

Tokaanu-Pipiriki Route.

The complaints of travellers on this route do not diminish; in fact, there is a tendency in the other direction. It is desirable that something more effective be done to put the coach-road in repair. For a great part of the past season it was unfit for coach traffic.

WHANGANUI RIVER.

The work of improving the upper reaches is still proceeding, under the direction of the River Trust Board. The river has been widened at Tarepokiore by removal of a cliff on the right bank, thereby improving the channel and causing the disappearance of a dangerous whirlpool. Retaining-walls in the Ongarue tributary near Taumarunui landing, at Rurumaiakatea, Taurangahoura, Towhenua, Rarawhakamatuku, Taitakataka, and Tehoroporoaki were constructed. These improvements have enabled a continuous service to be maintained. At Retaruke, Ohaoa, Upokopoito, Tupapa, and Auokura 1,593 ft. of new wall was constructed. The works were much hindered early in the year by a heavy flood which carried away considerable gear, &c. The steamship company's houseboat, between Pipiriki and Taumarunui, has been in use during the season. The river was very low for some time in late summer, which probably accounted for the complaints in the matter of irregular and unreliable runnings of the boats. An improvement was effected whereby a day is practically saved between Auckland and Wellington by making a steamer connection at Wanganui twice weekly with the express south, so as to enable passengers to travel from Pipiriki to Wellington in one day.

MOUNT EGMONT.

The number of visitors to the mountain-houses materially increased on previous years, especially at the Northern and at Dawson's Falls Houses. A feature of the traffic was the large number of oversea tourists who "did" the mountain. The traffic generally has now reached such dimensions that the question of providing better and more ample accommodation at the houses requires early consideration.

The report of the Chairman of the Egmont National Park Board is printed in the appendices.

MORERE.

The bath-houses mentioned in my last report have been completed, and in use for some time. The receipts from baths, a proportion of which come to the Department, amounted to £35 4s., and amply justify the expenditure on the new houses.

There are appearances of greatly increasing traffic at this place.

LAKE WAIKAREMOANA.

This resort had a very late season owing to broken weather, which at any time seriously affects the means of transit to the lake. The oil-launch returns, however, show a fair increase. The number of visitors to the resort was 314, and receipts £449 10s. 5d., compared with 279 and £441 2s. 5d. for the previous year.

To provide for the lake traffic, a wharf for the oil-launch passengers has been constructed in Oporau Bay, and skids with cradle laid from the boat-house alongside in order that the launch may be protected from the weather during the off season.

A cottage has been erected near the house for employees and visitors, fitted with bunks, &c.

Tracks were cut in the Aniwanui Valley to the falls, to Te Mokau Falls, and to Ohiring Bluffs, and the Waikareiti Track was cleared. The surroundings of the house have been greatly improved by enclosed lawns, flower-beds, &c., and the orchard and kitchen-garden furnished an ample supply of vegetables, &c., for the house.

The fishing on this lake is attracting much attention, and is becoming a feature of the season's business. More boats, however, will be required for sportsmen.

The pigeon service to the telegraph-office at Wairoa is now in regular working-order, with good results.

The difficulties of reaching the lake and the class of some of the accommodation *en route* go a long way to militate against the complete success of this resort, although the coaching facilities are now much improved. I do not anticipate any great increase of outside traffic until better means of reaching the lake from Rotorua through the Urewera country are provided.

FOXTON MARINE RESERVE.

During the year this reserve at Manawatu Heads was fenced by the Department at a cost of £48 2s., as a protection for the plantation laid out there some years ago.

THE MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS.

The beautiful Sounds of Marlborough—Queen Charlotte and Pelorus Sounds and their subsidiary arms—are attracting more attention every year, and their charms of scenery are becoming widely known. Pelorus Sound is a fine yachting-ground, and is destined to become as important a pleasure place for the people of Wellington as the Hauraki Gulf is for Aucklanders. As in the case of other scenic resorts and sport localities in the colony, the attractions of the Marlborough Sounds are being widely advertised by the Department, and amongst the district maps of tourist routes published recently is one devoted to the county of the Sounds and adjacent parts, showing steamer-tracks, coach-routes, &c., places of accommodation, telephone-offices, and fishing and shooting grounds.