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**Preserving The Brownies' Portion:
A History Of Voluntary Nature
Conservation Organisations
In New Zealand
1888-1935**

**A thesis
submitted in fulfilment of
the requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
at
Lincoln University**

**by
L. E. Lochhead**

**Lincoln University
1994**

One of the Chief problems of our time is the reconciliation of civilisation and the wild, of business and beauty. We have to overcome the extremists of both sides, those idealists who dwell in the clouds and those "whole-hog" civilisers who would spoil everything that does not conduce to financial gain.... There is an ancient rural myth that one tiny part of every field or garden should be left untilled for the fairy people, who will not dwell where spade or pruning-hook have been. It seems as if there can be too much of cultivation and efficiency.... the brownies' portion should be well guarded. In a young country like this we have inherited riches that are not for our generation alone, but belong as fully to those who come after us.

Maurice Hurst, "The Heron's Beach," *New Zealand Life*, August, 1923, p.13.

Abstract of a thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the Degree of Ph.D.

**PRESERVING THE BROWNIES' PORTION
A HISTORY OF VOLUNTARY NATURE CONSERVATION
ORGANISATIONS IN NEW ZEALAND
1888-1935**

The systematic colonisation of New Zealand by Europeans from 1840 onwards led to rapid changes of the natural environment. Inhabited until then by relatively small numbers of Polynesians, New Zealand's insular biogeography made it particularly susceptible to the impact of an advanced western technology and economy. Within less than 50 years of the declaration of British sovereignty, the first organised nature conservation groups had emerged. In contrast to other studies of nature conservation in New Zealand, this thesis examines the succession of small voluntary groups dedicated to the preservation of scenery and protection of wildlife between 1888 and 1935. These groups played an important role in raising public awareness of the values of nature conservation in the face of the dominant views of settler society which was predicated upon the subjugation and exploitation of nature.

The first two chapters examine the wider intellectual climate within which the groups arose. Chapter One discusses the key idea which militated against conservation, centering around the doctrine of progress. The second chapter examines the ideas which led to the growing conservation consciousness which was an international phenomenon at the end of the nineteenth century. The influence of romanticism and developments in science promoted by the Darwinian revolution emerge as key factors.

The remaining chapters focus on the efforts of individual groups, beginning with the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society. Chapter Four examines the most successful of the nineteenth-century groups, the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society. The widening of the movement is covered in Chapter Five, which documents the efforts of groups in Auckland, Christchurch, Nelson, Wanganui, and Wellington, though information on all of these is sparse. Chapter Six focuses on an important but unsuccessful campaign to protect lowland forests in the Rai Valley, Marlborough, a conflict which illustrates the difficulties the movement faced. Hitherto best-known of the early groups, Harry Ell's Summit Road Association is discussed in Chapter Seven.

The final three chapters examine groups which aspired, with varying degrees of success, to be national in scope and which were more scientific in their orientation. The evolving philosophical framework of nature conservation in New Zealand is central to Chapter Eight, which examines the contribution of the first Forest and Bird Protection Society. Members of this Society included the key conservation thinkers of the time, among them Leonard Cockayne, Harry Ell, George Malcolm Thomson, Herbert Guthrie-Smith, and the first notable woman conservationist, Blanche Baughan. Chapter Nine examines the role of the New Zealand Forestry League, which played an important role in the promotion of the New Zealand Forest Service. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the early years of the first of the modern nature conservation groups, the Native Bird Protection Society, known since 1935 as the Forest and Bird Protection Society.

Keywords. New Zealand history; mid-nineteenth-early twentieth century; nature conservation; voluntary organisations; scenery preservation; bird protection.

CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Contents	iv
List of Illustrations and Maps	v
Introduction	1
1. "Subduing and Replenishing the Earth" : The "Heroic Work" of Colonisation, 1840-1890	10
2. Towards the Liberation of Nature, 1840-1890	47
3. Beginnings: The Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society	82
4. "The Premier Society of its Type" : The Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society	104
5. The Movement Expands	131
6. The Nelson Scenery Preservation Society and the Battle for the Rai	160
7. Harry Ell and the Summit Road Association	181
8. Back to the Wilds: The First New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society	192
8.1 Part 1. The Society, Its Formation, Its Goals And Its Achievements	192
8.2 Part 2. The Conservation Philosophy of Key Members	206
8.3 Part 3. Conclusion: Aesthetes And Elitists?	233
9. The New Zealand Forestry League: Preservation and Conservation	239
10. Val Sanderson and the Native Bird Protection Society, 1923-1935: The First of the Modern Conservation Groups	266
Conclusion	296
Acknowledgements	301
Bibliography	302
Appendix	325

ILLUSTRATIONS

Following page:

C.W. Govett	103
W. H. Skinner	103
Eighteen Miles up the Mokau	115
Meeting of the Waters Reserve	115
H. G. Ell	180
Kennedy's Bush	183
Leonard Cockayne	193
H. Guthrie-Smith	193
G.M.Thomson	217
Sir James Wilson	238
Val Sanderson	265
Sir Thomas Mackenzie	265

MAPS

Ronga and Opouri Valleys, Marlborough. Location map	159
Ronga and Opouri Valleys, Marlborough. Topographical map	159
Mt Richmond Forest Park	176

INTRODUCTION

The vigour of the conservation movement since the 1970s has tended to obscure the fact that an organised conservation movement in New Zealand dates back to the previous century. The majority of modern conservationists, if asked to pinpoint the beginnings of the movement would probably cite the Manapouri controversy, which began with the launch of a petition by the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society in 1960. A third petition on the issue, organised by the same Society in 1970, gathered 264,907 signatures, the largest petition ever presented to Parliament up to that time.¹ The controversy can justifiably be viewed as the main catalyst within New Zealand for the upsurge in environmental awareness which was a phenomenon throughout the Western World in the early 1970s. Within the space of a just a few years, the Environmental Defense Society, Ecology Action, the Native Forests Action Council, which evolved from the slightly earlier Beech Forest Action Committee, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, and CoEnCo² were new names to contend with in the New Zealand conservation scene, alongside the much earlier Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. In addition, a number of relatively short-lived single issue groups and coalitions formed, including the Campaign for Non-Nuclear Futures, Campaign Power Pole, Save Manapouri Campaign, Save Aramoana Campaign, Campaign for Rational Economic and Environmental Development in New Zealand (CREEDNZ) and Coromandel Watchdog Committee.³

The 70th anniversary celebrations of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society in 1983 served as a timely reminder that the history of organised conservation long preceded the 1970s. A fiftieth anniversary publication of the Federated Mountain Clubs in 1981, outlining that organisation's contributions to the creation and management of national parks, forest parks and the New Zealand walkways system and to the conservation and management of wilderness areas and mountain environments, reminds us that Forest and Bird was not working alone in the period prior to 1970. It is less widely known that these

1. Seven years later the Maruia Declaration exceeded this with 341,160 signatures.

2. CoEnCo was a coalition of environmental groups which evolved into the Environment and Conservation Organisation of New Zealand (ECO). The initiative for the coalition came from Forest and Bird, which convened a meeting in 1971 at which a working group was set up to try and establish a permanent environmental coalition. The group organised a conference in December 1971 known as the "Conference on Environment and Conservation," from which the name of the coalition derived. The organisation was formally established at the conference. (R. Wilson, *From Manapouri to Aramoana: The Battle for New Zealand's Environment*. Waiwera : Earthworks Press, 1982)

3. For further discussion of these groups and of major environmental controversies of the past two decades see Wilson (1982).

groups, which emerged in the early part of the century, built upon the efforts and experience of a number of even earlier groups, for the most part short-lived, the first of which was founded in the late 1880s. The emergence and achievements of these early conservation societies forms the subject of this thesis.

In their first flush of enthusiasm for the movement, many adherents of the modern groups, with the reformist zeal of the newly converted and the typical contempt of the younger generation for the older, were dismissive of the achievements of their antecedents. Their policy and tactics were characterised as conservative until forced to change by the example of their more enterprising and assertive juniors. Undoubtedly new blood brought with it worthwhile changes. However, the achievements of the last twenty years owe more than is perhaps acknowledged to the slow, steady and often unspectacular gains and achievements of the earlier groups, in the face of public indifference and prevailing social norms inimical to conservation of nature. Not least of those achievements was the ability of Forest and Bird and the Federated Mountain Clubs to survive and prosper as organisations through the adverse conditions of the Depression and the Second World War. Whether any of the younger groups will achieve the longevity and sustained vitality of these two groups awaits the test of time.

