

mate; how much less then should the ground be begrudged for the maintenance of the living objects themselves in all their beauty amidst their natural surroundings.

5. Reserves, especially of forest, that may serve as resorts for picnics and for recreation.

Most of the reserves already mentioned serve, in part, the above purposes. What are here meant are rather pieces of forest near centres of population, and which need not, of necessity, be in their virgin condition. It is reserves of this class, by no means the most important, that are most generally associated with the term "scenic reserve" in the public mind.

An excellent account of the origin and development of the scenic-reserve movement is to be found in the report on scenery-preservation for the year 1906-7, pp. 1-3. Here some of the main facts are briefly stated. From its foundation the Department of Lands has aimed to conserve suitable areas of forest lands as State forests, public-recreation reserves, domains, thermal-spring reserves, areas of protection for water-supply, &c. Although under the numerous Land Acts power was given to reserve land for such purposes as the above, it was not until the Land Act of 1892 came into force that scenery-preservation was added to the object. Since the above date areas of specially attractive forest or land surrounding remarkable natural objects—*e.g.*, waterfalls, caves, and thermal springs—have been regularly set aside and excluded from sale.

In 1903 Sir Joseph Ward, then Minister in charge of the Tourist Department, brought down the Scenery Preservation Act. This provided for a Royal Commission to visit and report upon all areas possessing scenic or historic interest, or on which there were thermal springs, and submit recommendations for the acquisition of such as seemed desirable, whether Crown, freehold, or Native. For two years the Commission performed this work; but in order to provide simpler machinery an amending Act was passed terminating the Commission and substituting a small permanent Board of Government officials, consisting of the Surveyor-General, the head of the Tourist Department, and the Commissioner of Crown Lands for each land district, to investigate and report from time to time on all areas worthy of inspection. This body, known as the Scenery Preservation Board, acts as an advisory Board to the Government. By the Act of 1903 a special vote towards expenses of purchasing and dealing with lands selected for scenic reserves appears in the annual appropriations. In 1910 the Scenery Preservation Amendment Act became law; this added the Under-Secretary of the Native Department to the Board, and provided the power to take Native lands for scenic reserves. The Minister was also empowered to grant leases or licenses over open or cleared portions of scenic reserves for short periods not exceeding five years. The Governor may, in certain cases, revoke the reservation of land no longer suitable for scenic purposes, and dispose of the land as Crown land, but the price so obtained must be paid to the credit of the scenery-preservation vote. Finally, the whole of the reserves were made sanctuaries for the flora and fauna, so that no firearm may be discharged on a scenic reserve nor may any bird or game be killed thereon. In 1907 Mr. E. Phillips Turner was appointed Inspector of Scenic Reserves, a post which he still holds, and the duties of which he has fulfilled in an exceptionally able manner.

#### *Regarding the Uplifting of Scenic Reserves.*

From time to time requests are made to the Minister of Lands to uplift certain of the scenic reserves. The reasons given for so doing are for the most part that the land is suitable for farming purposes; that it harbours noxious weeds, which spread on to the neighbouring land; that it has been burnt more or less, and so no longer serves its purpose; that no one makes use of it for purposes of picnics; and, finally, that it is certain some day to be destroyed by fire.