

No open season was declared for the shooting of these birds, and where it was found that land-holders were suffering damage they were granted authority for a limited period to destroy the birds.

As usual, open seasons for game-shooting were declared in various acclimatization districts.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT.

The Borough of Taihape was constituted a fire district in January last, making a total of fifty-one Fire Boards now operating. The estimates of expenditure of each Fire Board have been approved by the Minister. Plans and specifications for the erection of a number of proposed fire-stations, including those for a new central fire-station in Dunedin, have been submitted for approval. Model by-laws in a very comprehensive form regarding the provision of fire-escapes have been drafted and issued by the Department to all Fire Boards and local bodies as a guide for local enactments. A Conference of chief officers of the principal fire brigades, for the purpose of considering matters in connection with safe storage of bulk petrol, fighting of oil-fires, &c., was authorized, and held at Christchurch during the progress of the big oil-fire which occurred in that city in August last. The usual inspections of fire brigades operating in the fire districts have been made by the Inspector of Fire Brigades and, in compliance with requests received from various Government Departments and local bodies, special inspections and reports have been made. Public addresses in regard to fire-prevention matters have also been given.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

His Excellency General Sir Alexander Hore Ruthven, Governor of South Australia, together with Lady Hore Ruthven, spent a few weeks in New Zealand. His Excellency devoted practically the whole of the period of his visit to trout-fishing in the thermal district, while Her Excellency visited a number of tourist resorts. The Viscount Craigavon, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, and the Viscountess Craigavon spent three months in the Dominion and extensively covered the North and South Islands. A visit of much interest and enthusiasm was that of Rear-Admiral Byrd and the members of his expedition on their return from the Antarctic. Organized parties included the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian bowling team, and the Empire farmers. Foreign warships to visit Auckland and Wellington were the French cruiser "Tourville" and the German cruiser "Emden."

NATIONALITY.

The British Nationality and Status of Aliens (in New Zealand) Act, 1928, which applies to the Cook Islands and Western Samoa, came into force on the 1st July, 1929. It adopts Part II of the Imperial Act, thereby bringing New Zealand into line with the other four self-governing Dominions, all of which had previously adopted that part of the Imperial Act. The effect of this legislation is twofold, namely: (1) Certificates heretofore granted or that may hereafter be granted in the United Kingdom or in any of the self-governing Dominions will operate in New Zealand, and the holders will continue in New Zealand to have the status of British subjects; (2) certificates of naturalization granted in New Zealand under the Act will confer on the holders the complete status of British subjects both in and beyond the Dominion. It prescribes that persons previously naturalized in New Zealand may apply for and receive certificates under the new Act, and unless and until new certificates are granted to them they shall be deemed to be British subjects in New Zealand, but not elsewhere. One of the essential conditions to the issue of a certificate is that the applicant shall have an adequate knowledge of the English language, and in this connection special provisions are made for the naturalization of Samoans as defined in the Samoa Act, 1921. Fifty-three certificates have been issued under the new Act.

PASSPORTS.

The possession of passports by British subjects travelling from New Zealand, which became essential during the war period of 1914-18, is equally necessary to-day to facilitate entry into other parts of the British Empire (not including the Commonwealth of Australia) and foreign countries. The issue of 4,909 passports during the year under review establishes a record for the Dominion; 817 passports were renewed for varying periods. It is considered that in times of peace passport visas are unnecessary, and reciprocal agreements for the abolition thereof have been concluded between the Government of New Zealand and that of the countries of Austria, Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, Denmark, France (and French colonies), Germany, Italy, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. Similar agreements are in the preliminary stages with Greece, Albania, Yugo-Slavia, and Hungary.

LOTTERIES.

In accordance with the authority contained in section 42 of the Gaming Act, 1908, a total of 354 licenses were issued to dispose of works of art, &c., by raffle or chance. Two prosecutions were successfully made for failure to observe the conditions under which the licenses were granted. The statute referred to above also provides for a similar disposal of mineral specimens, and the Government has decided that a limited number of lotteries with alluvial gold as prizes may be permitted. The conditions under which such licenses are issued are most stringent, and it is a *sine qua non* that they shall be for the benefit of community objects only.