The growth of interest in environmental history over the past few years has helped to place the achievements of the past twenty years in a clearer perspective. Yet despite the gains in knowledge, the role of early conservation organisations remains curiously neglected. The majority of studies to date fall into one of two categories; those emphasising government policy and legislation in relation to a particular aspect of conservation and those dealing with prominent individuals active in the movement.

N. M. Harris has greatly advanced our understanding of the origins and evolution of the national parks movement in New Zealand but his work contains no recognition of the contributions of the pioneering conservation organisations.⁴ M. M. Roche, undoubtedly the most active contributor to the field, has examined the origins and evolution of scenic reserves and has also made a major contribution to the history of forest policy in New Zealand.⁵ He gives a very brief account of the New Zealand Forestry League's role in

4. N. W. Harris, *Three Parks: An Analysis of the Origins and Evolution of the New Zealand National Park Movement*. M.A. Thesis (Geography) University of Canterbury, 1974.

5. M. M. Roche, *The Origins and Evolution of Scenic Reserves in New Zealand*. M.A. Thesis (Geography) University of Canterbury, 1979; "Securing Representative Areas of New Zealand's Environment: Some Historical and Design Perspectives," *New Zealand Geographer*, 37(2) : 73-77, 1981; "Evolving Attitudes Towards New Zealand's Protected Area System," pp. 226-242 in Department of Lands and Survey, *Seminar on People and Parks: The Human Side of Managing New Zealand's Parks and Protected Areas*. Wellington : Department of Lands and Survey, [1985]; *Forest Policy in New Zealand: An*

promoting the establishment of an independent Forestry Department.⁶ The existence of some earlier conservation groups is acknowledged but their contribution to raising scenery preservation consciousness prior to the passing of the Scenery Preservation Act 1903 is not explored.⁷ In an attractive volume produced to commemorate the centenary of the gift of Tongariro as a national park by Te Heuheu Tukino in 1887, David Thom presents a broad overview of conservation history in New Zealand.⁸ He recognises the contributions of a number of individuals, but the activities of the conservation groups which pre-date Forest and Bird play no part in the story he tells.

Our knowledge of the contributions of particular individuals to the development of the early conservation movement has been enhanced by a number of recent studies, but these, too, shed little light on the role of groups. Richard Henry, the curator of the first off-shore island bird sanctuary and Sir Walter Buller, ornithologist, bird collector and "reluctant conservationist" have both been the subject of detailed biographical works.⁹ Paul Star, in a recently completed thesis, directed his attention to the conservation activities of Thomas Henry Potts, New Zealand's first parliamentary spokesperson for conservation at a national level.¹⁰ None of these men appear to have been associated with conservation groups.

Henry George Ell is probably the best known of our early conservationists. This and other aspects of his life have been the subject of a number of studies. Roche, in his history of scenery preservation, examined Ell's contribution to the cause, which included the formation of the Summit Road Association in 1909. Because of its close association with Ell, this organisation is the one early group which is reasonably widely known. A more comprehensive account of the Summit Road Association is to be found in a biography of Ell by Leonore Oakley.¹¹ The most recent discussion occurs in an article by Paul

Historical Geography, 1840-1919. Palmerston North : Dunmore Press, 1987; *History of New Zealand Forestry.* Wellington : New Zealand Forestry Corporation in association with G P Books, 1990.

6. M. M. Roche, *Forest Policy in New Zealand: An Historical Geography, 1840-1919.* Palmerston North : Dunmore Press, 1987.

7. M. M. Roche (1979 & 1985)

8. D. Thom, *Heritage: The Parks of the People.* Auckland : Landsdowne Press, 1987.

9. S. & J. Hill, *Richard Henry of Resolution Island.* Dunedin : John McIndoe, 1987; R. Galbreath, *Walter Buller: The Reluctant Conservationist.* Wellington : G. P. Books, 1989.

