

an additional pleasure-drive. With the exception of the special cheap trips from Saturday to Wednesday (which were well patronised), the number of *bond fide* tourists has not been quite so great as formerly. The Coronation is said to be accountable for this. The opinion of the tourists is that this place has not been overrated. Many have said they had no idea such beautiful scenery existed. A great want has been felt in the shape of a local guide-book, which, in my opinion, is absolutely necessary."

Ranger Andrew McDougall, who was appointed to exercise a local inspection of the bushes chiefly in the Hawea, Wanaka, and Makarora districts, with the view of preventing the spoliation and wanton destruction of timber and the preservation of picturesque and scenic spots in those localities, more especially round the shores of the lakes, has done good service during the year in the direction indicated, as well as in the ordinary work of reporting upon applications for timber rights and privileges, and checking output for royalty and revenue purposes and other local inspections. He reports for the year as follows: "During the year I have sent about thirty reports to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Dunedin, relating to applications for sections, runs, bush, and flax. During the same period I have sent out about forty communications relating to matters of a local nature. On the 23rd July last I made an extended inspection of the Hawea Lake and bush. During the year I, as Ranger, visited Hawea eight times, Forks Settlement twice, Makarora Bush six times, and head of Lake Wanaka and the islands fifty-two times. I have worked with the Islands Domain Board in suppressing any interference with the bush on the different islands. The only act of vandalism I discovered was the cutting-down of a wattle-tree on Ruby Island, and, although a reward of £5 was offered, the offender was not detected. The very close scrutiny which has been maintained on the islands and shores of Lake Wanaka has been very beneficial in allowing the bush to once again assume a green and healthy appearance. The illegal cutting of bush, so common in Makarora Bush some two years ago, has been stopped, by the offenders being compelled to resort to other occupations. Regarding Hawea Bush, I am sorry to say it is not so satisfactory as one could wish. On account of the deer and trout, so numerous here, this lake must before long become a very popular resort for sportsmen, and any further diminution of the bush, already so meagre, must necessarily lessen its attractiveness. I respectfully suggest that in the granting of licenses or permits in this bush a serious regard to limitation in grants be entertained. I would suggest that in addition to the islands, Minaret Bush (growing up again) be conserved for some years to come. It is the only bush of any extent on the lake borders. A piece of very nice bush, which acts as a splendid foreground in a view of Mount Aspiring, situated on Run 334c (Barker Bros.), should be preserved; also a small piece of bush on Section 8, Block XVIII., Lower Wanaka District (Alexander McDougall), should also be preserved. These are only small pieces of bush, but if removed would very much detract from the beauty of Glendhu Bay."

With reference to Ranger McDougall's suggestions as to the limitation of timber privileges at Hawea Bush, I may state that this is a matter that has already been attended to, and will not be lost sight of in the granting of any further rights at the place referred to.

Land for Settlements Acts.

Pomahaka Downs.—The condition of this estate continues unsatisfactory, the area still unlet being 3,180 acres 3 roods 18 perches, only 369 acres 1 rood having been taken up during the year. The value of the unlet area is £502 7s. 8d. per annum. The number of settlers at present in occupation is nineteen, the area occupied 4,074 acres 2 roods 25 perches, and the annual rental £690 15s. 8d., including three temporary licenses at £7 10s. per annum over 92 acres. The receipts for the year were £710 9s. 3d., making the total from commencement £6,600 16s. 6d. Amount of rebate granted to three selectors, £9 16s. 11d.; number of houses, 13; persons resident, 40; value of improvements effected, £4,328. Ranger O'Neill reports on this estate as follows: "During the past year only one new selection was made, so that there are still a number of unoccupied sections on this estate. A very great improvement, however, has been made in the Clinton-Pomahaka Road, which is now metalled as far as the southern end of the estate. Formerly the road cut up very badly during the grain-carting season, and this was a serious handicap to the settlers. Now that the principal road has been so much improved much heavier loads may be carted, and the expense of getting away the grain much lessened. The crops of oats and turnips on Pomahaka are very fair this year; in fact, on northern slopes the crops might be described as good. The early season, however, was very broken, and farm-work was much hindered by broken weather. This had the effect of making a very late harvest, and it is very doubtful if the grain-crops in the south will be saved. The grass has been backward this year also, owing to the lateness of the season, but as some recompense for this loss the turnip-crops are generally good. The condition of the settlers on Pomahaka is much the same as in previous years; they have not made much progress, and their prospects, owing chiefly to the lateness of the season, are not at all bright. The holdings being fairly large each settler is wholly employed on his farm. Mixed farming—that is, sheep-grazing and grain and turnip growing—is followed, and a steady rotation of crops kept up. Grass does not seem to stand more than two to three years, so that a rotation of grass and crop must be adhered to. From the nature of the soil and from the climate it would appear that Pomahaka Downs would be very much improved by artificial drainage and lime. Unfortunately the distance from the nearest railway-station—Clinton—is too great to allow the settlers to try lime to any great extent."

Teanaraki.—This settlement is now fully occupied by twenty-two settlers, the area being 344 acres 1 rood 30 perches, and the annual rental £281 9s. 6d. The year's receipts amounted to £362 14s. 3d., and the total to date £2,239 5s. 6d. Rebate granted to seven tenants, £6 12s. 9d.; number of houses, 16; persons resident, 67; value of improvements, £1,829 12s. Ranger Atkinson reports: "This settlement continues in much the same condition as last year. The