

The house erected by the Government as a residence for the caretaker has been kept in good order and condition, as also all outhouses, boat-sheds, &c. A neat garden and orchard has been formed, and is well looked after; and generally all matters connected with the maintenance of the island have received proper attention.

The Institute would again draw the attention of the Government to the desirability of a few pairs of huia being transferred to the island from the mainland. The huia is a bird which is now becoming very rare in its special habitats, and in a few years will probably become extinct. The Little Barrier is a locality that would probably suit it better than any other, and, if it is intended to make an attempt to preserve it anywhere in New Zealand, no time should be lost in attending to the matter.

T. E. Donne, Esq., Wellington.

I have, &c.,

T. F. CHEESEMAN, Secretary.

APPENDIX IV.

REPORT ON NATIONAL PARK AT MOUNT EGMONT.

THE number of visitors to the North Egmont House and reserve during the past season was 1,082. The receipts totalled £141 15s., inclusive of a Government grant of £50. The expenditure was £112 8s. 8d.; the principal items under this category being caretaker, £31 6s. 2d.; toll-keeper, £5; house and cottage repairs, &c., £22 12s. 6d.; labour on tracks, £36 1s.; clearing and grassing upper paddock, £7 10s. The unexpended balance will be spent in further improvements to the house and tracks.

The season just ended has been a record one as regards the number of visitors to the Northern House and its surroundings. The heavy traffic over the main track, coupled with the broken weather, has had the effect of damaging the roadway considerably, but the work done recently under the supervision of the Roads Department and the North Egmont Committee will have the effect of keeping the track through the winter in fair condition ready for the opening of next season. The track from the North House towards the summit of the mountain will be opened out and improved, and also the pathway from the house to the Waiwakaiho Gorge and thence on to Bell's Falls will be reopened and made available to tourist and local visitors wishing to visit these undoubtedly charming spots. It is the North Committee's intention to keep the house open during the coming winter months. This is an experiment which it is hoped will prove successful; the novelty of the surroundings, and Egmont in its winter garb, should prove attractive to the more hardy type of mountaineers.

The popularity of the mountain as a health resort is being every day more appreciated, and its recuperative power is continually recommended by the medical profession. The high altitude, with its bracing and health-giving surroundings, coupled with the dry porous nature of the ground (light layer of soil resting on a scoria-gravel bed), has proved remarkably beneficial to all classes of the community.

The East Committee labours under the disadvantage of having their house more exposed than the others, and consequently only the hardy and more robust seem to favour this route, the majority of the visitors from Stratford and its surroundings seldom reaching the plateau where the house is situated. They drive to the end of the Pembroke Road, leave their horses and vehicles there, stroll up the bush track until they reach a convenient picnicking-ground, and possibly afterwards penetrate another mile or two into the Reserve; but the pleasures of a day in the bush appear to suffice the generality of visitors, who numbered three hundred and fifty. The receipts for the past season, including a Government subsidy, were £70 13s. 1d., and the expenditure £68 4s. 8d.

Assisted by a Government subsidy, and by subscriptions from the Road Board and the general public, the energetic West Committee have done a good year's work, the effects of which will be more noticeable as time goes on. A house has been built 32 ft. by 14 ft., consisting of a general room, and two sleeping-rooms each containing twelve bunks; but about thirty-five persons could be accommodated if required. Tables and forms and a few utensils have been provided, but as the building has only lately been completed the formal opening will be made next season. A horse-track on a fairly easy grade has been completed, so that goods can be packed right up to the house. Although without a house to rest or sleep in on the end of a trip, two hundred visitors ascended the mountain *via* Rahotu by this route during the season. The receipts, £90, including a grant, will be quite exhausted by this initial expenditure.

The South Committee's house has again had a very successful season, as its record of 1,084 visitors will show. The large number of visitors who make the mountain trip their great yearly outing tends to show the interest taken by local residents. The comfortable house, together with the lovely scenery in the immediate neighbourhood, which can be enjoyed without much exertion, has doubtless a great deal to do with this. No details of expenditure have been received from this committee.

During the year, under the Act of 1901, the Board leased for a term of twenty-one years the portion of open land in the reserve near Ahuahu, mostly to owners of adjoining lands, who under