

AREAS ACQUIRED BUT NOT PROCLAIMED BY END OF YEAR, AND GIFTS OF SCENIC AREAS

Arrangements for the purchase of several areas were made during the year, while negotiations for others are being carried on. Amongst purchased areas awaiting proclamation may be mentioned two of 1,680 acres and 458 acres respectively on D'Urville Island and one of 301 acres at Mangarakau, in the north-west of Nelson Land District. The last-mentioned area was acquired from the Taitapu Lands No. 2 Co., Ltd., which also made a generous gift of a second area of 58 acres. A fine area of 360 acres of bush-clad land at Okiwi Bay, in the Croixelles, was purchased during the year by Mrs. Perrine Moncrieff, of Nelson, for the express purpose of handing it over to the Crown for reservation under the Scenery Preservation Act. Her generous gift was gratefully accepted, and a Proclamation will be issued in due course. The gift is a practical demonstration of the keen interest Mrs. Moncrieff, who is a valued member of the Abel Tasman National Park Board, has always shown in all matters pertaining to the preservation of native birds and bush.

PRIVATE SCENIC RESERVES

Several applications for the declaration of freehold bush areas as private scenic reserves under section 6 of the Scenery Preservation Amendment Act, 1933, are under consideration in various parts of the Dominion and, it seems likely, will result in the issue of the requisite Proclamations in terms of that legislation. The provisions of the statute in that respect have not been availed of to any great extent; but, nevertheless, some very fine areas have been proclaimed, and, as is indicated by the inquiries now under action, other owners are taking an interest in the scheme, which gives the benefit of the protection afforded by the provisions of the Scenery Preservation Act without involving any change in the ownership of the land concerned.

SUPERVISION OF RESERVES

Arrangements were completed during the year for the vesting of control in the Christchurch City Council of nine reserves on what is known as the Summit Road scenic route, and renovation of the buildings on some of these areas is now proceeding. These Summit Road reserves are a valuable asset to the city, and the drive, as an observation tour, is very popular. Control of the Otatara Reserve was vested in the Invercargill City Council, and special Boards were appointed or reappointed as follows: the Pounawea Scenic Board to control the reserves at Pounawea, in the Catlins district of South Otago; the Everett Road Scenic Board (including representatives of the local authorities of the district) to control the Everett Road Reserve, near Inglewood; the Punakaiki Scenic Board to control a number of beautiful reserves in the vicinity of the Punakaiki and Porarari Rivers; and the Tuatapere Scenic Board to control the fine reserves at Tuatapere, in western Southland. Vacancies in the membership of various Boards were filled, and additional members were appointed to the Lake Kaniere and New Plymouth Scenic Reserves Boards.

Four gentlemen were appointed as honorary Inspectors of scenic reserves throughout the Dominion.

The field staff of the Department made as many inspections of reserves as could be fitted in with other duties, and periodic inspections of the reserves on Stewart Island were carried out by the resident caretaker. Caretakers are also in residence on the Trounson Kauri Park Reserve and the Balls' Clearing Reserve at Puketitiri, Hawke's Bay.