and 25,333 bookings were made. Eighty-seven conducted party tours were organized on itineraries for the North and South Islands. Three large conducted tour parties organized in Australia were dealt with by this Bureau.

The majority of overseas visitors came from Australia. A few more Americans were booked this year, most of them arriving by the trans-Pacific air services.

Local travel was dislocated to some extent during the summer owing to the restrictions imposed in connection with the poliomyelitis epidemic.

*Rotorua.*—Passenger-booking sales advanced by 7 $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. The travel restriction on juveniles elsewhere referred to had a retarding influence on sales.

As usual, a great deal of work was carried out by Rotorua office for other Bureaux and Agencies in connection with accommodation and transport reservations.

The accommodation position at Rotorua shows no improvement over the previous year and is considered to have deteriorated.

*Te Aroha.*—Although passenger-booking functions are not a major activity at this resort, business transacted shows an increase of £850 for the year in review.

*Wellington.*—This Bureau shows an increase of £56,160 in sales made. Interesting developments during the year were increased air business, the promotion and operation of fourteen conducted party tours, and two organized tours of footballers and bowlers from South Africa and British Columbia respectively. In addition, fifteen special automobile tours and ten group travel tours were arranged.

Special travel arrangements serviced by the Bureau included the Girl Guides Association Conference, local sporting teams covering cricket, Rugby, association, hockey, softball, marching, &c. Reservation of accommodation for persons travelling with their own private automobiles was another feature of work during the year.

*Christchurch.*—The transfer of this office to more suitable premises has enabled it to provide a better service to the travelling public and to visitors. The staffing position is now more satisfactory, and the organization of the combined office (it now includes the Railway Central Booking Office) has been the subject of appreciative comment in many quarters.

Tourist business shows an increase of £9,605. Railway business for the seven months during which the Railway Central Booking Office has been combined with the Bureau has been substantial.

Conducted tours proved popular during the year, and eight North Island and eleven South Island itineraries were operated. Five week-end tours were conducted to the Hermitage, to Franz Josef Glacier, and to Fox Glacier. Local sporting bodies availed themselves of the services of the Bureau.

*Dunedin.*—This Bureau showed a decrease of £5,015 as compared with the previous year. The poliomyelitis epidemic was the chief cause of this reduction in turnover. In the circumstances, and having regard for the record figures of the preceding year and the necessity for much tourist traffic to by-pass Dunedin owing to the temporary congestion of accommodation arising out of the Centennial Celebrations, the position must be regarded as satisfactory.

A separate section of the Bureau has been organized to deal exclusively with railway-ticket sales to provide a better and more speedy service for train-passengers.

Eleven conducted party tours were operated by this office during the year.

All resorts in the Bureau territory were patronized fully.

*Invercargill.*—Tourist booking business at this Bureau remained static over the period.

As at all major Bureaux, a number of organized party tours was planned, and experience shows that week-end and short excursions are very well patronized, whereas more extensive itineraries are less popular. A number of the week-end tours assisted in popularizing the newly-opened snow-sports area at Coronet Peak near Queenstown. A new departure was the operation, in conjunction with the Marine Department, of a week-end cruise to Stewart Island. The route covered Port Pegasus, as well as Half-moon Bay. Altogether thirteen organized tours were run by this office, and the ultimate destinations were: Milford Sound, Te Anau, Maapouri, Doubtful Sound, Queenstown, and Wanaka.

Chief resorts in the Bureau territory have been fully booked at times, and it was necessary on occasions to divert tourist traffic to other places where accommodation was available.

*Queenstown.*—A busy year was again experienced, and the Honorary Government Tourist Agent states that the most important activity during the period has arisen out of applications for accommodation. Accommodation facilities are quite inadequate to meet the popular demand for holidays in Queenstown.

Complaints have been received regarding the standard of some of the accommodation that is available at this resort. This was particularly noticeable when the leading houses, which have a limited capacity, were fully booked. At times the position has created a most unfavourable impression in the minds of some overseas visitors, who, after receiving first-class service and amenities at other resorts and city stop-overs *en route* to and from Queenstown, were disappointed at the treatment received in this otherwise outstanding sightseeing centre.

*Booking Agencies.*—The twenty-one Booking Agencies throughout New Zealand that provide an extension of the services of the Government Tourist Bureaux to various centres and districts beyond the cities and resort towns have performed excellent work for the Department during the year. Their efforts have contributed in no small part to the very satisfactory results achieved during the period.

## ADVERTISING

In order to encourage the tourist traffic to New Zealand the Department loses no legitimate opportunity to make the country's natural attractions better known overseas.

