

introduction during the final session of the present Parliament, the whole of the funds received both from the Government and from the people of New Zealand have been invested in inscribed stock, bearing interest at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum. By the time the fund comes to be administered, the corpus of the fund will be over £180,000.

It is safe to say that the response of the people on this occasion has never been surpassed. It is a tribute to the affectionate reverence in which the memory of His late Majesty is held by the people and their complete endorsement of the object of the fund. All sections of the community, in various forms of organization and as individuals, contributed in noble manner. It is estimated that through various channels at least half a million individual contributions were made.

In conclusion, it is the duty of this Department to place on record once more its indebtedness to Mayors and Chairmen of local bodies throughout New Zealand, to organizations of all kinds, including social bodies, organizations of employers and workers, sports bodies, Government Departments, the Broadcasting Services, and the press of the Dominion. Without their whole-hearted co-operation and enthusiasm the task of the Department would have been an impossible one.

NEW ZEALAND'S CENTENNIAL, 1940.

The past year, apart from the activities of the National Historical Committee, which are dealt with separately, has been a period of quiet consolidation of work done during the previous year and preparation for the intensive period from now on until the beginning of the Centennial year. Throughout New Zealand there has been gratifying evidence of the desire of the people generally to celebrate the Centennial period in fitting manner. The provincial organizations set up in 1936 have been functioning well. An effort has been made from time to time to keep them in touch with each other's doings.

Considerable interest has been shown throughout the Dominion in the question of Centennial memorials, and it is gratifying to note that tree-planting in various forms promises to take a prominent place in memorial ideas.

A special branch of this Department has been established to deal with the Centennial, and during the last session of the present Parliament a Bill dealing with it will be introduced. This Bill, incidentally, will provide retrospective authority for local bodies throughout the Dominion to expend moneys for Centennial purposes.

NATIONAL CENTENNIAL HISTORICAL COMMITTEE.

It was stated in the last annual report of the Department that steps were then being taken to set up a National Historical Committee to advise the Government on matters of historical interest in connection with the Centennial. At the first meeting of the Committee held on the 10th June, 1937, its functions were outlined in an address forwarded by the Minister of Internal Affairs. The Committee, it was explained, had been entrusted with the work of supervising the historical, as distinct from the administrative and organizing, sides of the Centennial celebrations. More specifically it was asked :—

- (1) To prepare for the Government's consideration proposals for a series of historical surveys—"written by the most competent authorities in New Zealand on all phases of our national life, and written, moreover, for general reading as well as for the purposes of historical record."
- (2) To supervise the writing and publication of approved surveys.
- (3) To confirm relevant historical dates and to evaluate their importance relatively one to another for the purpose of Centennial celebrations.

The Minister also mentioned the important service the Committee might perform in preserving records of historical value, and suggested the extension of the Committee's organization into the provinces, thereby "awakening interest in district and local history."

In considering the proposed series of surveys, the Committee agreed to adopt four general principles for guidance in drawing up proposals for the Government :—

- (1) That the surveys be national in scope ;
- (2) That they be authoritative, yet suitable for general reading ;
- (3) That they be moderate in length, not, in general, exceeding 30,000 words ;
- (4) That they comprise a uniform series.

In addition to the series of surveys, it was suggested that the Committee might consider other commemorative publications, including an Historical Atlas and Gazetteer, a Dictionary of National Biography, a revised National Bibliography, and volumes of select historical documents.

Following a general discussion of the whole field to be covered by the Committee in the course of its work, suitable persons were appointed to convene Provincial Historical Committees, sub-committees were set up to consider proposals introduced at the meeting, and a group of Wellington members was authorized to act as an Executive or Standing Committee.

Since the date of the Committee's first meeting an organization has gradually been built up under the supervision of the Standing Committee. Representative Historical Committees have been formed in each provincial centre, and in certain districts affiliated local committees have been set up in smaller centres. The sub-committees of the National Committee itself have carried on their discussions either at meetings or, where membership is scattered, by means of correspondence. The Standing Committee has met frequently to transact routine business, to discuss questions of policy as they