

	A.	R.	P.
Recreation	1,103	0	26
Primary and secondary education	7,456	0	17
School-sites	662	1	31
Forest reserves and plantations	405,092	0	16
Preservation of native fauna and flora, scenic and historical purposes	1,799	3	0
Water-supply, Town of Whangarei*	1,569	2	8
Endowment, Thames Borough†	739	2	33
Agricultural and pastoral show-grounds, &c.	138	1	36
Miscellaneous	1,818	1	21
	420,379	2	28

The above total area shows a very considerable increase above the acreage reserved in later years, and is due to the large amount of land set aside in Canterbury as State forests, as referred to under the heading of "State Forests and Plantations." The lands reserved for the preservation of native fauna and flora consist of ten reserves in the Wellington Land District and one in Canterbury; they are usually of small area, but very important for the purpose intended.

In the Tongariro National Park the bridle-road constructed last year from the main carriage-road that runs past Roto-a-Ira to the Kete-tahi Springs has been continued for about two miles and a half beyond those springs to the Blue Lake on top of Tongariro Mountain, so that tourists can now easily reach that place, and from there visit the various craters on the mountain. The lake is at about 6,000 ft. above sea-level. This National Park is under the administration of a Board, but no occasion has yet arisen necessitating the members being called together. The area in the reservation—62,300 acres—might be extended with advantage as the adjacent lands fall into the hands of the Crown.

The exchange of land authorised under "The Reserves Disposal and Exchange Act, 1895," by which the Patua Ranges in Taranaki became practically a public park, has been completed during the year, and this 5,500 acres of fine forest mountain has now become a national property.

The secretary of the Auckland Institute has furnished a report on Hauturu or Little Barrier Island, situated in the Hauraki Gulf, which was reserved for the preservation of the native flora and fauna: this will be found in the Appendix hereto. The object for which the reservation was made appears, so far, to be successful, in that no depredations have taken place, and that there are to be found on the island a large number of birds now extinct on the mainland.

A report will also be found in the Appendix by Mr. Henry, the caretaker of Resolution Island, showing his proceedings during the year. He has succeeded in placing some additional birds on Resolution and the other islands around there, and reports no depredations.

A sum of £250 was paid for the purchase of the rare bird, the takahe, or *Notornis mantelli*, which was discovered near Lake Te Anau. The bird is deposited for the present in the Otago Museum. A description of it, together with a photograph, will be found in the Appendix. This is the fourth bird of this species that has been discovered in New Zealand.

"The Reserves, Endowments, and Crown and Native Lands Exchange, Sale, Disposal, and Enabling Act, 1898," section 26, authorised the handing over to trustees of 500 acres of wooded country on the slopes of the Ruahine Ranges as a sanctuary for native and imported game. This has been done, and the reserve is now in charge of the Wellington Acclimatisation Society, which body has expended this last year a sum of £311 12s. 3d. in further improving the reserve as a game-farm. The caretaker has now under his charge a herd of nine red-deer, and a number of pheasants are retained for breeding purposes. Seventy acres of bush have been felled and grassed, and a cottage erected for the caretaker. A report on this subject will be found in the Appendix.

A vote was taken last session (No. 71, item 22) of £300 as a subsidy towards the purchase of a domain for the district of Khandallah, near Wellington. Some gentlemen interested in the question secured an area of about 31 acres at a cost of over £500, the sum mentioned above forming part of the purchase-money.

THERMAL SPRINGS, SANATORIA, ETC.

At Rotorua, which is the largest of the sanatoria under Government direction, improvements and extensions have been made in several directions under the supervision of Mr. Reaney, all of which are referred to in his report, which will be found printed in the Appendix hereto. The bath-accommodation at Rotorua is now fairly large, but might be extended with advantage at Whakarewarewa, where there is an excellent supply of hot and chemical waters. The time will come when the extensive supply of thermal waters on the west side of the town, at Kuirau and its neighbourhood, will be brought into use, but at present it is deemed best to confine operations to the neighbourhood of the Pavilion, &c.

The Pukeroa Park has been improved by planting and the making of additional paths, and more will be done in these directions during the present season. The Kuirau Reserve has also been taken in hand, and some paths have been cut and planting done. This reserve is being fenced in at the present time. Additional planting will be done also at Whakarewarewa, and as much use as possible be made of native shrubs for ornamental purposes.

The level of the lake itself has been unusually low during the year, and this, to a certain extent, affects the hot springs. It is possible that something may yet have to be done to control the level by works at the outlet. The wharf running out from the township into the lake has now reached a length of over 500 ft., but has yet to be extended to allow of a greater depth of water to facilitate landing from boats, steam-launches, &c.

* Reserves Disposal &c., Act of 1898, section 4.

† Reserves Disposal, &c., Act of 1898, section 12.