

The Grave Talbot Pass has been very popular during the season. Quite a number did the round trip, crossing the Milford Track and Dore Pass.

The weather has been fairly good most of the season, but several heavy floods have been experienced, making the track heavy going on several occasions. It was necessary to delay only one party for a day. January, 1938, shows the lightest rainfall record for the past ten years.

The new road under construction to the Homer has been formed about $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It will be possible next season to drive by motor up to the "Chasm," a distance of six miles from the hotel. This is a place well worth visiting. It is described in Moir's "Southern Lakes" guide as a place of great interest.

During the season several aeroplanes have made flights over Milford Sound district, including one Lockheed plane, which set a course about 3,000 ft. up, coming through the narrows, doing all the valleys, and finally proceeding through the Arthur Valley towards McKinnon Pass. It is understood that this plane was chartered by a party of American tourists.

The Department took over control of the Lake Te Anau steamer this season, which made the regulating of passenger traffic much more efficient.

The launch "Donald Sutherland" is running very satisfactorily. The comfort of this launch is much appreciated by all tourists. In March she was chartered for a trip to George Sound. The launch, "Gispa," purchased in Auckland for Milford Sound, is also giving good service.

Lake Ada has been very difficult to navigate this season owing to a very low water-level. The service has been maintained under great difficulties; new landings had to be made on both sides of the lake.

THE MANAGER, THE CHATEAU TONGARIRO.

The Manager reports that with the exception of the restoration and enlarging of the annexe to the Salt Hut, which was damaged by a gale, no new buildings have been constructed during the year. General maintenance-work has been attended to on all buildings and plant. The lodges, huts, cottages, &c., behind the Chateau have been painted and generally improved.

The golf-course was maintained in good order, and the excellent condition of the greens and fairways was commented on favourably by guests.

Ski-ing.—Despite the fact that there were no New Zealand championships or inter-state matches held at the Chateau Tongariro last winter, the season was a record one, an appreciable increase in revenue being recorded. The visit of the American ski-ing team was much appreciated, and the best exhibitions of ski-ing ever seen on Ruapehu were witnessed. The Americans were a very fine type and helped our local skiers to improve their ski-ing. It was pleasing to record that the team considered the slopes of Ruapehu ideal for ski-ing, and the Department is indebted to them for publicity obtained for New Zealand in the *American Ski Annual*.

THE CARETAKER, LITTLE BARRIER BIRD SANCTUARY.

The Caretaker reports that an excellent summer was experienced at Little Barrier Island, more bright sunshine being recorded than at any time since 1933.

Considerable improvements to the tracks on the island were made during the year, and every endeavour made to keep in check wild cats and rats, which are such a menace to bird-life on the Island.

Signs of increasing bird-life were evident, and kakas were particularly plentiful on the island at times.

Records of the weather and rainfall were carefully recorded throughout the year and supplied to the Meteorological Department.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (760 copies), £20.

By Authority: E. V. PAUL, Government Printer, Wellington.—1938.

Price 6d.]