

The balance in bank at 31st March to Board's credit was £26 11s. 11d.; cash in hand, £5 6s.: total, £31 17s. 11d. This does not include subsidy received in April, 1906—£50. There will not be any money available for a bowling-green this year.

The Superintendent, Tourist Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
J. GALLAGHER, Chairman.

APPENDIX V.

THE EGMONT NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 12th July, 1906.

Enclosed herewith I forward report in connection with the past season's operations.

I regret that this was not sent you earlier, but I was prevented doing so by the non-receipt of certain information I had been waiting for in connection with the completing of the report.

I have, &c.,
The Acting-Superintendent, Tourist Department, Wellington. IVAN SIMPSON, Chairman.

FOR the past season, although well above the average, a falling-off in the number of visitors has to be recorded, mainly owing to the unsettled weather, as the roads—at any rate, to the two main houses—are now negotiable for wheel traffic. At the northern end this is more particularly the case—in fact, the trip has been made from New Plymouth to the Egmont House by motor-car, driven all the way. At the southern end the road can be driven over, but requires metalling, the formation being soft, particularly should the weather be wet. His Excellency the Governor made a visit to Dawson's Falls House this season, being driven all the way. Now that the road approaches are passable, attention has been given to making serviceable tracks between the various houses, and the round trip has been accomplished in the day. Communication has also been opened up between the Egmont (Northern) House and Bell's Falls, and this route is being largely availed of. As a result of inspections made, the Board can more particularly strongly recommend visitors to the Egmont and Dawson's Falls Houses, owing to the presence of caretakers (married), and a sure supply of provisions and bedding.

As I have pointed out from time to time, the question of wild cattle trespassing in the reserve will soon have to be considered, and legislative sanction obtained to keep these down, as a protection to tourists and the forest flora.

The number of visitors who have actually signed the book at the Egmont House has been about sixteen hundred, the fees received being spent in the upkeep of houses and track extension and repairs.

The number of visitors to the Dawson's Falls House was about seventeen hundred, a considerable decrease on last year, due to the wet weather prevailing through the season and the consequent bad state of the road. The local revenue from fees, &c., from this house amounted to £68 11s., but this does not include the amount due to the custodian, which would bring the total up to about £200.

The principal expenditure was in the erection of an additional mountain cottage, at a cost of about £150. This cottage has been built and furnished with the object of providing ordinary home accommodation for a limited number of visitors, and the Tourist Department can now safely recommend visitors to the Dawson's Falls House, knowing they will find quarters well above the average.

In addition to the above expenditure, ordinary upkeep accounted for some £30.

The number of visitors to the Western House was about a hundred; the track is in very fair order, and the accommodation very fair. The fees received have practically all been absorbed in repairs and improvements to the track, logging up, &c., glazing and other repairs to the house.

The Stratford House has been more an adjunct to the Dawson's Falls House than a residence resort for tourists, and work in the locality has mainly been on track-formation.

EXPENDITURE (TOURIST ROADS).

Grant £200, Stratford House to Egmont House.

This line was located at a grade of 1 in 7 or better. A good walking-track, at most places fit for horses, has been constructed and maintained for 90 chains, and work is still in progress. The Man-ganui Gorge was the chief difficulty. Expenditure, £136 9s. 6d., out of £200

Grant £550, Upper Egmont.

The metalling contract let to Messrs. Bayly and Sole, covering 110½ chains, has been completed, 21 chains of felling done to let in light and air, and the whole track, 4 miles 15 chains, maintained. Expenditure, £547 3s. 10d., out of £550.

Grant £241, Upper Pembroke.

A hundred and twenty chains of bridle-track have been formed and maintained, and 41 lineal feet of culverts constructed; and a contract for clearing up to the crossing of the Mountain Railway is now in hand. Expenditure, £186 1s. 9d., out of £241.