

HANMER SPRINGS.

In view of the proposal of the Health Department to erect a hospital for wounded soldiers at Hanmer, the Department has not taken further action to rebuild the Sanatorium, but has continued to lease the cottages now used for the accommodation of invalids. The revenue from this source and from the grounds has been £1,594, while for the previous year it was £1,574.

HERMITAGE, MOUNT COOK.

The returns from this resort are easily the best to date, and this fact, coupled with the necessity of having to refuse accommodation to many intending visitors, points to the urgency of further accommodation being provided, and for this plans have been prepared. The season was opened earlier than usual, and alpine sports indulged in at the head of the Mueller Glacier with very satisfactory results. The revenue for the year was £4,539, an increase of £1,524 on the previous season.

During the year a considerable amount of improvement work has been carried out. After last tourist season closed the guiding staff remained on and several miles of new track were constructed, which have added much to the convenience of visitors. In the spring the repairing-work of all the tracks in the vicinity of the Hermitage and glaciers was put in hand, and these were kept in good order throughout the season.

Early in March an unfortunate washout occurred on the Ball Hut track, when the "Blue Lake," a well-known and much-admired beauty-spot on the way to the Tasman Valley, was totally filled in and destroyed.

The traffic-bridge over the Hooker River, which was completed during the winter, was of considerable assistance and convenience during the season to visitors doing the Tasman trips, besides relieving the anxiety of having to negotiate the river during flood-time. The increase in the livery returns is largely due to the use which has been made of the bridge.

A new hut has been constructed on the Haast Ridge, at an altitude of about 7,000 ft., near the site of the old bivouac. The hut—which is a memorial to the climbers killed in 1913—has been erected at the joint cost of the Government and a committee of climbers and friends of the deceased. This work, which has been very arduous, has been carried out by the Public Works Department. The situation of the hut commands a most comprehensive view of the whole of the glacier systems of the great Tasman and surrounding high peaks, and will be the climbing-base for ten to twelve of the highest mountains in the Alps, including Mounts Cook and Tasman.

The Department's action in opening the Hermitage in October, a month earlier than usual, to encourage skiing and other winter sports, proved to be a step in the right direction. The weather was not all it might have been, but nevertheless a very large party spent an enjoyable time at the Mueller hut. With such encouragement each spring I feel sure that ski-ing and winter sport will soon become a big feature in our mountains.

During the season a considerable number of high ascents (of which a list is appended) and interesting expeditions were accomplished, the most important being the first ascent of Mount Cook by a New Zealand lady, this honour having fallen to Mrs. P. Graham. Great interest was also taken in the complete traverse of the three peaks of Mount Cook by Mrs. Thomson, of Wellington, and also the complete traverse and first ascent of the second peak of Mount Sefton, and the complete traverse of the three peaks of Mount Cook by Mr. Samuel Turner, F.R.G.S., also of Wellington. Besides the climbs mentioned, four ascents were made of the Hochstetter Dome, nine ascents of Mount Annette, three of Mount Kitchener, three of Mount Wakefield, including one traverse of Mounts Kinsey and Wakefield, and one crossing of the Ball Pass. Trips to the glaciers, valleys, and other points of interest in the vicinity of the Hermitage were well patronized. About fifty persons, including the guides, made the crossing of the Copland Pass, several parties making the round trip across to the West Coast and returning by Graham's Saddle.

The new guides' quarters were completed during December, and were extensively used for an overflow while the rush of visitors was on during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

The chamois and thar liberated on the reserves have been seen several times during the summer, and on all occasions the animals have looked very fit and in splendid condition. A herd of eighteen thar was seen on one occasion on the Sealy Range behind the hostel.

For the purposes of record a list of the season's climbs is included herein.

LIST OF CLIMBS ON SOUTHERN ALPS, SEASON 1915-16.

Date.	Name of Peaks.	Height, in Feet.	Climbed by	Name of Guide.	Route and Remarks.
1915. April 7	Unnamed peak on Ben Ohau Range, first peak south of Mount Sealy	About 7,541	Mrs. J. Thomson ..	C. Kain ..	First ascent by east <i>arête</i> .
.. 8	Mount Sealy	8,631	F. G. Rolleston, M. W. Beaven, W. G. Graves	P. Graham	Ascent N. face; descent W. face.
Oct. 28		8,631	G. Gresson, M. Gresson	F. Milne ..	Ascent and descent W. face.
Dec. 6	Mount Bannic	8,300	Mrs. J. Thomson ..	C. Kain ..	Ascent and descent S. face.
.. 11	Mount Burns	8,984			Ascent and descent E. face.
.. 13	Mount Cook	12,349	Mrs. P. Graham ..	P. Graham, F. Milne	Ascent and descent by Green's route from Haast Bivouac. "First New Zealand lady."