

In the majority of cases the lands set apart were Crown lands that had not been dealt with. In a few cases small areas of Native lands have been acquired under the Public Works Act, as was also done in the case of some private freehold lands desired for scenic and historic reservation. It may here be noted that no land can be reserved for scenic purposes until its reservation has been recommended by the Scenery Preservation Board, consisting of the Surveyor-General (Chairman); the General Manager of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts; the Under-Secretary, Native Department; and the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the district in which is situated the land proposed to be dealt with. Before submitting any recommendation the Board has a most careful inspection made of the lands brought under its notice, and the Board's recommendation is then considered by the Government prior to His Excellency the Governor proclaiming the land under the Act. It will thus be seen that every care is taken to ensure that only suitable lands are reserved, and that the interests of land-settlement, of the Natives, and the country generally are respected and safeguarded.

RESERVATIONS DURING THE YEAR.

As will be seen by a glance at the schedule appearing in Appendix A of this report, the reserves made include areas situated in all parts of the Dominion.

In the *Auckland District* the beautiful Waiharakeke Inlet, situated in the Kawhia Harbour, was taken and set apart, as was also the Ngahuinga Bluff, near the mouth of the Marakopa River, south of the Kawhia Harbour, and a most curious natural tunnel in the same district. On account of its historic associations, the land on which was situated the Ruapekapeka Pa, not far from the Bay of Islands, was also secured and reserved.

In the *Hawke's Bay District* the only land reserved during the year is that on which is situated the Mangatutu Thermal Springs, in the Pohui district.

In the *Taranaki District* several small areas adjoining the Wanganui River were reserved, and a fine section of bush land on the Whangamomona Saddle was set apart.

In the *Wellington District* a beautiful bush area at the Township of Rangataua, on the Main Trunk Railway, was reserved, and on the road from Awahuri to Feilding the well-known Riddiford's Bush was finally secured and reserved. An area of steep bush-clad land at the Makatote Gorge, also situated on the Main Trunk Railway, was added to the existing reservation, and a few small areas on the Wanganui River were acquired.

In the *Marlborough Sounds* three small islands at Tennyson Inlet were reserved.

In the *Nelson District* several areas of hilly Crown land covered with mixed bush were reserved, amongst them being Okiwi Bay near the Croixelles, the Huia Cave near Tadmor, not far from the Midland Railway route, and some fine mountain scenery in the Motupiko district, on the St. Arnaud Range.

In the *Westland District* the magnificent Franz Josef Glacier and surrounding lands, comprising nearly 50,000 acres, was permanently reserved for scenic purposes; and several areas along the Punakaiki, Waiho, and Atupau Rivers.

In the *Canterbury District* two pretty scenic areas in the Four Peaks Settlement near Geraldine, and a similar area on the Claremont Settlement near Timaru, were reserved, whilst six additional areas were added to that well-known chain of reserves along the Summit Road (or King Edward VII Drive), extending from the hills at the back of Lyttelton, around Governor's Bay, and towards Banks Peninsula. A special report upon these reserves appears in Appendix D.

In the *Otago District* three small areas along the McLennan River, Catlins district, together with Table Hill, in the Clutha district, and areas along the Glenomaru and Tahakopa Streams, were reserved.

In the *Southland District* an area of hilly country known as "Glen Allen," near Kingston, Lake Wakatipu, together with two areas in Stewart Island, were also added to the permanent scenic assets of the Dominion.

SUPERVISION OF SCENIC RESERVES.

The chief difficulty which confronts the Department in dealing with areas reserved for scenic purposes is in ensuring their continuance in a state of nature, so that their botanical wealth and beautiful flora are not detrimentally affected or destroyed by the spread of fires, vandalism, or accident. A constant endeavour is being made to ensure the co-operation of local residents. Where a suitable opportunity offers, Scenic Boards, comprised of residents who are willing to look after the reserves in their locality, are set up, and adequate powers entrusted to them to provide for the maintenance of the reserves, and improvement where necessary. Where, owing to the sparseness of settlement, this is not possible, honorary inspectors may be appointed, and wherever possible periodical visits are made by Government officers whose duties take them to the locality.

It is difficult to overestimate the value of these scenic reserves for future generations. Great credit is due to those men who in the past have assisted the Government, or are at the present time endeavouring to assist it, in acquiring and preserving good specimens of our forest inheritance. The unfortunate prevalence of bush-fires is a continual menace to the greater number of the scenic reserves, but it is gratifying to record that the damage suffered has hitherto been comparatively small.

EXPENDITURE.

The expenditure during the year amounted to £7,887 3s. 10d., as set forth in the statement of accounts appearing in Appendix A.

Every care has been taken to expend the funds of the scenery-preservation vote to the utmost advantage, and no land has been recommended for reservation until it has been carefully viewed and reported upon, and every precaution taken that the interests of settlement are not detrimentally