New publications, substantially for use abroad, are expected to be available within a short time. The major pieces are in sight and some of the auxiliary material has already been printed. It is the policy of the Department to forward suitable material to all principal commercial tourist agencies throughout the world, as well as to its present representatives abroad.

In principal English-speaking countries the Department has agency arrangements which permit of information and travel services being furnished to prospective visitors, and already some progress has been accomplished in renewing business associations and in rebuilding the necessary selling organization that existed prior to the war.

With the inauguration of regular steamer and aeroplane schedules this work of servicing overseas travel agents is being accelerated with a view to providing accurate and up-to-date information through all recognized travel agencies.

Connections with editors and publishers of travel magazines and travel-trade papers in overseas countries have been re-established, and articles and photographs descriptive of New Zealand attractions are being supplied for publication.

Associations with international travel offices have been maintained, and this Department is particularly interested in the development of the International Association of Tourist Organizations, and was represented at both the Paris and Oslo Conferences of this body by our London Travel Manager.

In the domestic field advertising of resorts and travel opportunities in New Zealand has been undertaken with most satisfactory results. Development of the conducted tour system of booking has reached a high standard, and many New Zealanders who otherwise would not have visited our scenic resorts have been encouraged to do so.

Within New Zealand the activities of the Bureaux and Agencies throughout the country have been supported strongly by residents.

## MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESORTS, HOTELS, ETC., UNDER THE DEPARTMENT'S CONTROL

### (1) SPAS AND BATHS

*Rotorua.—Sanatorium:* The Sanatorium and the Main Treatment Baths were transferred to the Health Department on 1st July, 1947. These institutions were administered by the Department for only three months of this year. Up to the date of transfer these activities were administered and maintained in the normal way. By arrangement with the Department of Health, the Tourist Department remains responsible for the maintenance of the supply of thermal water.

*Ward and Blue Baths:* These establishments continue under departmental control as they are in the nature of pleasure or recreational baths.

Revenue earned showed a decrease of about 30 per cent., principally in respect of the Blue Baths. This decrease is attributable to the specific ban on the admission of children during part of the year.

Normal maintenance has been carried out and renovation is in progress. It is expected that the necessary work will be completed in time for the next tourist season.

*Te Aroha.*—Revenue at this spa shows a slight increase as compared with the previous year. Notwithstanding the restrictions placed on children as a result of the poliomyelitis outbreak, there has been only a small reduction in bath receipts. This is explained by the greater patronage of higher-priced private baths. Attendances totalled 25,452.

The x-ray plant is functioning efficiently and has been in steady use throughout the year.

Major repairs have been made to the main Cadman bath building and to the ladies' bath building, old electric-light fittings in the public baths have been replaced with fluorescent lighting, and there has been a certain amount of minor renovation of bath installations and some rebuilding. An ex-Army building has been obtained as the nucleus for extension of pavilion facilities.

*Morere Hot Springs.*—The number of visitors to this small but consistently popular thermal resort remains fairly constant compared with previous years, and revenue receipts are unchanged.

The co-operation and interest of local settlers occupying land adjacent to the reserve, which is the sole remaining area of unspoiled native forest in the district, have been invited with a view to preventing possible damage by fire, and their unanimous public-spirited response has been received.

Improvements to the main highway which passes the resort will probably result in increased patronage.

The various buildings have been repainted and minor repairs and all essential maintenance work have been carried out satisfactorily.

## (2) HOTELS, ETC.

*Waitomo Caves.*—*The Hotel Waitomo*: Approximately 20,160 visitors inspected the Waitomo Caves during the year, and of these, 11,128 were accommodated at the hotel.

Visitors from overseas arrived in greater numbers. Australians have been in the majority, but there has also been a fair proportion from Britain and the United States of America.

*Wairakei.*—*Wairakei Hotel*: The Wairakei Hotel is not yet open for the accommodation of guests, but the Public Works Department commenced renovation in November, 1947, and steady progress is reported.

The golf-course has been restored to good order after some years of inattention, and other playing-areas attached to the hotel have been reconditioned.

Sightseeing side-trips to the Wairakei Geyser Valley have been operated as usual throughout the year.

*Lake Taupo.*—*Tokaanu Hotel*: Owing to the age of the buildings at this fishing resort, a great deal of maintenance was required, and renovations and repairs have involved constant attention. The drainage and the water-supply have continued to give trouble, but these matters have received attention, and improvements in the near future may be expected.