10. P. Star, T.H. Potts and the Origins of Conservation in New Zealand. M.A. Thesis (History) University of Otago, 1991. I note the proviso that Potts was the first Parliamentarian to address conservation at a national level because in 1867 William Mosely raised the issue before the Otago Provincial Council with the result that provision was made for forest reserves in 1868. Roche (1987) pp. 69-71.

11. L. Oakley, *Harry Ell and His Summit Road.* Christchurch : Caxton Press, 1960.

Dingwall on Ell's contribution to nature conservation but this covers no new ground¹² In all of these studies the Association is dealt with in isolation. There is no acknowledgement of the role of earlier or contemporary groups, hence no assessment is possible of its contribution within the context of the growing organised conservation movement. Perhaps surprisingly, no one yet has taken up the challenge of reassessing Ell's contributions in the light of more recent understanding of the development of the conservation movement. Oakley's book was written well before the current interest in nature conservation history arose so she was in no position to make an informed assessment of his contribution. Although she gives a good account of his efforts to promote the conservation cause in Parliament and of his efforts in relation to the Summit Road, she presents a far from complete picture of his conservation activity. In particular, his participation in other conservation organisations is not mentioned.

Ell's friend and supporter, the eminent botanist and pioneer conservationist, Leonard Cockayne, is the subject of a brief biography by A. D. Thomson.¹³ This account, which has no pretensions to being a comprehensive biography, reveals nothing about his participation in the several conservation organisations with which he was actively involved. The life and works of George Malcolm Thomson, another of our pioneer conservationists, are examined in a thesis by Yvonne Speirs.¹⁴ Thomson had a varied and active life in many spheres, including membership of a number of conservation organisations. His conservation activities, although addressed in the thesis, were not the prime focus of Speirs' research and much still remains to be told about this aspect of his life.

Apart from the studies dealing with the Summit Road Association and the brief discussion of the New Zealand Forestry League by Roche, the one major exception to this neglect of the earliest conservation groups is a thesis by G. F. Vine on the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society, founded in 1888.¹⁵ From the perspective of conservation history, this study shares the shortcomings of the works on the Summit Road Association. Vine made no attempt to place the group's conservation activities within the context of the developing conservation movement in New Zealand and though he recognised the existence

12. P. R. Dingwall, "Harry Ell's Vision in Nature Conservation," *Landscape*, 10 : 23-27, 1981. A brief account of the organisation can also be found in G. Ogilvie, *The Port Hills of Christchurch*. Auckland : Reed Books, 1978.

13. A. D. Thomson, *The Life and Correspondence of Leonard Cockayne*. Paper presented at the History of Science Conference, Wellington, 12-14 February 1983. Christchurch : Caxton Press, 1983.

14. E. Y. Speirs, *George Malcolm Thomson*. M.A. Thesis (History) University of Otago, 1983.

15. G. F. Vine, *Doing a Good Work: The Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society 1888-1915*. M.A. Thesis (History) University of Otago, 1983.

of a number of contemporary conservation groups, he did not address the relationship between them and the Dunedin Society. Not unreasonably, Vine focussed most of his attention on the urban amenity work of the Society, which dominated its activities.

Forest and Bird and the Federated Mountain Clubs have fared a little better than their antecedents. In addition to the history issued to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Federated Mountain Clubs, which I have already mentioned, there is a general history of Forest and Bird by N. E. Dalmer.¹⁶ These are both straightforward accounts of the activities of the respective societies, written by members, which do not purport to be analytical and do nothing to place the societies within their historical context. A quite different sort of study is M. Stokdijk's examination of the national parks movement between 1928 and 1952, which analyses the contributions of Forest and Bird, the Federated Mountain Clubs, as well as the Royal Society, to the formation of national park policy during the period under investigation.¹⁷ Though this study deals with just one aspect of the activities of those organisations, it is a valuable contribution within the terms it sets itself.

