

“great kiwi” on account of its size. One of the kakapos was reported to stand 3 ft. high, and weighed 22 lb. Assuming the correctness of this it can be claimed that the New Zealand kakapo is the largest living representative in the world of the parrot family of birds. In many other respects the bird-life of the Downs is particularly rare and valuable. Now that the land has been effectively reserved the provisions of the Scenery Preservation Act will apply, and render any person liable to a heavy fine who takes or discharges any firearm thereon or kills or takes any birds or any native or imported game thereon.

Another interesting reserve is that of 2,000 acres outside the City of Nelson and adjoining Cawthron Park. It is wooded hilly country overlooking the Maitai River, and accessible by the Dun Mountain track.

In the Marlborough District 300 acres of bush land, consisting of kahikatea, rimu, and birch, situated on the main road from Nelson to Blenheim, has been set aside, together with 67 acres of forest land in the suburbs of Picton.

In the Westland District areas containing 660 acres on the south-west shore of Lake Brunner were added to the scenic reserves of the locality, so that all the beautiful scenery of the southern part of the lake is secured for all time. These reserves now extend to the railway at Te Kinga Station, on the eastern shore, round to the eastern Hohonu River.

In Canterbury three reserves in the Kinloch Settlement, Akaroa, aggregating 84 acres, were proclaimed under the Scenery Preservation Act. They comprise steep hillsides covered with native bush containing interesting examples of the native flora of the locality. They also afford a sanctuary for native birds.

In Otago an area of 8 acres, on the banks of the Catlin's River, was added to former reservations in that district.

*Summary.*—Altogether areas aggregating 21,639 acres were set aside during the year, and, after deducting 33 acres comprised in former reserves over which the reservation was revoked during the year, there now remains a total of 305,421 acres proclaimed under the Scenery Preservation Act.

#### SCENIC BOARDS AND LOCAL SUPERVISION OF SCENIC RESERVES.

In order to effectually safeguard the scenic reserves of the Dominion and to ensure adequate supervision and development it has been the practice to vest the control of reserves in local authorities, or to appoint special Scenic Boards to control reserves. The Department has been fortunate in securing the services of gentlemen interested in scenery-preservation and bird-protection to act as members of these Boards. In cases where scenic reserves are situated in districts which are at present only sparsely populated, local honorary inspectors are appointed where circumstances warrant such action being taken. It is therefore pleasing to record that a considerable number of valuable scenic reserves near centres of population and in other localities, such as the Marlborough Sounds, are being looked after in an efficient manner.

The local authorities controlling scenic reserves are as follows :—

- Whangarei Borough Council (Coronation Scenic Reserve).
- Levin Borough Council (Waiopahu Scenic Reserve).
- Invercargill Borough Council (Waihopai River Bank Scenic Reserve).
- Nelson City Council (Ururakau Scenic Reserve).
- Rangitikei County Council (Silverhope Scenic Reserve, near Hunterville).
- Dunedin City Council (Evansdale Glen Scenic Reserve).

The special Boards constituted under the Scenery Preservation Act are as follows :—

- Summit Road Scenic Board, Christchurch.
- New Plymouth Scenic Reserves Board.
- Silverstream Scenic Board, Wellington.
- Orari Gorge Scenic Board, Canterbury.
- Papatowai Scenic Board, Catlin's District, Otago.
- Northcote Scenic Board, Auckland.

#### OTARI SCENIC RESERVE (WILTON'S BUSH).

In 1906 and subsequently an area of 142 acres of Native land at Wadestown (Wellington) was purchased and reserved under the Scenery Preservation Act at a cost of £1,200, of which £500 was contributed by the Wellington City Council. It comprised an attractive example of the native forests that formerly clothed the hillsides around Wellington, and has been a popular resort since its acquisition. There has been, however, considerable difficulty in safeguarding it, and as the City Corporation was unwilling to take over its protection and development unless the freehold of the land was vested in it, authority was obtained by section 62 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal, &c., Act, 1917, to sell the fee-simple of the reserve to the Council for the sum of £700. The purchase-money has been paid over to the Crown, and the ownership of the land is now being vested in the Corporation of the City of Wellington, which will in future care for and control this beautiful reserve.

#### HISTORICAL MONUMENTS IN NEW ZEALAND.

The Director of the Dominion Museum drew the attention of the Government to legislative action that had been taken in Great Britain to preserve ancient buildings and objects such as tumuli, dolmens, stone circles, long barrows, and ancient British fort-sites, earthworks, and towers. In New Zealand “historical monuments” would include aboriginal rock-paintings, earthworks of Maori pas, Maori or pre-Maori stone fences, battle-sites of the Maori wars, redoubts, blockhouses, and perhaps certain buildings erected by the early colonists.

At the present time the Scenery Preservation Act gives power for the Crown to acquire and reserve lands possessing scenic or historical interest or on which there are thermal springs. It does not, however, provide for the execution of deeds or agreements for the protection of many of the objects included in the term “historical monuments” situated on privately owned land, which it may