

At the request of the people concerned, the appointment of the Tui Domain Board was revoked during the year. The domain comprises an area of 6 acres 3 roods at Aotuhia, in the Whangamomona district. It was set aside in 1931, but as settlement has not progressed as expected in the locality it has not proved possible to arrange for a continuance of local control. The domain will now be controlled by the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

In 1937 the Department made arrangements for the reservation of an area of approximately 5 acres near National Park to provide a recreation-ground for the employees of sawmilling firms operating in the district. The reserve was called the Ngauruhoe Public Domain, and was placed under the control of a Domain Board of local residents. No work has been carried out on the area, and it transpires that the principal milling company is making its own arrangements for the recreation of its employees. Under the circumstances, the appointment of the Ngauruhoe Public Domain Board was revoked during the year. The land will be utilized as a public-school site in future, and arrangements are being made to change the purpose of the reservation accordingly.

Orders in Council were issued appointing seventy-five Domain Boards to control domains for further terms, while one hundred and twenty vacancies on various Boards were filled by the appointment of suitable persons. In nine cases additional members were also appointed to Domain Boards. The Mata-a-vai and Kororareka Domains were united to form one public domain.

A Warrant was issued increasing the number of days on which charges may be made for admission to the Taihape Oval Domain from twenty days to thirty days during the year ending 31st March, 1940.

Permission was granted in fourteen cases for Domain Boards to increase the charges for admission to their domains during the year. Three sets of by-laws were approved, and permission given in fourteen cases to the setting-aside of camping-grounds and parking-places in domains.

Under the provisions of section 13 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1932, rental concessions to lessees of domain lands were granted in seven cases. Numerous leasing proposals were again submitted by Domain Boards and fully investigated by the Department.

A Warrant was issued authorizing the erection of a public hall on a suitable site within the Laingholm Domain.

The sum of £1,135 was expended by the Department in the acquisition of land for domain purposes during the year. The principal cases dealt with were—

- (a) Purchase of 5 acres for a recreation-ground in Ngatea at a cost of £250.
- (b) Acquisition of 41 acres at Hot-water Beach, Whenuakite, on the coast of Coromandel Peninsula, at a cost of £350.
- (c) Acquisition of 655 acres at Orokawa Bay, Bay of Plenty, at a cost of £400.

Full particulars of these areas will be given in next year's report.

Grants and subsidies totalling £2,153 for various improvement purposes were granted to thirty-two Domain Boards during the year, while arrangements were also made for the diversion of funds standing to the credit of certain domains for use on other domains less happily endowed.

The Christchurch Domain Board, which controls the areas known as Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens, comprises representatives of the Government, the City Council, and adjacent local authorities appointed pursuant to the Christchurch Domains Amendment Act, 1913. In order to assist in providing finance for the Board, provision was made by sections 8 and 9 of the Act for the constitution by Order in Council of a Christchurch Domains District and for contributions to the Domain Board by the local bodies situated within the boundaries of such district. It was stipulated that the domains district was to include the City of Christchurch and such other parts of Canterbury Province within a radius of ten miles of the Chief Post Office in the city as the Governor might determine. By section 10 of the Act provision was made for the appointment of a Commissioner to inquire and report to the Governor regarding the boundaries of the district and the amount that should be paid to the Board by the contributory local authorities. In 1914 the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Christchurch, was appointed a Commissioner under section 10, and by an Order in Council dated the 5th October, 1914, the boundaries of the domains district were constituted. The proportions to be paid by the various local authorities were determined by a Warrant dated the 7th October, 1914. The Warrant set out the total contribution as £2,500, being the maximum amount at that time authorized by the statute. Section 2 of the Christchurch Domains Amendment Act, 1923, increased the total to £5,000, with a proviso, however, that no local authority need pay a larger amount than could be apportioned to it if the amount of the Board's estimated requirements were £3,500. This amendment was further amended by the Christchurch Domains Amendment Act, 1937, which repealed the proviso, and since then the Board has levied the whole amount of £5,000 on the contributory local authorities on the basis set out in the 1914 Warrant.

Early in 1939 the Domain Board advised that one or two of the contributing local bodies had expressed the opinion that a new Warrant should be issued fixing the proportions to be paid by the various bodies. In view of the length of time since the previous determination, and owing to the material changes around Christchurch since 1914, it was considered desirable that the whole matter should be reviewed, and Mr. E. C. Levvey, S.M., was appointed as a Commissioner to inquire and report in terms of section 10 of the Christchurch Domains Amendment Act, 1913, as to what portions of the provincial district should be included in the Christchurch Domains District, and what portion of the cost of improvement and management of the domain should be provided by each of the contributory local authorities. After due inquiries the Commissioner presented a report recommending that the domains district should comprise the City of Christchurch and such other parts of the provincial district as are within a radius of ten miles of the principal post-office in the city, and that the allocation of the total contribution should be made on a population basis. The recommendations of the Commissioner were adopted, and a warrant dated the 16th August, 1939, was thereupon issued