

Another valuable gift of bush land is that of an area of approximately 125 acres which has been offered to the Crown by Captain G. Humphreys-Davies, of Clevedon, on condition that it is made a permanent reserve. The area is situated on the main road between Kawakawa Bay and Orere, and contains valuable specimens of various forest trees. The offer of the land has been accepted, and the Department is making arrangements for the necessary survey so that the transfer to the Crown can be completed and the land set apart as a permanent reserve under the Scenery Preservation Act.

It is hoped that the example set by Mr. Hutchinson and Captain Humphreys-Davies will be followed by other owners who possess bush areas worthy of preservation as national reserves. In this connection it may be stated that arrangements are being made in various parts of the Dominion whereby Crown lessees are surrendering without consideration portions of their leaseholds containing bush of scenic value.

UREWERA COUNTRY.

A decision was made during the year that the whole of the Crown's holdings in the Urewera, amounting to some 400,000 acres, should be reserved in the interests of the preservation of the native flora and fauna. The details have not yet been fully worked out, but the Government's decision will be put into effect in due course.

FUTURE OPERATIONS.

While a progressive policy is being followed in reserving all available areas that are suitable for setting aside under the Scenery Preservation Act the position is not entirely satisfactory so far as concerns the acquisition of privately-owned land on which the bush should if possible be preserved. A great deal requires to be done in that direction, but results can only be achieved by systematic effort coupled with financial provision sufficient for the purpose. During the past thirty-three years (1904-37) the sum of £171,353 has been expended in the acquisition of land for scenic purposes, representing an average expenditure of £5,192 per annum. The annual expenditure has, however, fluctuated greatly, the amount varying from under £10 to over £57,000. During recent years particularly it has been difficult to obtain an adequate allocation for scenic purposes, and the average yearly expenditure on the acquisition of scenic areas has been only a little over £700 during the last eight years. It is probable that no greater contribution to the prosperity and welfare of the Dominion could be made than a well-conceived and steadily executed plan of acquisition of bush areas that should be preserved not necessarily for their scenic value alone, but also for their great value as water-conservation and general protection areas. It is natural that a great many areas which are of considerable scenic value function also as water-conservation and general protection areas, and their acquisition would serve a dual purpose to the great advantage of the State. The Department, therefore, while continuing the present policy of reserving all available areas of Crown land of scenic value, will also represent in the proper quarters the necessity of acquiring freehold lands that should be owned by the State, and of resuming where necessary leasehold areas that would have been better left unleased in the first place.

SPECIAL ARTICLE.

The Department published as an Appendix to the 1929-30 report a special article on the glacial scenic reserves of Westland contributed by the late Dr. L. Cockayne and Dr. E. Teichelmann. That article dealt principally with the reserves from a botanic point of view. Towards the end of 1930 Mr. A. P. Harper supplied, at the Department's request, a descriptive account of the same reserves on more general lines. Unfortunately, publication had to be held over for reasons of economy, but the Department is pleased to be able to arrange for the printing of the paper as an Appendix to this year's report. The article, which has been brought thoroughly up to date by the author, describes the physical and topographical features of the reserves, and gives much information of general interest. It is illustrated by a series of very fine photographs.

APPENDICES.

The appendices to this report are listed hereunder:—

- A. Schedule of reserves made and reservations revoked during the year, accompanied by statement of expenditure.
- B. The Glacial Scenic Reserves of Westland (Mr. A. P. Harper, late president of the New Zealand Alpine Club).
- C. An account of the work carried out on Kapiti Island.