

of the Department of Industries and Commerce. The first meeting of this committee was held at Government Buildings, Wellington, on 18th June, 1936, when certain decisions of the Government were announced in the chairman's opening address. Briefly, these decisions were as follows. The Government had decided that the event be celebrated—

- (1) By permanent memorials, including a national memorial to be erected by the Government:
- (2) By a series of historical surveys of the first hundred years of our national life:
- (3) By suitable celebrations, both national and local, throughout the year 1940.

The Chairman also announced the proposed Government expenditure in connection with the Centennial. Apart from the cost of the national memorial and the historical surveys, the Government contemplated providing £250,000 for Centennial celebrations to be expended as follows:—

- (a) Up to a maximum of £75,000 loan and subsidy for the Exhibition to be held in Wellington, allocated as follows: A subsidy of £1 for every £2 of subscribed share capital up to a limit of £50,000, and a loan without interest not exceeding £25,000.
- (b) The balance of £175,000 for—
  - (i) National celebrations held by the Government itself or by provincial organizations on behalf of the Government:
  - (ii) Subsidizing on a basis of £1 for every £3 of moneys raised locally for celebrations or memorials.

In addition to all this, it was announced that the Government itself would bear the cost of suitably entertaining guests from abroad invited by the Government, and would also between now and 1940 suitably increase the vote of the Department of Industries and Commerce, Tourist and Publicity for the purpose of advertising the Centennial abroad and providing special tourist attractions for visitors.

The principal outcome of this meeting was a resolution recommending the Government to invite the Mayor of each provincial capital to convene, as early as conveniently may be, a representative conference of local bodies and other organizations within the province for the purpose of forming a Centennial organization, and that for the purpose of this resolution the East Coast (Poverty Bay) District of the North Island be deemed a separate province. Further important resolutions were passed, recommending the Government—

- (a) To convene, on Thursday, the 20th August, 1936, a Dominion conference of delegates of provincial Centennial organizations:
- (b) To set up a National Historical Committee to settle relevant historical dates, and generally to advise on matters of historical interest in connection with the Centennial:
- (c) To invite the press of New Zealand to form a National Press Committee for the purpose of furthering the objects of the Centennial:
- (d) Endorsing the Government's view that a very important part in the Centennial celebrations should be taken by the Maori race.

Immediately after the meeting, the Minister wrote to the Mayors of all provincial capitals requesting the setting-up of the provincial Centennial organizations. These were duly established and the Dominion Conference held at Parliament Buildings on the 20th August, 1936, the meeting being fully representative. Since that conference a great deal of work has been done in various provinces by way of preliminary preparation, the National Press Committee has been constituted, and before the expiration of the year steps were taken for the setting-up of the National Historical Committee.

Also during the year the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition Company was registered, and provision was made in its articles for the appointment of three Government Directors. The Under-Secretary of this Department has been appointed as one of those Directors.

#### PROPOSED NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SPORT AND RECREATION.

A meeting of representatives of the New Zealand and Wellington controlling bodies of sport was held at Parliament Buildings on Thursday, 4th March, 1937, when a resolution was passed referring the Minister's address to all national controlling bodies for their comments on the views set out thereon to be furnished to the Minister not later than the 30th June, 1937.

#### BUSH PRESERVATION AND AMENITY TREE-PLANTING.

There has been a remarkable increase in the work of this Department through growing interest in these matters arising particularly out of an appeal by His Excellency the Governor-General. An inter-departmental committee was set up with the Under-Secretary of this Department as Chairman which held a number of meetings and formulated proposals for submission to a Dominion Conference fixed for 2nd April, 1937, to be presided over by His Excellency.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

*Counties.*—Eleven county councils passed special orders under the authority of the Counties Amendment Act, 1931, abolishing the system of separate riding finance. This made a total of fifty-two county councils to avail themselves of that legislation. The question that now has to be faced is that of finally abolishing the system of separate riding finance. The system, which was a very necessary one in its day and did much to assist in the development of the Dominion, particularly the backblocks areas, has now practically outlived its usefulness.