

animal and plant life as we can. Our birds especially, and our plants, too, are among the most wonderful in the world—many are unique—and every ill-advised introduction of a new animal is directly or indirectly a nibbling at their heritage.

Taking the economic viewpoint for a moment, and considering the case of blackberry, gorse, rabbits, and several other major pests, we realise that the annals of "acclimatisation" are a record of national disaster brought on us and our posterity by wilful ignorance. But it is the aesthetic reason I wish to stress here—I appeal to the feeling and to the patriotism of the New Zealand people. I have called the dangers of "acclimatisation" insidious—and one sees the thin edge of the wedge inserted at many points. The outstanding influence—the deliberate planting of heather in the Tongariro National Park has been already mentioned. There irreparable damage has been committed and associations of plants now cover a considerable area, which is neither New Zealand nor Scotland, but a bastard mixture of both. Nature made there, by the laborious process of ages and evolution, a Venus of Milo, and our generation has set upon the head of this masterpiece a Merry Widow hat—the result, says Dr. Cockayne, is like nothing either on earth, nor it is to be hoped, elsewhere.

Pines of various exotic species calculated to thrive in the locality have recently been planted near one of the huts on the middle of the Tararua Range. At first sight the scheme is a laudable one—firewood and shelter will be provided for future trampers. But again it is the thin end of the wedge—if the unfortunate occurs and these foreigners become established on the Tararuas, we must remember that their seeds are dispersed by the wind, and there is considerable danger of further spread. No trees alter the whole aspect of a landscape more than pines. One well-known New Zealand artist found the exotic pines overlooking the Huka Falls so utterly foreign to the spirit of New Zealand landscape, that, choosing the lesser of two evils and electing to follow Nature unspoiled rather than paint the illegitimate offspring of California and Maoriland, had perforce to omit them from his sketch.

Deer, introduced and fostered for the pleasure of an infinitesimal minority, have committed many thousands of pounds' worth of damage to our indi-

genous forests—and so the process goes on.

New Zealanders, are you content with New Zealand as Nature has made her, or shall the "acclimatisors" continue their mischievous policy until not a vestige of the real New Zealand exists outside the pages of history!

MAYOR ISLAND.

The following interesting notes on Mayor Island, which is gazetted a sanctuary, are by Mr. K. W. Dalrymple, of Bulls.

Mayor Island, so called by Captain Cook, is in the Bay of Plenty, about 27 miles N.N.E. of Tauranga, and the same distance S.S.E. of the Alderman Islands, and is 20 miles from the mainland.

The island is of volcanic formation, the native name, Tahua, being Maori for obsidian or volcanic glass; the area is 3154 acres; the shape is nearly square, with a high ridge running east and west across the south end, and north and south on the western side, rising to just under 1300 feet at the north end.

The island, lying outside the 100-fathom line, is very picturesque with its rough, water-worn cliffs streaked with veins of obsidian, and high, bush-covered hills surrounded by deep blue water.

A small opening, Opo Bay, on the S.E. corner is the usual landing place, unworkable, however, in east or south-east weather, when bays on the south or west sides have to be used.

Opo Bay, with its high arched cliffs on each side, overhung with twisted old pohutukawas, a white sandy beach at the head, backed by a little grassy flat on which are more pohutukawas, the whole sheltered by a cliff about 80 feet high topped with pohutukawas again is a sight not often seen. Five minutes' walk from the beach is a tree which should make Mayor Island known to all. Growing on the side of a small gully stands a grand old pohutukawa, surely the largest of its kind, with a trunk measuring just under 30ft round, 10ft up to the first branch and having a magnificent, spreading top.

There are many other pohutukawas of great size on the island, but none here or elsewhere to compare in symmetry and size with this one.

The varieties of trees and plants on Mayor Island are not many. There are none of the common trees of the mainland forest—rimu, matai, totara, kahikatea, tawa, rata, miro all being absent. Pohutukawas are in great groves on the