

Copland Pass was crossed seven times; Graham's Saddle was crossed six times.

It was disappointing that conditions prevented the Right Hon. L. S. Amery from climbing Mount Cook, but he got in some other good climbs, and crossed the ranges to Westland. Mr. Amery was laudatory of the ski-ing grounds in the New Zealand Alps, and his testimony in this respect will be of great value to this country.

The guiding staff had a busy season, and were easily equal to all demands made on their skill and experience.

WAIKAREMOANA AND EAST COAST.

As previously mentioned, the year at Lake House has been a very successful one, and shows the increasing popularity of this great holiday resort. The launch and boats were well patronized, and certain improvements will be effected before next season. The drawback of the bad state of the road from the outlet of the lake to the hostel has been overcome, and the road is now in first-class order right to the landing-place below Lake House. Cars can now proceed direct to the landing. The house has been well conducted by the Manageress during the season.

Morere Springs Reserve has also had a good season, and been well patronized. Various improvements to the baths have been authorized, and others are under consideration.

It has been decided to lease the site at Te Puia, and a lease has been granted to Mr. F. Thompson, of Tokomaru Bay, who has undertaken to erect a suitable accommodation-house and cater for the large business which is expected there. This matter has been the subject of much effort by Chambers of Commerce in Gisborne and Wairoa, and it is hoped that the hostel will again enable the benefits of the baths to be available to local people, as well as visitors to the district.

TE ANAU - MILFORD TRACK.

The traffic in this district has unaccountably fallen short of last year's; but it bears a healthy look for next season.

The track has been maintained in first-class order, very good work having been done by the track hands, without exception. A new hut has been erected on the Mackinnon Pass, which will prove a great boon as a resting-house and shelter. The filling and blinding work carried out on both sides of the pass is worthy of special mention. The huts have been well conducted, the couples having carried out their duties with every satisfaction. Minor improvements, such as painting, &c., have been effected at Quintin and Pompolona Huts, greatly improving the general appearance. The staff at Glade House have carried out their various duties in an able manner, although working under difficulties during the rush period.

By the time I come to write my next annual report I hope to be able to report that the new hostel at Milford has been open for a season and has been the means of inducing a much larger traffic to that district. The contract time for the building is up in July, and the work of fitting and furnishing the same will be put in hand forthwith. I am arranging to visit Milford with the Government Architect about that time, and to deal on the spot with any minor matters requiring attention.

The steamer at Lake Te Anau is at present being overhauled by the Marine Department's officers, with a view to effecting improvements. The project of the formation of a company to run a regular service from the Bluff to Milford and other sounds has been advanced a stage by the purchase of the "Awarua," and I understand the company are negotiating for the purchase of another and larger vessel.

The Public Works Department are still working on the access from Te Anau to Wakatipu, and I understand that good progress has been made. An officer of this Department did the walk across this season, and I have already a considerable amount of correspondence regarding the prospects for next season.

The work of installing the wireless telephone communication from Te Anau to Glade House has been completed, and will be in operation next season. A radio set has also been installed at Glade House; it has been tried out and given perfect reception. It will be a simple matter to extend this connection to the huts on the track.

OVERSEAS AGENCIES.

Mr. W. R. Blow (Sydney Agent) reports as follows:—

"It gives me very much pleasure to again report a record year as regards the amount of business that was transacted and the amount of money that was collected at this office for the sale of tickets for travel and accommodation in the Dominion. For the year ending 31st March, 1927, the large sum of £3,533 7s. 4d. was taken, but this year all records have been broken through the total bookings reaching £5,545 3s. 9d., an increase over last year of £2,011 16s. 5d. I attribute our great success to the fact that the majority of people who have bought our tickets have been personally recommended to do so by friends who have found out by experience how reliable the passenger-booking part of our Department is, and how the information and attention given by this office can be depended on.

"*Advertising.*—I am pleased to report that during the year the Dominion obtained many excellent advertisements, particulars of which are as follows:—

"(a) The distribution to leading hotels, clubs, steamers, &c., of ninety-four framed pictures of New Zealand scenery. This is an excellent class of advertisement, as it is permanent, and continually keeps the Dominion in memory. These pictures were framed and distributed on behalf of the Publicity Department.

"(b) Mr. Prentice, the late leading announcer of the Auckland Broadcasting Wireless Station, delivered two lectures on New Zealand, both of which were illustrated by cinematograph-film and magic-lantern slides, which I loaned to him. Each lecture was attended by hundreds of people.