

Ranger.—Mr. Norman Gibson, the Board's ranger, continues to do excellent work. He has a great interest in the flora and fauna of the mountain, and he never spares himself where the Board's interests are concerned. He has, too, won increasing co-operation from the farmers adjoining and in proximity of the radius line. During the year just ended he has destroyed 800-odd goats. It seems that now the menace is well under control.

During the coming season it is suggested that with the help of honorary rangers, who will form themselves into shooting parties, the goats may be almost exterminated. This, though, will not be possible until farmers within a definite radius of the mountain are prohibited by legislation from keeping goats. The ranger reports that as the winter approaches the nanny goats make for the lower levels and that the winter shooting party finds that its bag consists largely of billy goats.

There have been cases of stock trespassing in the reserve, but the ranger has kept a very close eye on this, and there is actually little cause for complaint, nor has it been necessary to prosecute offenders. Unbranded cattle and cattle which cannot readily be mustered in the reserve the ranger has not hesitated to destroy. He reports, too, that there is an increasing care by the public of bird-life in Taranaki and that the numbers of birds in the reserve are definitely on the increase.

He reports that he has not detected any unauthorized cutting of trees within the reserve. This matter has his constant care.

Native Trees.—At the Winter Show in New Plymouth the Taranaki schools, under the direction of Mr. Duncan McKay, Senior Instructor in Agriculture for the Taranaki Education Board, and with the encouragement of the Park Board and its ranger, made a most excellent display of native seedlings. The Board's wish is at all times to encourage in every way the raising, planting, and protection of native trees. The display made by the schools was most encouraging.

Opossum-trapping.—For the coming year, which has been declared a close season for trapping, the Board has, rather than allow the opossums to unduly increase in number, obtained special permission from the Minister to trap. Blocks have been let on a royalty basis of 6d. per skin, the trapper in addition to pay 6d. per skin for the cost of stamping.

Pinis Plantation.—With the help of the Unemployment Board the work of lopping off the lower branches of the *Pinis insignis* and the thinning-out of the dead and weaker trees in the 300 acres of plantation continues. This work is being undertaken under the advice of the Forestry Department, and should be completed by the end of the 1939 winter. It has been a much heavier work than was anticipated. This forest should be a valuable asset to the Board in the years to come, besides providing a valuable protection for the native bush.

Local Committees and Alpine Clubs.—These bodies continue to do most valuable work. To the three hostels valuable improvements have been made largely out of revenue during the year. This has been possible owing to the increasing numbers of visitors and tourists to Mount Egmont. The alpine clubs, too, have progressed, and it is pleasant to report the friendly co-operation which exists among the House Committees, the alpine club, and the Park Board.

The Park Board is in entire sympathy with the Government for the physical improvement of the young people of New Zealand and will do all that it can to encourage the members of the five alpine clubs in Taranaki.

Before concluding I should like to state that it is my hope that in the event of some system of permanent revenue being established for the upkeep of the park, a permanent forester be appointed. This should be a young man, a forest enthusiast, who could look forward to a life's work in gradually developing the protection of the forest and the scientific reforestation of the reserve, a work which should be invaluable to Taranaki in the years to come.

In conclusion, I wish to express to members of the Board my sincere appreciation of their valued support and encouragement during the year, and to Mr. Hugh Baily, the Board's Secretary, and Mr. Norman Gibson, the Ranger, for their work and interest in the affairs of the Board. Since the year closed the Board lost the services of Mr. W. H. Moyes and Mr. P. E. Stainton as Board members. Both have done most useful work for the park. The new representatives for the North Committee are Messrs. F. Amore, New Plymouth, and G. W. Gibson, Kaimiro.

ARTHUR PASS NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

(N. C. KENSINGTON, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Christchurch, Chairman.)

The 31st March, 1938, marked the end of the eighth year of the Board's activities, and I have the honour to submit for adoption and for presentation to the Hon. the Minister of Lands a report on the Board's affairs for that period.

Financial.—The Board has again had the benefit of a financial grant from the Government, this year the sum of £250 being advanced for the employment of permanent labour in the way of track-making and the maintenance of earlier works. The Board is most grateful for the generous assistance which has been given by the Government over the last two years, which, needless to say, encourages the Board considerably in its work. Assistance from local bodies has not, however, been so stimulating, and a generous grant provisionally proposed by the Christchurch City Council has so far not been made available. The general question of financial assistance will no doubt be considered by the Board at its next meeting.

Personnel.—During the year there have been changes in the personnel of the Board through the regrettable demise of Mr. W. K. McAlpine and the resignation of Mr. J. D. Pascoe. Mr. N. C. Kensington has succeeded Mr. J. F. Quinn as Chairman, and Mr. A. G. Flower and Mrs. W. F. Tracey have been appointed members of the Board. Another change is pending due to the fact that His Worship the Mayor of Christchurch has decided not to contest the Mayoralty at the forthcoming election. While welcoming his successor in advance, the Board will regret the departure of Mr. Beanland from the Board table.