

Taking the evidence of the non-sportsman, and considering the damage done by deer not only to the forests (see photo No. 1), but also to the plantations, orchards, and crops, our opinion as to their harmfulness is much strengthened. We therefore advise that measures be taken to restrict deer to limited areas, sufficient for sport, which may be proclaimed deer parks, where they can do the smallest possible damage.

The undergrowth of forest is of especial importance in preventing evaporation from the ground-surface, and thus assisting in conserving the water-supply. This function is recognized the world over, but in a New Zealand forest, where the undergrowth is usually very dense, its climatic effect reaches a maximum. Any factor, therefore, should be vigorously repressed which may lead to damage to such undergrowth. Deer, both red and fallow; cattle, tame or wild; and goats are of especial moment in this regard. So far as deer are concerned, these animals year by year are extending their range, so that the time is not far distant when, unless stringent measures are adopted, the whole of the Southern Alps in the South Island and the dividing range in the North Island will be overrun.

(2.) *Scenic Reserves.*

Under the term "scenic reserves" are included several distinct classes of reserve, which may be distinguished as follows:—

1. Reserves for preserving the scenery. The special character of the scenery of any country does not depend upon the surface features of the landscape, but upon the plant covering. For example, were the vegetation of the Otira Gorge to consist of European deciduous forest, and not of a mixed assembly of evergreen trees, shrubs, and ferns, most of them peculiar to New Zealand, the scenery, now famed throughout the world, would be altogether different, and its special charm and interest gone. So, too, the present Otira scenery differs in part from that of the Buller Gorge owing to the absence of New Zealand beech in the former and its predominance in the latter. The scenery of the Wanganui River has in many places between Wanganui and Pipiriki lost altogether its peculiar character and especial attraction since, instead of the original unique plant covering, innumerable European willows, in long lines, fringe its banks. The class of scenic reserve here dealt with is of especial moment along tourist routes, and the importance of maintaining the vegetation of such in its virgin condition should need no elaboration. Speaking of the vegetation of New Zealand as a whole, it must be remembered that out of its total of some 1,700 species of trees, shrubs, herbs, ferns and fern allies, more than three-fourths are found nowhere else in the world. Moreover, this vegetation, where unmolested by human occupation, is not artificial, as is that of Europe generally, where the forests have been planted or much modified by man, and even the mountain meadows changed by the grazing of domestic animals. The vegetation of New Zealand, where undisturbed, is truly primitive. It is indeed a piece of the primeval world just as planted by nature.

2. Reserves for the protection of historic places.

3. Reserves in the vicinity of hot springs.

4. Reserves for preserving examples of the vegetation, together with its accompanying birds and other animals.

Many of the foregoing reserves, as also those for climatic purposes, belong, in addition, to this class. They are, in fact, open-air museums where the unique plants and animals of New Zealand may remain unmolested for the benefit of future generations. Such otherwise would know only of the natural productions of their country from isolated specimens in gardens, dried plants in museums, descriptions in books, paintings, or photographs. Reserves of this character have been aptly termed "monuments of nature," and such have been created of late years in all parts of the civilized world, and legislation introduced to prevent their molestation. No one is opposed to the erection and maintenance of museums and picture-galleries at great cost, where all is inani-