

Fees.—Experience has shown that the fees in force when the Board assumed control were somewhat high, with the result that they were reduced, and are now as follows :—

		SCALE OF FEES.		
		£	s.	d.
Accommodation—				
In huts (per person per night)	0	2	0
In tent (per person per night)	0	1	0
Camping—				
Tent not holding more than four (per week)	0	7	6
Tent holding between four and eight (per week)	0	10	0
Tent holding more than eight (per week)	1	0	0
Guide—				
For one person (per day)	1	0	0
For two persons (per day)	1	10	0
For extra person (per day)	0	7	6

Additions to Area of Park.—By Proclamation published in the *Gazette* of the 17th May, 1923, three areas of land aggregating 832 acres and 14 perches, and situated on the Mangawhero River bank near Ohakune, were added to the park. A further Proclamation in the *Gazette* of the 21st June, 1923, included 1 acre of the Town of Waimarino within the park. This latter area will be useful in the future as a depot for the Board in close proximity to the Waimarino Railway-station. These valuable additions to the park property bring its total area up to 145,833 acres.

Pamphlet.—The topographical map of the park issued as a lithograph was much in demand, but as the existing supply has recently been exhausted, the Lands and Survey Department are arranging to revise and republish the map at an early date.

Eruption.—Early in January last Ngauruhoe was in eruption. The outbreak was first observed at 6 o'clock in the morning of the 9th January. The mountains were obscured most of the day by masses of cumulus cloud, but the summit of the volcano at intervals was clear. Volumes of dark-grey smoke were billowing from the crater, and rolling away on the south-west wind, but did not rise to any great height. Seen through glasses, the outbreak presented an imposing sight, resembling smoke from a large bush-fire. This is the first eruption of any moment in five years. Towards evening the clouds cleared, and there appeared to be less smoke than in the morning. The dark bulk of the volcano made an impressive picture set against a background of vividly coloured sunset sky. There was apparently no extra activity at Ketetahi or Te Mari crater.

Hostel-site.—The Board made a very careful inspection of the several proposed hostel-sites at its meeting in February last, but deferred final decision on the matter pending the Engineer's report as to the water and hydro-electric supply available for the several sites.

It will be the policy of the Board to have an up-to-date hostel, capable of accommodating from fifty to one hundred visitors, erected near the base of Ruapehu, and to have a good metalled road constructed thereto from the main Waimarino-Tokaanu Road so that visitors may motor direct to the hostel, or step from the train at Waimarino into a conveyance, and be landed at the hostel without difficulty. The hostel will be in a central position, from which ascents of Ruapehu and other mountains can readily be made. There will be attractive walks to the lakes, springs, bush, and other features of the park, so that not only mountaineers and trampers, but visitors from the cities of the Dominion and abroad, unaccustomed to much exertion, can benefit by and enjoy the numerous walks and rambles which will be available. In addition the Board will see that the hostel is thoroughly modern and such as will harmonize with its surroundings; provision will be made for tennis-courts, golf-links, &c. Moreover, the policy of the Board is to encourage ski-ing and other winter sports. The hostel, therefore, should be in close proximity to the localities where these will take place, so that in winter as well as in summer the park will offer facilities and provide convenient and acceptable accommodation to all classes of visitors.

There are two methods by which such a hostel may be erected and managed. One is by encouraging private enterprise to undertake the task under lease or franchise from the Board, on somewhat similar terms to those granted by the park authorities in Canada or the United States; that would enable the parties concerned to erect a hostel and to manage it subject to a tariff and conditions prescribed or approved by the Board. The other way is for the Board to erect the hostel and appoint a manager to conduct it. The latter course, however, necessitates the expenditure of a considerable sum of money, which is beyond the present financial resources of the Board. So soon as the site for the hostel is definitely determined the Board will devote its earnest attention to the question of ways and means of erecting the hostel with requisite accommodation.

Bruce Road.—The main road leading from Waimarino to Tokaanu, over which a motor-car service runs regularly, was constructed, and has been kept in order by the Public Works Department, but as a distance of about four miles separates it from the Whakapapa huts, where the main body of visitors go, it is necessary to construct a permanent line of road thereto. Towards this purpose the Bruce Trustees very generously donated the sum of £1,000. The Lands and Survey Department arranged for the survey of the route by Mr. Stewart Fairhall, and the Public Works Department was good enough to allow Mr. P. J. Kellar, District Engineer, to prepare plans and specifications of the route adopted, which is now known as Bruce Road. The work of constructing it has been placed in the hands of the Prisons Department, and it is hoped that suitable access will be provided by next season.

Winter Sports.—The Ruapehu Ski Club held very successful alpine sports on the slopes of Ruapehu at the back of the Whakapapa huts on the 25th August, when between forty and fifty enthusiasts were present from Auckland, Wellington, Wanganui, Taumarunui, Ohakune, Raetihi, Hunterville, and Marton.