

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF PARK BOARDS.

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

(W. ROBERTSON, Under-Secretary for Lands, Chairman.)

It is with regret that the Board records the inability of the Tongariro Park Tourist Co., Ltd., to carry on with the running of the Chateau. On the 2nd February, 1931, a resolution was passed for the winding-up of the company, and the Board entered into possession of the Chateau at the close of business on Friday, the 20th February. An application was made to the Registrar of the Supreme Court, Wanganui, on the 27th February, 1931, for the sale of the leasehold and chattels comprised in the Board's securities, and on the 30th March the leasehold was bought in at auction on behalf of the Board for £46,000 and the chattels for £15,000. The Board is now in full possession of the Chateau and other buildings erected by the company at Whakapapa, subject to the loan charges with respect to the moneys borrowed from the Public Trustee. All steps taken by the Board in regard to entering into possession and subsequent sale under conduct of the Registrar of the Supreme Court were with the approval of the Hon. the Minister of Finance. Immediately upon entering into possession the Board appointed a Manager and staff to carry on the running of the Chateau, so as to ensure that accommodation and other services would be available for the enjoyment of the public. Arrangements were also made with Webbs Motors, of Raetihi, to run a suitable transport service to and from the Chateau. There has been no break in the continuity of these services.

Questions relating to drainage, heating, lighting and power, development of golf-links, repairs to buildings, &c., are now engaging the attention of the Board.

It is evident that with the present financial depression and the falling-off of the tourist traffic, the Board will have some difficulty in carrying on the running of the Chateau, unless assistance is granted until times improve. The position will be carefully watched and reports submitted to the Government from time to time. Notwithstanding the depression, the park has been visited by large parties during the holidays and the winter-sports season should see a large gathering at the Chateau for ski-ing and winter climbing.

ROADS AND TRACKS.

Roads.

Bruce Road Main Highway.—No construction work was carried out on this road during the year under review. Ordinary maintenance work was undertaken by the Prisons Department, the metal being boxed up where necessary.

Whakapapa-Mangatepopo Road.—As stated in last year's report, formation on this road has been completed for a distance of a little over a mile. No further construction work was carried out on this road during the year, but the culverting of the portion already formed was completed, nine culverts of an aggregate length of 250 ft. being laid.

Whakapapa-Scoria Flat Road.—A length of 1 mile 11 chains of this road has been formed to a width of 14 ft., and nine culverts of an aggregate length of 167 ft. have been laid. A start was made with the erection of a bridge across the Whakapapa Stream of length 27 ft. and roadway 7 ft. wide. This road, when completed for its full distance of three miles and a quarter, will provide excellent access to the ski-ing grounds on the slopes of Mount Ruapehu.

Tracks.

A new footbridge has been erected across the Waiuku Stream and a good track has been formed through the bush for a distance of one mile and a half. This track, when completed, will open up a new and interesting route to the Tawhai Falls. The Main Tama Track for some distance has been trenched and widened, and a new track has been formed close to the Taranaki Falls. The Waihothonu Valley route for a distance of about two miles has been poled, indicating the direction to the hut. Repair work has also been carried out on the Main Ruapehu Track, and poles have been put in indicating the route to the Glacier Hut. The track to the Silica Springs has been repaired and a footbridge erected across the Whakapapa Stream. A further footbridge has been erected across the Upper Taranaki Stream. At Ohakune the track from the hut to the Mangaturuturu Valley was poled and general track maintenance carried out. The maintenance of existing tracks and the opening-up of new routes is an important feature in connection with the future development of the park. It is now possible for visitors to walk for many miles through bush and plain, broken by waterfalls and mountain streams, but much has yet to be done in the way of track formation to enable the public to fully appreciate the beauties of the park.

Finance.—The Board in entering into possession of the Chateau on the 20th February, 1931, was faced with a considerable outlay for the purchase of stores, printing, advertising, and other incidental expenses.

Debenture (No. 4) for £1,356 16s. 5d., being one of the series of seventy-three issued in 1929 in connection with the loan of £40,000 from the Public Trustee, fell due on the 1st March, 1931, and payment was made by the Government out of the Consolidated Fund under the provisions of section 36 of the Finance Act, 1928.

During the year the bequest of £100 (with accrued interest) under the will of the late Mr. W. Salt was received from the Public Trustee, and the sum will be expended on some appropriate work in the park.