

Over 3,000 acres of land on the south bank of the Mokau River were set aside during the year, and, as has already been stated, the acquisition of these areas will preserve the magnificent scenery of the river. Although the banks do not possess the grandeur of those on the upper reaches of the Wanganui River, yet they have a beauty of their own, and in this way cannot be surpassed by any other river in New Zealand. With the increase of motor and other traffic and the proper facilities being afforded for launching up the Mokau River, its beauties will receive ample recognition in the future, and will serve to attract to this part of the Island many visitors who otherwise would not come.

A further area of 8 acres covered with native bush on the Okoroa Road, to the north-west of Okahukura Station, on the Main Trunk line, were resumed and set apart under the Act.

In the *Marlborough Land District* four small areas of land adjoining Whenua-nui Bay, in Queen Charlotte Sound, were acquired by way of exchange and reserved for scenic purposes. They are within easy distance of Picton, and will no doubt be visited largely in the future.

In the *Southland Land District* 190 acres abutting on the southern shores of Pickersgill Harbour and Dusky Sound, Fiord County, were proclaimed as a scenic reserve. The land is covered with heavy mixed forest and native bush, comprising broken and precipitous country. The proclamation of this area completes the reservation of the land in the Sounds National Park.

The only other reserve made during the year was $\frac{1}{4}$ acre adjoining the existing scenic reserve at Clifden.

The reservation over three areas, comprising 211 acres, was revoked during the year. This was done on account of the land being no longer suitable for scenic purposes.

Added to the reservations made under the Scenery Preservation Act since 1903, there are now 525 separate reserves, aggregating 312,075 acres, and this, as has been said before, includes some of the finest scenery in the Dominion. When further reservations which are now under contemplation are effected the bulk of the unique scenery of the Dominion will be secured.

During the last few years, through the unusual circumstances occasioned by a state of war and the great strain thrown upon the financial and other resources of New Zealand, there has naturally been a falling-off in the expenditure of money under the scenery-preservation vote, but every care has been taken that judicious expenditure should afford the best results, and this will continue to be done in the future.

LAKE ROTOITI.

Some time ago the Native owners of certain lands fronting the shores of Lake Rotoiti decided to cede portions to the Crown for scenic reservation, and last year, while the Hon. Sir Francis Bell was in the Rotorua district, he met a number of the interested Natives at Okere and discussed the matter with them. Among those present were Morehu te Kirikau, Wirehunga Tamati, Teiri te Tikau, Raharuhi Pururu, and Captain Vercoe, D.S.O. Captain Gilbert Mair acted as interpreter.

Speaking for the Natives, Morehu te Kirikau made an offer of the land to the Government free of compensation, subject to certain conditions, and subsequently he visited Wellington and confirmed the offer. Provision was made by section 33 of the Native Land Amendment and Native Land Claims Adjustment Act, 1919, to accept this offer, and to establish a special Board in accordance with the wishes of the Natives for the administration, protection, and control of the land: the Board of control to consist of not less than six members, of whom five shall be members of the Ngatipikiao Tribe. The former Native owners are to retain free right of access to any ancestral burial-grounds, and shall also have the right to bury deceased Natives in any such burial-grounds.

The survey of the land has been carried out by Mr. Tai Mitchell, and as soon as the plans have been approved steps will be taken to constitute the Scenic Board in pursuance of section 13 of the Scenery Preservation Act, 1908.

It is understood that it is the intention of the Natives to celebrate the handing-over of the scenic reserves by holding an official gathering at Rotorua to which representatives of the Government will be invited.

The spontaneous action of the Ngatipikiao Natives in presenting such a beautiful area of scenic bush to the Dominion is worthy of the highest praise, and is very gratifying to the Department.

TENNYSON INLET.

The reservation of the forest-covered land around Tennyson Inlet, containing about 7,000 acres, has been considered by the Scenery Preservation Board on more than one occasion, and it is now pleasing to record that provision was made by section 14 of the Native Land Amendment and Native Land Claims Adjustment Act, 1919, to reserve this magnificent area of Native bush, which extends in its virgin state practically from the tops of the hills to the shores of Tennyson Inlet, one of the most beautiful in the Marlborough Sounds.

Certain South Island landless Natives were awarded land in this locality by the Smith-Mackay Commission, but, as the land was very rugged and quite unsuitable for settlement, the legislation quoted provided for the payment of a grant of money in lieu of land to the Natives entitled thereto, and action in that direction is now being taken. As soon as opportunity offers it is hoped to make a properly formed road to the reserve in order that its scenic grandeur may be accessible to all visitors.

LOCAL SCENIC BOARDS.

Local Scenic Boards appointed in pursuance of section 13 of the Scenery Preservation Act, 1908, continue to do good work in controlling scenic reserves in various parts of the Dominion, and as these gentlemen hold purely honorary positions and act without remuneration of any kind their services in protecting much of our beautiful scenic bush are highly appreciated by the Department. At present seven of these Boards are in operation.