

trustees though not included in the domain was so included. The Gore Borough Council was, at its own request, divested of $3\frac{1}{4}$ acres of municipal endowment, and this area was added to the Gore Domain so that it may be developed for a playing area.

During the year, at the request of the residents of the localities concerned, the names of the following domains were changed :—

Wahi Takaro Domain (35 miles north of Christchurch) changed to Amberley Beach Domain.

Hatea-arangi Park Domain (at Tokomaru Bay) changed to Hatea-arangi Memorial Park Domain.

Greenwich Square Domain (Otago) changed to Waiholā Domain.

PART II—NATIONAL PARKS

As there are now under consideration proposals to stimulate the tourist traffic to the Dominion and also to revise and improve the laws governing the administration of our national park areas, I feel that I should bring under notice the views of the Department on various points concerning the control and use of these important national reserves.

It may be interesting in the first place to consider just what a national park is in the general scheme of things. In some countries a national park is treated as a reserved area in which the natural features and the flora and fauna are preserved strictly without any interference by man. The purpose of such parks is almost purely scientific and only properly qualified persons are allowed to enter them. In other countries a national park is regarded as a wilderness area set apart for preservation as nearly as possible in its natural state, but made available for and accessible to the general public, who are allowed and encouraged to visit the reserve. In such an area the recreation and enjoyment of the public is a main purpose ; but, at the same time, the natural scenery, flora, and fauna are interfered with as little as possible. Such a reserve should contain scenery of distinctive quality or some natural features so extraordinary or unique as to be of national interest and importance, and as a rule it should be extensive in area.

Our New Zealand parks, with possibly one exception, come within the second description. They are Crown property held in trust for the benefit of the people. They comprise reservations of virgin country, the main principle underlying their control and management being that of preserving them, as far as is humanly possible, in their natural state, while at the same time providing adequate facilities for the public to visit and enjoy them and to receive in full measure the inspiration and benefits that mountains, forests, lakes, and rivers have it in their power to give. The exception referred to is Peel Forest, which is a very much smaller reserve than the others. It is nevertheless a charming area representative of the lowland forest that once covered portions of the Canterbury Province, and has given enjoyment and refreshment of spirit to many thousands.

EXTENT OF NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL PARKS

It is probably not generally realized how well endowed New Zealand is in the way of national parks. Tongariro contains 150,000 acres, Egmont 79,000 acres, Abel Tasman 37,600 acres, Arthur Pass 146,000 acres, Tasman Park and adjoining reserves 135,000 acres, and Fiordland over 2,400,000 acres. The total national park area is a little over 3,000,000 acres, or roughly $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total area of the Dominion.

CONTROL OF THE PARKS

The Tongariro, Egmont, and Peel Forest Parks are controlled by Boards appointed under special Acts—viz., the Tongariro National Park Act, 1922, the Egmont National Park Act, 1924, and the Peel Forest Act, 1926, respectively—while the Abel Tasman and Arthur Pass Parks are controlled by Boards appointed under Part III of the Public