The fishing season opened well, but continued dry conditions with low lake-levels affected the sport adversely. Nevertheless, trout taken during the season have been bigger and in better condition than for many seasons past.

The hotel is patronized chiefly by anglers and, in lesser degree, by transient travellers and those in search of rest or relaxation.

*Lake Waikaremoana.*—*Lake House*: Weather conditions at this resort have been uniformly good throughout the year, and the hotel accommodation has remained fairly well booked accordingly. There has, however, been a falling off in patronage of the huts and camping-ground. This is probably due to a shortage of petrol and to the epidemic elsewhere referred to.

The major side-trips have been operated to capacity. Progress continues with additional amenities projected at this resort. A community hall at the camping-ground should be ready for use by next season, and work is continuing with the excavation for the recreation rooms to be constructed at the rear of the hotel.

*Tongariro National Park.—The Chateau Tongariro :* Activities in connection with the main building are nearing completion, and include entire repainting, replumbing, carpentry, plastering, and furniture renovation. A new improved intake for water to drive the hydro-electric installation for electric energy has been constructed. There is also an auxiliary water-supply from a new source which will provide good water for domestic purposes.

These undertakings have been on a large scale, and progress has been made to a point where the Chateau Tongariro will again be open to the public on 20th August, 1948.

The golf-links are fairly good, and a top-dressing in the near future will restore them completely.

It is interesting to record that, despite the fact that the Chateau Tongariro has been closed for so long, the patronage of mountain-lovers and ski enthusiasts has in no way diminished, and the various huts and lodges giving restricted accommodation facilities have been uniformly well booked in all seasons.

*The Central Southern Alps.—The Hermitage, Mount Cook :* This resort again shows an increase in the total number of tourists accommodated, its popularity has been maintained, and the service given has been appreciated. The Hermitage is becoming one of the most sought after summer and autumn, as well as winter and spring, holiday resorts. On the basis of turnover, the Hermitage is the most popular of the hotels at present in operation by this Department.

Good progress was made with alterations and improvements to buildings and services. The painting of interiors and exteriors of buildings was continued, and the main block and adjoining structures now present a fresh and uniformly neat appearance.

There was a very busy climbing season. One hundred and four peaks were climbed and a number of trans-alpine journeys was made. Of the major climbs, 83 were first-class ascents and 21 were second-class ascents. Thirty-five were led by Hermitage Guides and 14 by other Guides.

Repairs to mountain huts commenced during the year with the dropping of building materials to Haast and Hooker Huts from aircraft. The operation was successful, and the work will continue as opportunity presents itself. Improvements have been made to Ball Hut.

The motor-garage was destroyed by accidental fire in November, and plans are in hand for rebuilding. Gale damage to the swing-bridges over the Hooker River has been repaired. Floods at the end of 1947 caused main-road blockage, which was successfully overcome by a detour of 3 miles constructed by the Main Highways Board.

A popular addition to hotel amenities was the installation of a 16 mm. film-projector with sound-equipment. Weekly screenings of feature programmes are much appreciated by guests and staff.

Additional staff accommodation, including cottages for married staff and better recreation rooms for staff, are needed. Plans are in hand for these improvements.

*South Westland.—Franz Josef Glacier Hotel :* The Glacier Hotel, South Westland, which was for many years conducted by the distinguished and popular alpinists, Messrs. Peter and Alex Graham, passed to the control of the Department on 1st December, 1947.

This hotel and its contents are old and much renovation and refurnishing will be necessary to place it in first-class order. Plans and specifications for part of this work—additional and improved staff accommodation—are already completed, and the work will proceed as rapidly as possible in terms of other priorities in the building industry.

A 16 mm. film-projector with sound-equipment has been installed, and screenings at regular intervals are appreciated by guests and staff.

*Southern Lakes and Fiordland.—Te Anau Hotel :* In common with other establishments, the Te Anau Hotel has experienced considerable difficulty at times to provide accommodation for the number of guests offering, and occasionally conditions have approached overcrowding. Revenue figures for the year show an increase.



Additional staff quarters in the nature of huts have been erected. A completely new water-supply has been installed.

Forty-two conducted party tours visited Te Anau, compared with 17 in the previous year.

*Milford Track*: The Milford Track opened on 28th November and was closed on 15th April. Seven hundred and sixty-four persons made the journey from the Te Anau end alone, and it is estimated that more than 1,000 visitors walked the whole or a portion of the overland journey during the season.

Very little maintenance could be undertaken during the season as all facilities were needed to cope with the numbers passing over the track, but, since closing, this essential work has proceeded in pace with the labour and materials available.

