

Marlborough reservations included a small bush-clad headland at Poison Point, Kenepuru Sound, and 462 acres at Big Bay, Endeavour Inlet.

In the Westland Land District a beautiful piece of riverflat bush on the Grey River near Greymouth was set apart under the Act, while an area of 668 acres was added to the Rapahoe Range Scenic Reserve. The latter area consists of undulating to steep slopes covered with dense native bush of great beauty, and is in full view from the Greymouth-Westport Main Highway. It was set apart in 1902 for the purposes of the State Coal-mines Act, 1901; but being no longer required for such purposes the Mines Department arranged to make it available for reservation under the Scenery Preservation Act. Two small reservations were made in the Tautuku district, South Otago coast, in a locality which has been generously endowed with luxuriant bush, placid rivers of outstanding charm, and magnificent seascapes of curving bays and bold and rugged headlands.

The reservation over three small portions of scenic reserves was revoked during the year, the total area so dealt with amounting to 3 acres 2 roods 30 perches. In one case an area of 3 acres was released from reservation in order to improve the fencing-line between the reserve and the adjoining farm; in another an area of a quarter of an acre was made available as a site for a public hall; and the third case was that of a small portion of a reserve required for public purposes.

During the year several important acquisitions were arranged which have not been referred to above, for the reason that the final Proclamations had not been issued by the end of the period under review. In one case, that of the purchase of a fairly large area on the slopes of Mount Pirongia, substantial financial assistance was granted by the Bruce Trustees. The areas concerned, together with several important proposals for the reservation of Crown land areas in various parts of the Dominion, will be fully dealt with in the next annual report.

The number of scenic reservations in the Dominion is now 980, covering a total area of over 705,000 acres.

SUPERVISION OF RESERVES.

During the year special Boards were appointed or reappointed as follows: The Hae Hae Te Moana, Tapuinikau Pa, Kaiata, Everett Road, Waikaka, Taihape, Ranfurly Bay, Mapoutahi Pa, Clevedon, and Pukeamaru Range Scenic and Historic Reserve Boards. Additional areas were placed under the control of the Lake Kanieri and Papatowai Scenic Boards. The Wanganui River Trust was given control of a reserve on the Wanganui River, and the Timaru Borough Council was entrusted with the care of a South Canterbury reserve.

Forty-three ladies and gentlemen were appointed honorary inspectors for scenic reserves throughout the Dominion, and a certificate of appointment was issued in each case. As in previous years the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture has assisted in this matter by nominating suitable persons for appointment.

A number of special inspections have been made by officers of the Department, and although pressure of other work has prevented a systematic inspection of all scenic reserves from being carried out, every available opportunity has been taken of supervising as many reserves as possible. Valuable assistance has also been given by officers of the State Forest Service, who in the course of their field duties have opportunities of observing the condition of scenic reserves in localities where State forests are situated.

GENERAL CONDITION OF RESERVES, ETC.

Reports from the various districts enable me to state that the past year was a very satisfactory one from the point of view of scenery preservation. A few small fires occurred, but fortunately very little damage was done. The extensive fires which raged throughout the Catlins district in the spring spread in several cases to adjoining scenic reserves. Some standing bush and underscrub was damaged, but in most cases it is expected that the damage will soon be repaired by the natural regeneration of the bush. In several instances scrub had been cut along the roadsides by the local authority, but had not been cleared away. This helped to spread the fires considerably. The attention of the County Council has been drawn to this matter, and their co-operation sought in preventing fires from this source in future.

A number of applications for mining privileges within scenic reserves was dealt with during the year. Consent was declined in two cases, and given in seven others, subject to special conditions framed for the protection of the reserves concerned.

Fencing is required in a fair number of cases to protect reserves from trespassing stock. Funds for this purpose have again been extremely limited, but it is hoped that the position in that respect will improve in the near future. It is, of course, not sufficient to acquire scenic areas and then leave them to look after themselves. They should, if they are not protected from stock by natural boundaries, be securely fenced, and a certain amount of planting should be done in suitable cases. There is ample scope for a great deal of useful work on these lines, and it is work which, when considered as it ought to be on broad lines of national welfare, will return a real if indirect dividend to the State.

GENERAL.

The Trounson Kauri Park continues to increase in popularity with visitors who wish to see a kauri forest in its virgin state. The motor camp established on an open portion of the reserve is much appreciated, and the facilities provided have been favourably commented upon by the public. Last season Norfolk pines were planted on the northern boundary of the park. These are showing new growth, and will in time give much needed shelter to that portion of the forest that was so severely damaged by the heavy gales. The experiment of transplanting young kauris from the main forest to the damaged area gave