

The Board again wishes to thank the various alpine clubs of the district for their assistance in popularizing the mountain and making use of the facilities available, as well as for drawing fairly large parties of the younger people to the mountain, and the enjoyment of the health-giving activities which can be engaged in on its slopes.

ARTHUR PASS NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

W. STEWART, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Christchurch, Chairman.)

I have the honour to submit a report dealing with the fourth complete year since the Board was established. It has again been a quiet year. Plans are not wanting to carry out the purposes for which the Board is constituted, but finances are so limited as to restrict the Board to only the most modest improvements. Nevertheless, it can be fairly claimed that the Board is more firmly established as a controlling body and has exercised a progressive influence in the park area.

Personnel.—It is with the utmost regret that we have to record the death of Sir Arthur Dudley Dobson, an original member of the Board. Sir Arthur was, of course, a notable personality in the Provinces of Canterbury and Westland, and the honour he received from the King was a recognition of his very valuable services to the community, about which we need not refer to here. His passing is a distinct loss to the Board not only because of his early associations with the discovery of the pass which bears his name, and with the district under the Board's control, but also because we shall no longer have the advantage of his keen interest in and activity on behalf of the Board.

Meetings.—The Board met three times during the year. The annual visit to the park on the 3rd June was made by the majority of members, and enabled much work to be carried out. One party attended the ceremony at the opening of the Christchurch Ski Club's hut, and another dealt with matters requiring attention in the township, and, in particular, with the proposals for the improvement of what otherwise is a waste area adjacent to the township.

Tourist Traffic was not as heavy this year. The Railway Department ran seven excursions and carried 1,478 passengers during the winter. The season, however, did not prove the best for winter sports, because of the poor falls of snow. The influx of visitors during the "off season" has, however, been greater. The locality is becoming steadily more popular as a holiday resort. The Board has still, unfortunately, failed to impress the Railway Department with the merits of its request that a small surcharge should be made on excursion tickets to enable the Board to improve the facilities available to patrons of the excursions.

Township.—The Board's control here is manifesting itself in a steady improvement in the orderliness of the place, and in the amenities provided for residents. There is no demand for sections, nor has any new cottage been erected, but several owners have added to and improved their properties. There is good ground for the expectation that when the general financial position is alleviated there will be a decided increase in building permits. The street-lighting provided by the Board has proved a boon to residents.

The Ranger has rendered much useful service to the Board and the public. Particularly appreciative comment is made in respect of his services to visitors and trampers. He displayed resource and gave much help in the unfortunate mountain tragedy that occurred last winter. He has shown much zeal in the interests of the Board. Mr. Warden's report, which will be presented to the Board, advocates the erection of a shelter at the Divide in memory of Sir Arthur Dudley Dobson; refers to the erection by himself of rustic seats at vantage-points; and remarks upon the efficacy of the river-protection works carried out by the Public Works Department.

Thanks are due to Mr. T. W. Johnstone, Engineer, Public Works Department, Greymouth, for technical advice freely given and for inspections carried out; to the public press for generous publicity of the Board's affairs and of the park's attractions; to Mr. M. J. Barnett for a well-conceived plan for laying out and developing waste areas into a public garden and park; to Mr. W. D. Frazer for a first-class lantern lecture; to honorary rangers for carrying out their duties efficiently and in the best spirit; to Dr. William McKay for his continued services as Chairman of the Grounds Committee, where he has borne the brunt of the Board's work with maintained interest and energy.

Winter Sports were much restricted because of the limited fall of snow, but the park was much used by trampers, mountaineers, and skiers. The latter, under the ægis of the Christchurch Ski Club, have now erected a well-equipped hut which affords much improved facilities for the sport. The club has co-operated with the Board to the fullest extent, and has shown a gratifying spirit of self-help. Its efforts in the proper control of winter sports are much appreciated.

GROUND.

The report of the Grounds Committee is furnished by the Chairman, Dr. William McKay, and is set out hereunder:—

Tracks.—In accordance with the Board's resolution at last meeting, two new mountain tracks have been made. One on Mount Barron is over the line of the old Public Works track to the point from which the survey observations were taken in constructing the tunnel. The other is on the northern face of Mount Philistine, and will prove an excellent return route for climbers ascending this peak from the Upper Otira Valley. Your Committee would like to point out that the park now has a good series of such well-graded tracks, there being two to Mount Rolleston, two to Mount Barron, two to Mount Philistine, while Avalanche Peak and Kelly Range each has one. The necessary sign-posting in connection with all these has been well carried out by our ranger, Mr. C. Warden. Our honorary ranger at Otira, Mr. W. Frazer, informs us that the tracks on the western side are much used and appreciated by visitors. On Mount Barron and Philistine several lookouts were made in the bush, so that excellent views can be obtained of the surrounding country.