

Authority was granted to the Gore Borough Council, which is also the local Domain Board, to exchange portion of the domain known as the Caledonian Ground for a municipal endowment. The Caledonian Ground is to be leased, and all moneys derived therefrom are to be paid into the Domain Account and used in the maintenance and improvement of the domain.

The erection of public halls on the Maitua Island and Scotsburn Domains was authorized during the year by warrants issued under section 4 of the Public Reserves and Domains Amendment Act, 1921-22. Several applications were received, and permission granted for admission charges under section 2 of the Public Reserves and Domains Amendment Act, 1925, and in suitable cases the condition was imposed that a fixed proportion of the gate-money be paid to the Domain Board concerned.

Orders in Council were issued appointing fifty-eight Boards to control domains for further terms. Some seventy-four vacancies on Boards were also filled by the appointment of suitable persons nominated by the residents of the particular districts concerned.

At the request of the controlling Boards the names of the Lake Ellesmere and Te Aroha Bridge Domains were changed to Springston South and Herries Memorial Park respectively.

The Whangamomona and Mahoe Domains, which are situated within a short distance of each other, were, at the request of the residents, amalgamated as one domain under the provisions of section 4 of the Public Reserves and Domains Amendment Act, 1925. The Ngaruawahia and Kirikiriroa Domains were also amalgamated during the year, and placed under the control of the Ngaruawahia Borough Council. Formerly the Kirikiriroa area was controlled by a Board of local residents; but insufficient funds were available to develop the ground for playing purposes. The Borough Council, however, was in a position to carry out improvements, and, as the land has lately been included within the borough boundary, it was considered advisable, at the request of all concerned, to bring the domains under one control.

The Tokomaru Domain was exchanged for an area of private land more suitable for recreation purposes.

Under the provisions of the Peel Forest Act, 1926, the reservation for recreation purposes over the Scotsburn Domain and the appointment of the Domain Board have been cancelled. The domain is now included within the area controlled by the Peel Forest Park Board under the powers conferred by the statute.

Numerous applications have been received for grants and subsidies for the carrying-out of improvements on public domains and for the purchase of new areas for recreation purposes. The funds available, however, have been somewhat restricted, and it has not been possible to afford financial assistance other than in a few deserving cases. Under the conditions prevailing, votes for domain improvements have been restricted as much as possible to country districts, as it is held that boroughs and cities have much greater facilities for providing funds than scantily populated districts. Sympathetic consideration is always given to the requirements of districts where no reserves have been set aside for public recreation, and where no Crown land is available for reservation subsidies have been granted in some cases to assist in the purchase of private land. The very reasonable conditions are imposed that a fair proportion of the purchase-money must be found by the local people concerned, and that any land acquired must be transferred to the Crown as a recreation reserve with a view to its being brought under the provisions of the Public Reserves and Domains Act as a public domain.

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON, Under-Secretary.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (600 copies), £2 5s.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1927.

Price 3d.]