

HANMER HOT SPRINGS.

The total receipts from all sources show a falling-off from £2,189 16s. 6d. for the previous year to £1,899 14s. 9d.; but as Hanmer is a place supported almost wholly by local people, such a result was only to be expected during an exceptionally wet and unseasonable summer. The rainfall during the season exceeded all previous records for the past thirty-seven years.

The number of visitors to the Spa was 392, being fifty-six less than recorded for the previous twelve months, and the number of baths taken was 21,536, compared with 25,132 for 1904-5.

The value of free accommodation and treatment, &c., amounted to £223 19s.

The new tea-house opened by the Department two years ago had, despite unfavourable weather, a very successful year, the receipts amounting to £181 2s. 6d., the taking for the five summer months of the previous year being £108 9s. 11d. The time occupied *en route* from Christchurch also operates against the popularity of this resort, especially for short-period visitors, who are being attracted to more accessible resorts, such as Timaru and Kowai.

The establishment of a motor-car service from Culverden would do a great deal to increase the traffic, but it would be necessary to bridge the streams between the Waiau Ferry and Hanmer.

During the year extensive repairs were carried out in the hot-water supply and outlet systems generally.

The grounds and lawns have been kept in good order, paths widened, and new beds put down. A meteorological observatory was erected on the grounds.

The work of fencing and planting the Conical Hill Reserve will be put in hand during the coming planting season.

The water-race was very much damaged by floods in February, but prompt repairs were effected.

The pipes for the new water-supply have been ordered, and the work is expected to be put in hand early.

PUKAKI ACCOMMODATION-HOUSE.

Although the gross receipts for the year show a decrease of £88 4s. 3d. as compared with the previous year, the accommodation fees were about the same—£256 2s., against £275 8s. 9d. for 1904-5, the falling-off being principally due to reduced liquor-sales. The number of visitors was about the same.

MOUNT COOK HERMITAGE.

The past year was a very successful one at this resort. The number of visitors totalled 185, as compared with 175; and receipts £1,082 9s. 8d., as compared with £924 13s. 6d.

Heavy floods during last winter cut the roads and tracks about a good deal, but the guides were able to effect repairs in time for the opening of the season.

Some fine alpine work was done during the season, the most notable achievements being the climbing feats of Mr. H. Sillem, an alpinist of European note, with Guides Clarke and Graham, and the traverse of Mount Cook by Messrs. Turner and Ross, accompanied by Guides Graham and Fyfe.

Mr. Sillem successfully climbed Mount Sealy with Guide Clarke, and followed it up by conquering the virgin peak Elie de Beaumont (10,200 ft.), the Malte Brun (10,421 ft.), only once previously ascended, and the southern peak of Mount Cook for the first time. He also did the main Mount Cook peak with Guides Clarke and Graham a few days later, and successfully scaled the Footstool, which he found a very difficult climb. The Department's guides did some very fine work in this series of ascents.

The traverse of Mount Cook was accomplished in January, the feature of the trip being the descent on the Hooker side of the mountain. Messrs. Turner and Ross gave the highest praise to Guides Graham and Fyfe for the excellent work and snowcraft displayed on this occasion.

The first accident of its kind in our alpine history occurred in March, when Mr. Low, a Scottish climber, met with an accident whilst attempting single-handed to cross *via* the Graham Pass from the west side of the range to the Hermitage. Shortly after crossing the pass he had the misfortune to slip on an ice-covered *couloir* and fell twenty feet, sustaining bad bruises and a broken ankle. He managed eventually to reach the Malte Brun Bivouac, where he was found by the Hermitage guides Clarke and Graham, having been out for ten days. This accident forcibly emphasizes the danger of undertaking difficult alpine trips without guides.

The accommodation at the Hermitage is now inadequate. The old portion of the house is showing signs of general decay, and a new house is immediately required.

I append an account from the pen of Dr. Teichelmann, describing an exploration of the valley of the main branch of the Cook River. Dr. Teichelmann was accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Newton and Mr. Lowe.

"This constitutes the first crossing of Harper's Saddle, and furnishes one more route from east to west over the Divide.

"In January, 1906, we again made our way to the Cook River Valley, feeling that there remained much to do, as we had not explored the extreme head of the valley, and we were also desirous of ascending Mount La Perouse, from the summit of which the most glorious of all the views of Mount Cook can be obtained. On this occasion we were joined by Mr. R. S. Low, of Scotland, and in place of Woodham we had the services of Charles Anderson, a prospector in the valley.

"We improved the track considerably this year, and it is now quite good enough for the use of miners or climbing tourists. In fact, it has been made use of by several prospectors since last year, and, I believe, with satisfactory results.

"With the exception of some changes in our camp-sites we proceeded up the valley by the same route as in 1905.

"This year we suffered from numerous delays on account of bad weather, snow falling for several days in succession. On the 1st February we started from a bivouac about an hour and a half above the high camp on the slopes of La Perouse to ascend that peak, and reached the summit