

## APPENDIX V.

## THE EGMONT NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 10th July, 1905.

Enclosed herewith I have the honour to forward a report for the past season, and regret I have been unable to forward it earlier.

I have, &amp;c.,

IVAN SIMPSON, Chairman.

The Acting-Superintendent, Tourist Department, Wellington.

In submitting the following report I regret that, owing to the non-receipt of returns from the sub-committees, the information is more meagre than I should have wished. I have pleasure, however, in stating that the increase in the number of visitors and the general interest taken in the mountain has been greatly in excess of that of any previous year.

Regarding the two main houses, the Northern (Egmont) House has had slightly over two thousand visitors, as compared with the previous season's 1,116, and, as there is now a good, though partly unmetalled, road to the house, the prospects are very encouraging. Another important factor, as evidenced by the visitors' book, is the large number (274) from outside Taranaki who have made the ascent, showing that the attractions of Egmont are becoming more widely known.

The Southern (Dawson's Falls) House is greatly increasing in popularity, and when one notes double the number of visitors over that of a previous record season, the Executive of the Southern House have reason to feel sanguine of the future prosperity of the house. The visitors last season were 2,608, as compared with 1,270 for the previous one.

The Eastern (Stratford) House is now rapidly becoming more of an adjunct to the Southern House, there being a good walking-track between the two, and the distance being trifling. The visitors would number about two hundred.

The West (Rahotu) House is more used by the local population around the western portion of Taranaki than the general outsider, and probably one hundred would cover its visitors.

It is gradually becoming more and more manifest that the present houses, at any rate the Northern and Southern, are totally inadequate to meet the requirements of visitors, and it is only a question of time when larger ones will have to be erected to meet the increasing demand for accommodation.

From the Tourist Department and local sources of revenue the Board had a credit of £495 10s. 1d. Out of this was expended to the 31st March the sum of £376 1s. 9d., the apportionment being as appended: Track and road work, £286 5s. 5d.; additions to houses, £51 16s. 4d.; furniture, fittings, and general, £38.

The undermentioned amounts were expended on works under the supervision of the District Road Engineer, New Plymouth.

## UPPER EGMONT ROAD.

The dray-road to the North Mountain House was completed last December, and was formally opened by the Right Hon. the Premier on the 14th January last. The work done comprises 140 chains of dray-road formed, 11½ chains covered with scoria from cuttings, 47 lineal feet of tunnel, 495 lineal feet of culverts constructed. The whole length (4 miles 15 chains) has been repaired and maintained: cost, £506 5s. 5d.

On the 13th March tenders were opened for metalling 110 chains, from 3 miles 20 chains downwards. On the 18th April the tender of Messrs. Bayly and Co. for £511 10s. was accepted; but owing to the lateness of the season and the bad weather, practically nothing has been done, and the work will have to be postponed to next season.

Under a grant to the Moa Road Board, the last 16 chains from outside to the Radius Line has been metalled, and 66 lineal feet of culverts put in: cost, £110.

Out of funds provided by the Board, one mile and a half of bridle-track has been made from the House to Humphries' Castle.

## UPPER PEMBROKE ROAD (TO STRATFORD HOUSE).

This road to the Stratford House has been laid off on the permanent lines for 120 chains from the Radius Line, and the clearing and forming of the same is now in hand.

## DAWSON'S FALLS ROAD (TO SOUTH HOUSE).

The permanent line to the Southern House has been located, and an engineering survey 1 mile 19 chains in length made, 39 chains of clearing and levelling off for dray-road has been made, 62 chains is now in progress, and the balance of 25 chains is let: expenditure, £169 12s. 8d.

Besides this work, one mile and a half of bridle-track has been cleared between the Southern and Eastern (Stratford) Houses out of funds provided by the Board, and is being still further improved.

## ROUTES TO THE MOUNTAIN.

*The Northern (Egmont) House.*—From New Plymouth and Inglewood, both situated on the railway-line, there are good metalled roads to the Radius Line, while conveyances and horses could be procured at either place.

*The Southern (Dawson's Falls) House.*—A weekly coach service during the season has been instituted both at Hawera and Eltham, while Stratford as a base is equally desirable to start from. It is confidently anticipated that it will be possible at the opening of next season to drive the whole distance up to the house.

*The Eastern (Stratford) House.*—From Stratford, where riding-horses could be procured, the visitor follows the Pembroke Road.

*The Western (Rahotu) House.*—There is a good riding or walking road to this house *via* Rahotu.

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing 2,050 copies (exclusive of illustrations), £11.

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