*M.v. "Tawera"*: This vessel, based on Te Anau, serves the Te Anau - Milford Track, and during the season carried 1,677 passengers, including day excursionists.

*Cascade Creek Camp*: Some serious damage was caused by fire in October, 1947, but arrangements were made to transfer a building from Marian Camp, and the temporary dislocation of the service thereby minimized.

*Passenger Services from Te Anau*: The New Zealand Railway Road Services bus based on Te Anau operated excursions to Eglinton Valley and provided transportation over the open section of road for passengers arriving from Milford Sound via the Homer Tunnel.

The privately-owned launch "Quinton McKinnon" again proved popular, and many cruises, chiefly to the western fiords, were operated on Lake Te Anau.

*Hotel Milford*: The year just ended constitutes a record for the Hotel Milford inasmuch as more guests have registered during the season than during any previous three seasons together. About two-thirds of these people walked the Milford Track, and of that number approximately 10 per cent. only made the return journey. The majority of visitors returned via the Homer Tunnel.

Accommodation was severely taxed at Christmas and New Year, and casual bookings could not be accepted. At one time, on the site of the old public-works camp, there were almost as many campers fending for themselves as there were guests at the hotel.

Many visitors made the excursion to Quintin Huts and Sutherland Falls from Milford in preference to undertaking the complete overland journey. That part of the track that lies around the shores of Lake Ada proved very attractive to some guests at Hotel Milford who were satisfied fully with a day excursion to the Giants Gate Falls and the head of Lake Ada.

Cruises on Milford Sound and fishing trips were operated every day during the season. New Zealand Railways Road Services reinstated their taxi service from the Hotel Milford to within  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles of the western portal of Homer Tunnel. This extra transport facility was much appreciated, and it also enabled visitors to inspect the Chasm. A larger vehicle may be placed in service on this route next season.

It is hoped that Bailey bridges will be placed in position by next January. These will enable transport to operate from Milford Sound to within a short distance of the western portal of the tunnel.

*Lake Pukaki.—Pukaki Hotel*: This hotel is leased and is not under departmental management. Consequent upon hydro-electric developments at Lake Pukaki, the hotel is being moved to a new site, and the reconstructed building will provide improved accommodation for a small number of travellers.

### (3) MISCELLANEOUS

#### (a) LITTLE BARRIER ISLAND

The Caretaker indicates in his report that all the various native birds continue to thrive, but that kakas appear to be somewhat fewer in numbers. There is a steady increase in kiwis, and these birds are now found throughout the island from sea level to the summit.

Visitors to the island, principally scientists, included Mr. E. G. Turbott, of the Auckland Museum, who made a colour film of the bird-life, and the American ornithologist, Dr. R. C. Murphy, who also made pictures.

Maintenance-work was carried out in connection with the Caretaker's establishment, and tracks have been kept in order.

The usual patrols of the reserve have been carried out, and a number of animal aliens (cats and rats) was destroyed. A study is being made of methods employed overseas, especially in North America, of ridding protected wild life sanctuaries of animal pests.

#### (b) ROTORUA

(1) *Electrical System.*—The Electrical Superintendent reports a successful year, but points out that the growth in the load and the sale of electric energy has been restricted considerably by Electricity Control Regulations.

Nine miles of new line were erected and some underground cable was installed. Nearly 3 miles of lines were renewed and a mile of existing line was recoppered. Nineteen new transformers were installed to give supply to new consumers. New connections totalled 285, and extensions to existing connections were 486. Transformer substations in four localities were increased in capacity owing to growth of load.

A large amount of renewal work has been carried out at Mamaku, and more than 75 per cent. was completed at the end of the period. No major breakdowns occurred.

(2) *Water and Drainage System.*—These services were transferred to the Borough Council on 1st December, 1947. Before the transfer a 4 in. main was installed in Shirley Street to give supply to new houses. The main gravity pipe-line in the Hemo Gorge was replaced at the site of the slip that occurred there some three years ago.

(3) *Thermal Waters.*—The supply to the Main Bath Building and Blue and Ward Baths was well maintained. A new 2½ in. lead main was installed in the Main Bath Building for the Priest water.

(4) *Wharves and Beacons.*—It was necessary to redeck most of the main wharf at Lake Rotorua. Specially milled red birch was secured for the purpose in the preceding year, and the work was completed during the current period.

