

The efforts of Alpine Club members generally have been of real benefit to the Board in providing attractions which, it is felt, will bring in increased revenue in later years.

Afforestation.—The clearing of the plantation has again been done by unemployed labour, but, unfortunately, replacement of dead trees has not been possible owing to total lack of the Board's funds.

Viewed generally, 300 acres of plantation are in very fair order, but there are numerous places where additional planting is vitally necessary to make a uniform plantation.

With the limited amount of unemployed labour available, considerable difficulty is experienced in getting adequate fire-breaks cleared in order to protect the trees in case of outbreak of fire from the neighbouring farms.

Every endeavour has been made by the Board through its various committees to again improve facilities for winter sport, as it is felt that considerable improvement in finance will follow if this attractive sport can be obtained on Mount Egmont. Winter sports are now held both at Stratford and Dawson Falls, and now that the new hut has been erected at Humphries Castle it will provide the necessary accommodation for winter sports on the northern area.

In an endeavour to obtain some financial assistance the Board has this year done everything possible to interest the local bodies of Taranaki in the hopes that some definite annual contribution may be obtained from them which, it is hoped, will carry a Government subsidy as well.

The Board has waited upon the District Highways Council with a request that it recommends to the Main Highways Board that the latter Board take over the responsibility for the maintenance of the roads within the reserve belonging to the North, East, and South Mountain Houses. This request was affirmed by the Council and recommended to the Highways Board.

ARTHUR PASS NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

(J. F. QUINN, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Christchurch, Chairman.)

I have the honour to submit a report and statement of accounts for the fifth complete year since the Board was established in September, 1929. The Board has this year been able to make some advance with a few of its projects, chiefly because of the assistance given by the Unemployment Board. Apart from these works, which will be covered in subsequent paragraphs, the Board continues to be stultified in its endeavours by the complete withdrawal of financial support, which very naturally reflects itself in a restriction of all the Board's activities. Nevertheless, the Board claims to have exercised a progressive and healthful influence in the park itself and upon the residents and public who make use of its attractions.

Personnel.—At the beginning of the year the Board had the misfortune to lose the services of Professor Arnold Wall, who removed his residence to Auckland. In September, Mr. W. Stewart was appointed to the office of Valuer-General in Wellington, and in consequence resigned his position as Chairman of the Board. The Board has tendered Mr. Stewart its cordial congratulations on his promotion and its sincere appreciation of his able services in the Board's behalf. Mr. J. F. Quinn, on his appointment as Commissioner of Crown Lands, assumes the Chairmanship in Mr. Stewart's stead.

Meetings.—The Board met on two occasions, and the Executive met once. Although more meetings were desirable and even necessary, considerations of expense were the chief cause of the reduction. The Board, however, has resolved on holding a minimum of four meetings annually. It was regrettable that the annual inspection was not held on the 3rd June, as this visit on the part of members is a most valuable feature of the Board's work.

Finance.—(a) Further endeavours were made to secure a share in an art union, but it was made abundantly clear by the authorities that the Board's application would not be granted.

Permission has just been sought and obtained for the Board to organize an art union for its own benefit. The limitations, however, that have been imposed are such as to make such an undertaking a most unattractive proposition. It will be a matter for the Board's consideration as to whether it will proceed.

(b) As a preliminary to approaching local bodies for further assistance, inquiries were made of the Christchurch City Council as to whether the sum of £150, the unpaid balance of a grant made in 1930, could now be paid. It appears that there will be considerable difficulty in obtaining approval to this. It will be an unprofitable proceeding to seek further grants from other local bodies unless a practical lead can be obtained from the City Council.

(c) Notwithstanding that the Government has made no monetary grants to the Board except a sum of £200 to cover preliminary expenses in 1929, and that other similar bodies have received generous grants, the Government will not afford any help. The only course to take here is to place the facts frankly before the Government in a final attempt to persuade the Government of the Board's urgent need.

(d) It is now a matter of immediate concern as to what further action can be taken to place the Board on a sound financial basis. Obviously the Board cannot be content to merely continue its present services until its funds are exhausted. There are many projects unfulfilled and added responsibilities to maintain which make it imperative to increase the Board's income and reserves, or both.

Unemployment Camp.—It is gratifying to report that we were able to arrange this year for a camp of unemployed to be established. A camp of six men, together with a foreman and cook, subsidized by this Board, was set up and were engaged for four months. Weather conditions, first heavy continuous rain and then prolonged drought, were against the best use being made of our opportunity.

In the early stages we suffered from labour troubles, but in due course we succeeded in getting together a first-class team of men whose work and general behaviour have merited high commendation. The camp has reopened at Otira to clear up rubbish that has disfigured the landscape since the opening of the tunnel. Early in April it will be transferred to Arthur Pass to continue planting operations. It will then remove again to Otira to finish the work there. In respect of both camps, and in