

## EXPENDITURE DURING YEAR.

Although a fair area of land was acquired during the twelve months, the expenditure by way of compensation is smaller than the preceding year, on account of most of the land not having been paid for during the financial year, and the delays occasioned through the necessity of making accurate surveys and valuations before the land is finally proclaimed. The result will probably be to swell the amount of compensation paid during 1908-9, as not only land authorised for purchase during the present year will have to be paid for, but also lands acquired previously. The statutory "Statement of Accounts" is published in Appendix A.

The following summary shows by way of comparison the expenditure each year since the passing of "The Scenery Preservation Act, 1903," which set aside the sum of £100,000 for all expenditure thereunder:—

	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.
	£	£	£	£
Compensation for land ... ..	216	3,336	7,856	4,286
Expenses of Commission and Board ... ..	1,822	1,221	185	111
Administration (including fencing) ... ..	...	...	304	532
Miscellaneous (including surveys, valuations, &c.) ... ..	52	527	801	555
Totals ... ..	2,090	5,084	9,146	5,484

It will therefore be seen that there remains a balance of £78,196 for the operations of the current and future years, and no one who has any intimate knowledge of the magnificent forest lands on the North Island Main Trunk Railway line, in the vicinity of main roads all over the Dominion, the practically unique river scenery on the Wanganui, Mokau, and other well-known waterways, the bush-clad shores of inland lakes and ocean inlets, and the innumerable scenic, historic, and thermal attractions of our country can deny that this amount will be more than required to preserve the best features of New Zealand scenery. The Wanganui River, for instance, has no equal in the world as regards its botanical and scenic attractions, and so in a greater or less degree throughout the whole of the Dominion, our natural scenery is more appreciated the more it is visited and known.

## SCENERY-PRESERVATION IN AUSTRALIA.

It will be interesting to compare the steps taken by the States of Australia to preserve the scenery in their respective countries. The following is a brief *résumé*:—

*New South Wales.*—No legislation has been passed dealing specially with the subject of scenery-preservation, but the provisions of the Crown Lands Act, under which Crown lands may be dedicated or reserved for public purposes, including purposes of public recreation and the preservation of indigenous flora, and of the Public Works Resumption Act, under which alienated lands may be acquired for purposes, *inter alia*, of public recreation, amply meet requirements in this direction.

In dealing with the Crown lands of the State, due consideration is given to the desirableness, in the public interests, of protecting from alienation lands required for general purposes of public recreation, or for the preservation of attractive indigenous flora, or which have claims to be regarded as natural beauty-spots or places of scenic interest. Many such areas have already been reserved or dedicated, and further similar reservations will be made from time to time as fresh areas come under review or have attention directed to them.

Regarding alienated lands, no very extensive areas have been acquired for scenic purposes, but some comparatively small areas of special interest in such connection have been purchased or resumed, and proposals for the acquisition of other areas of this character are at present receiving attention. The cost of such acquisition is met from an annual vote usually provided by Parliament for the acquisition of parks and recreation-grounds, &c.

Large tracts of land specially adapted for recreation reserves, but unsuitable in almost every instance for cultivation or settlement from an agricultural or pastoral aspect, have been set aside in New South Wales and dedicated to the public as national reserves. They are generally vested in Trusts, usually consisting of prominent local men, who, with the aid of private subscriptions and subsidies received from the Government, carry out all necessary work, such as roads, tracks, and shelter-sheds, for the benefit of the visiting public.

The two more important reserves in the vicinity of Sydney are National Park, of 36,000 acres, and Kuring-gai Chase, of 35,300 acres. Here, the Trustees, in addition to providing facilities for visitors, have taken steps to preserve the natural flora and fauna committed to their care, making it a penal offence to discharge firearms or to interfere in any way with the birds and animals in the parks. No one is allowed, without the permission of the Trustees, to remove, cut, or deface any trees, shrubs, plants, rocks, fences, or gates; to fish in prohibited waters, advertise, or depasture stock. Employees are sworn in as special constables to enforce these laws, and it is found that this policy of preservation has been successful in making the parks the haunts of great varieties of beautiful birds and other fauna. The same principle is adopted on a smaller scale at reserves of well-known beauty-spots.

These Trusts make their own rules and regulations, particularly emphasizing the fact that the natural flora must not be interfered with, and, where funds allow it, employees acting as special constables enforce this, or in other instances the Trustees, acting in an honorary capacity, endeavour to preserve the natural beauties.