(5) *Waimangu Round Trip.*—Unsatisfactory condition of plant, chiefly associated with engine trouble in launches, caused operation of this popular excursion to be intermittent, and eventually the service was temporarily suspended. Installation of new engines in the "Rangitihī" on Lake Tarawera and the "Rotomahana" on Lake Rotomahana, together with the acquisition of the launch "Kahurangi" on the first-mentioned lake, enabled the trip to be resumed after closing down for about two months.

General maintenance has been carried out on tracks and jetties and staff cottages. The road frontage to the tea-rooms at Waimangu has been sealed. Improvements to the wharves and jetties on Lake Tarawera are contemplated, and in the meantime jetties on Lake Rotomahana are being replaced with floating landing-pontoons. There is a continuous rise and fall of the latter lake.

(6) *Gardens, Reserves, and Playing-areas.*—Revenue for the year shows an increase. There has been a substantial advance in the proportion represented by golf, bowls, tennis, and croquet.

The summer season was a particularly good one, and there was little interruption to games by inclement weather. Special treatment of bowling-greens proved most beneficial and satisfactory.

Conditions were especially favourable for plant-growth, and approximately 30,000 seedlings were planted out for display purposes, and, together with a wide range of herbaceous plants, gave a good showing from spring to autumn.

Considerable work was undertaken in further improving the appearance of the various buildings within the Model Pa at Whakarewarewa. The work is still in progress and the general condition of the pa is better than it has been for many years and a greater degree of authenticity has been aimed at.

## (c) TE AROHA

Although conditions were very dry for long periods the playing-areas have been maintained in good order over the season.

A great deal of general maintenance-work, hitherto necessarily delayed, has been undertaken during the year. Extensive repairs have been carried out to tracks on Te Aroha Mountain.

## (d) QUEENSTOWN

(1) *Domain and Gardens*.—Maintenance and improvements were carried out as opportunity offered during the winter. The rustic bridge over the lily pond and that over Brewery Creek were renewed. Fences were repaired or renewed, as also were climber rose supports and rose pergolas. Bowling-greens were replugged and top-dressed, and the surfaces relevelled. These greens and the croquet-lawn, which was also top-dressed, were in good playing order throughout the season. The tennis-courts were redressed.

All playing-areas were well patronized by visitors, but the bowling-greens were particularly popular.

(2) *Tracks and Huts*.—The tracks and huts at the head of Lake Wakatipu received attention during the year, and major repair work was carried out in the Dart Valley. The two old Dredge Huts were dismantled and the material used to build a new large hut capable of accommodating twenty-four persons in bunks.

The track from Paradise to Dredge Hut was placed in good order, and a new track was cut over Sandy Bluff to eliminate a ford that is often dangerous.

These activities have been favourably commented upon by walkers and by various tramping clubs. More such work in the district is contemplated during the coming year.

Repairs have been made to various bridges including Earnslaw Creek and the Routeburn River.

(3) *Snow Sport*.—The Coronet Peak ski-ing grounds are becoming increasingly popular, and this is reflected in the volume of winter traffic to Queenstown. The development of this snow-sports area resulted in full booking of accommodation during several months of the season.

Arrangements are in hand for the New Zealand Ski Championships to be held here in August next.

## (e) PLANE TABLES AND VIEWING-APPARATUS

Several plane tables are on order for installation in various places of tourist interest throughout New Zealand.

Pressure of other work has prevented the Dominion Physical Laboratory from completing reconditioning of certain viewing-apparatus, but delivery of the powerful coast-watching glasses referred to in last year's report has been made. It is hoped to install this equipment at the Hermitage, Mount Cook, in the near future.

## (f) RADIO COMMUNICATION IN MOUNTAIN AREAS

Plans for the installation of two-way radiophone equipment for use in remote mountain areas for emergency and other purposes are being developed on behalf of this Department by the Dominion Physical Laboratory in conjunction with experts of the Post and Telegraph Department. Satisfactory progress has been made, and it is hoped that the installations will commence during the coming climbing season.

### PASSENGER-BOOKING ACTIVITIES

So great is the value of the tourist industry to New Zealand that expenditure on advertising and Tourist Bureau services, and all other activities ancillary thereto, is amply repaid. A very great part of it is repaid in foreign currency that is valuable in the national economy of this country. Expenditure on Tourist Bureau services is recouped in large degree from direct revenue obtained from hotel and transport interests, who pay commission to the Department and other recognized travel agents in accordance with universal commercial world travel practice.

The potential traffic to New Zealand is unlimited, and it has increased by world-wide postponement of foreign travel during the war years. The possibilities for the earning of dollars and other useful currency by the encouragement of inwards tourist traffic appear to be very great.

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