

voted themselves to provide a substantial income. Tongariro and Arthur Pass Boards had not sufficient income to maintain their areas; if any extra expenditure was necessary application for a grant had to be made to the Government.

Those who have been advocating reforms had hoped that special provision would be made for an annual appropriation for the upkeep of National Parks, as in Great Britain, United States and Canada. It is disappointing to find no mention of this in the Act. The only reference to finance is that one of the duties of the Authority is to recommend to the Minister the manner in which "moneys appropriated by Parliament for National Parks" shall be allocated. Let us hope that this forecasts special annual appropriations.

General Provisions

The powers given Boards for efficient ranging, prevention of fires, prohibition of firearms without a permit, the prevention of disturbance of birds or their eggs and nests, the extermination of introduced plants and animals and the protection of our native plants are extensive and the penalties adequate.

Power is given to Boards, with the consent of the Authority to construct roads and tracks with minimum damage to bush and to set aside suitable portions as "Wilderness Areas" to be left in their natural condition for all time. Perusal of these provisions will satisfy our members and the public generally that **preservation of our forests and birds is paramount.**

We congratulate the Minister of Lands for having brought down this much needed legislation and its most favourable reception in Parliament.

Manuka Blight

A NEWS item which has deeply stirred public opinion in recent months has been that of the deliberate spreading of the so-called "manuka blight" by certain farmers in the North Island. A leading provincial daily paper, quite early in the discussion called it, with prophetic foresight, "an issue which has every prospect of becoming one of the liveliest controversies seen in the country in many years". Many persons have taken part, from leading scientists downwards.

The scientists have not been so definite in their views as others, some of whom, without a full examination of the subject, have confidently put forward strong views in favour of the spread of the blight which may have seemed convincing to the uninitiated, while others again have argued from an intuitive repugnance to the deliberate spreading of disease or to the destruction of beauty. The scientists take the line that much research is needed before a definite pronouncement can be made. They are, however, uniformly against the artificial spreading of the disease in the meantime, and with this the Society definitely concurs, though it agrees that farmers should be given all reasonable help in their work and does not dispute the fact that manuka is a plague on some farms. On the other hand many farmers admit the shelter value of manuka for stock and the benefit accruing from the insect-eating birds which it, in turn, shelters.

Protest and Reply

In reply to a protest against deliberate infestation, the Society has received an assurance from the Hon. Mr. Holyoake, Minister of Agriculture, that he will consider whether any active steps should be taken to control the spread of the disease when an up-to-date survey, which he has arranged for his officers to undertake, has been completed. He has also told us that an inter-departmental committee which investi-