

who was recently gazetted as Land Purchase Officer. The details will be given in a separate report. The coming into operation of the Native Land Act, 1909, has necessitated different machinery from that formerly in vogue, and all purchases of Native lands by the Crown will now be by and through the Board specified in section 361 of the Native Land Act, 1909, the direct purchase by the Lands Department automatically ceasing.

Crown and State Forests.

The usual special report upon the progress made with reafforestation, and the work done under the direction of the Superintending Nurserymen for the North and South Islands, will be laid before Parliament in due course. It is sufficient to say that the work has been vigorously prosecuted, and that the results have exceeded the most sanguine expectations. So well have the trees grown at Waipa (Rotorua) and Waiotapu (on the way from Rotorua to Taupo) that it has been decided to set apart a large area of, say, 20,000 acres, on the Waiotapu-Galatea Road, upon which a central camp-site will be selected, and from which planting operations can be conducted for five or six years without a further removal of the prison headquarters. Trial boring for water is now being conducted, as that is one of the first considerations when selecting a camp-site. The exhaustive general report dealing with forestry in New Zealand—foreshadowed in last year's annual report—was duly laid before Parliament during last session. It has been well received and most favourably reviewed in many publications in Great Britain, the Continent of Europe, and America.

Scenery-preservation.

This work, though carried out by the Lands Department, is under the control of a separate Minister, and will appear in the usual report. The surveys in progress in connection therewith have been principally along the Main Trunk Railway line and on the banks of the Wanganui River.

Domains.

The recreation reserves brought under Part II of the Public Reserves and Domains Act, 1908, now number 510. Special grants were appropriated by Parliament towards the purchase of domains in several centres, and these have been paid over in every case where the areas purchased have been in the name of the King. Grants towards improvements, fencing, &c., have been paid to the amount of £1,869.

Cemeteries.

The additional cemetery-sites out of Crown land set apart during the year numbered five, and towards the clearing and fencing of cemeteries already vested in trustees sums totalling £149 have been granted.

DEPARTMENTAL AND GENERAL.

Amongst the names of those who, having reached the age of retirement under the Public Service Superannuation Act, 1908, and its amendment, have retired, or are on leave of absence previous to retirement, I would single out for honourable mention Mr. G. J. Roberts, who lately retired from the position which he had so ably filled of Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief-Surveyor, Westland, and who in his earlier days conducted most of the triangulation and topographical surveys of the Southern Alps in Canterbury and Westland, a most arduous and trying work, and one which left its legacy of impaired health at a comparatively early age. Mr. G. J. Roberts was a keen geologist and a most enthusiastic officer. His equal will be hard to find. Mr. J. W. Davis, formerly Chief Draughtsman in the Head Office, was obliged to retire early this year, owing to failing health. He was an old and valued officer. To the list of other valued officers in their special branches must be added the following names, viz.: Mr. H. P. Kavanagh, Chief Timber Expert, Auckland, formerly a Crown Lands Ranger in the Wellington District; Mr. Kavanagh's knowledge of New Zealand timbers was unequalled. Mr. T. M. Taylor, Receiver of Land Revenue, Auckland, was also retired, at his own request, after long and faithful service both under the Auckland Provincial and General Governments. Also Messrs. J. Cumine and W. C. O'Neill, surveyors, and Messrs. J. S. Welch, William Darby, H. G. Rodger, and Edward Frissell, draughtsmen. With regard to Mr. Frissell, it may be mentioned that he was a partner with Mr. Todd when the latter was shot by the Maoris whilst both were engaged on the survey of the Karamu and Pirongia Blocks for the Crown in the Auckland District, in 1865. Mr. J. Cook, clerk in the Receiver's office, Auckland, and Mr. J. M. McKay, Crown Lands Ranger, in the Whangarei District, North of Auckland, also retired.