

## APPENDIX H.

## TARANAKI SCENIC RESERVES.

(W. D. ARMIT, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

DURING the year inspections have been made of practically every scenic reserve in the land district, particular attention being paid to cases of vandalism, damage by fire, and trespass of stock. While these inspections show that the majority of the reserves are in good condition, several cases of vandalism have been reported by the Field Inspectors, and penalties commensurate with the offences have been collected from the persons concerned. The Tangarakau Gorge Reserves suffered to a small extent by travelling fires during the late summer of 1928, but no further damage has since been reported in this locality.

The Wanganui and Mokau River Reserves have all been inspected during the year, and were found to be in very good condition.

Although a number of the smaller reserves comprise good settlement land, in most cases the farming-value is far outweighed by their scenic attractions. The larger reserves all comprise poor rough country, of scenic value only.

Arrangements have been made to inspect scenic reserves annually, and a ledger record is kept of the condition of each reserve. A number of the most important scenic areas require attention in regard to fencing, and recommendations are being made in this direction from time to time with a view to preventing damage by stock.

## APPENDIX I.

## MARLBOROUGH SCENIC RESERVES.

(P. R. WILKINSON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

I HAVE pleasure in reporting that during the last year steady progress has been made in the reforestation, by natural means, of a number of scenic reserves recently created which had at some former period been more or less denuded by fires. The past summer season, by reason of the unusual amount of rainfall, has been wetter than preceding seasons for many years, consequently there have not been so many fires reported as in the past. In October, however, owing to the abnormally dry conditions in the Kaikoura district, disastrous bush-fires occurred which—although the forest reserve suffered to a considerable extent—only touched two of our scenic reserves, those at Black Miller Stream and Paparua Point. The fire came through these reserves in several places, but will not permanently mar their appearance, as owing to the plenteous rainfall the bush quickly re-establishes itself in these localities.

In the Sounds District, however, a more serious state of affairs prevails. Acting under the recommendations of the Scenery Preservation Board, many small islands have lately been reserved for scenic purposes which for years previously had been held under temporary grazing license. Amongst these were Motuanauru (Motnara) Island, famous for its historic interest on account of Captain Cook's visits of discovery. On this island he proclaimed the sovereignty of the British rule, and also established a shore hospital to treat his sick sailors. This island and Long Island (Te Keetu) were quickly reverting to light native bush, but since Christmas some misguided persons have feloniously set fire to them. Not much damage has been done to Long Island, but Motuanauru Island has suffered to the extent of some 50 acres being burnt—about one-third of its area. Such reprehensible conduct is hard to understand, for although there is a lack of sympathy amongst a small section of the Sounds settlers on account of some few small areas being withdrawn from sheep-grazing, yet it must be evident to them that the increased interest from a scenic point of view is proportionately more valuable as a tourist attraction than the grazing of the few hundred sheep that these islands would carry if they were entirely cleared.

It is regretted that pressure of other duties prevented me from visiting the more outlying reserves, but full advantage was taken when making other departmental inspections of visiting all Scenic Reserves *en route*. By this means, and also through the agency of the local honorary inspectors of scenic reserves, I have been enabled to keep closely in touch with them all. Some items of interest relating to the individual reserves are detailed as follows:—

*Chetwode Islands (Nukunuaiaia).*—On this island a colony of white rabbits have in some unknown manner become established, and as it is highly desirable that they be exterminated or kept in check, permission has been obtained from the Hon. the Ministers of Scenery-preservation and Internal Affairs to allow the honorary inspector, Mr. Harold Leov, and Mr. George Webber, J.P., to attend to this matter. Permission has also been obtained for Mr. Harold Leov to catch six pairs of kiwis on the mainland and endeavour to establish them on this island. It is considered that, as the island lies some distance from the mainland, it will make quite a good sanctuary for the protection and increase of various classes of native fauna.

*Ship Cove Reserve (Totaranui).*—During one week-end, in company with a number of enthusiasts, I visited this historic reserve, and with their help opened up a ditch to drain a swamp. I am pleased to state that although the reserve is visited by numerous tourists and holiday-makers during the year, no damage to the bush was apparent at the time of my visit. Vandals, however, have mutilated to some extent the monument placed on the reserve to commemorate the occupation by Captain Cook. One of these offenders was brought to book by the Captain Cook Memorial Committee, and this action will probably prove a strong deterrent to any future mischief of a like nature. A low-water landing is urgently required on this reserve. A small jetty sufficient for this purpose could be erected for somewhere in the vicinity of £75 to £80.