There are two groups of organisations which are not the direct focus of attention in this study but impinge upon it because they influenced the course of nature conservation development in the nineteenth century. These are the acclimatization societies and the scientific societies which fall under the umbrella of the Royal Society or, as it was then known, the New Zealand Institute. Neither can be considered conservation groups in the sense I am concerned with, that is, voluntary, non-governmental organisations formed with the express objective of promoting some aspect of nature conservation. However, both became involved with nature conservation from time to time in furtherance of the objects they were established for, the promotion of hunting and angling in the case of one and the advance of science in the case of the other. Both groups took actions which preceded the formation of conservation organisations, although the contributions of the acclimatization societies to conservation in the nineteenth century were more often negative than positive. A proper assessment of the contribution of the early conservation groups needs to recognise the contributions by these organisations. Fortunately the history of the acclimatization societies is well documented. Individual histories have been written for a number of these societies and Joan Druett has written a general history of acclimatization

16. N. E. Dalmer, *Birds, Forests, and Natural Features of New Zealand: Including the Growth of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand Incorporated*. Levin : Kerslake, Billens and Humphrey Ltd., 1983.

17. M. Stokdijk, *Between Two Acts: An Investigation into Attitudes and Lobbying in New Zealand's National Parks Movement, 1928-1952*. M.A. Thesis (Geography) University of Canterbury, 1988.

and acclimatization societies in New Zealand.¹⁸ The history of the scientific societies is also well documented. Charles Fleming has produced a substantial history of the Royal Society to commemorate its centenary, which includes a good summary of its involvement with conservation activities.¹⁹

A relatively new field such as environmental history provides opportunities for research but is also fraught with all the difficulties of breaking new ground. The first hurdle to be confronted in this study was the actual identification of groups, if any, other than the few already referred to above. A potentially important source of the information, the Index to Archives held in New Zealand was disappointing. This revealed no previously unknown organisations. The most useful source of information proved to be the *Cyclopaedia of New Zealand*, published in six volumes covering different provincial areas between 1897 and 1908 which aimed to provide information on prominent people within the community, businesses and organisations. Though by no means a comprehensive source of contemporary information on organisations because the publication relied on the supply of information by subscribers, it allowed me to increase the list of conservation organisations known to be operating around the turn of the century. A number of libraries and museums throughout the country maintain indexes to the early newspapers. These are an invaluable aid for newspaper research and promised to be a useful avenue for tracing the existence of groups through newspaper accounts. In fact, they proved less helpful than I had hoped, and in the end I identified only one group otherwise unknown to me from this source. On the other hand, the absence of any reference to conservation organisations in an index could not be taken as a reliable guide to whether or not such groups existed in an area. Lack of reference might equally reflect the failure of contemporary newspapers to report the activities of groups because such matters were not perceived to have high public interest or the biases of the compiler of the index. Further information was obtained from an investigation of correspondence to the Lands and Survey Department on the subject of Bush Preservation, a survey of the petitions coming before Select Committees in the period under investigation and from the records and newspaper accounts of other groups.

18. C. R. Ashby, *The Centenary History of the Auckland Acclimatisation Society, 1867-1967*. Auckland : Auckland Star Commercial Printer, 1967; J. Druett, *Exotic Intruders: The Introduction of Plants and Animals into New Zealand*. Auckland : Heinemann, 1983; R. C. Lamb, *Birds, Beasts, and Fishes: The First Hundred Years of the North Canterbury Acclimatisation Society*. Christchurch : The Society, 1964; W. C. R. Sowman, *Meadow, Mountain, Forest and Stream. The Provincial History of the Nelson Acclimatisation Society, 1863-1968*. Nelson : The Society, 1981; J. F. Swann, *A Short History of the Acclimatisation Society of Otago*. M.A. Thesis (History) University of Otago, 1962; J. M. Wellwood, ed., *Hawke's Bay Acclimatisation Society Centenary, 1868-1968*. Hastings : The Society, 1968.

19. C. A. Fleming, *Science, Settlers, and Scholars: The Centennial History of the Royal Society of New Zealand*. Royal Society of New Zealand Bulletin, 25. Wellington : Royal Society of New Zealand, 1987.

Obtaining information about the groups identified was in itself no easy task, with the exception of the two more recent groups, Forest and Bird and the Federated Mountain Club. The Turnbull Library holds very full records of these organisations but archival information is scarce in the case of the earlier groups which form the prime focus of this study.²⁰ No doubt at the time when these groups were functioning or ceased to function few people perceived the value of retaining records pertaining to what was then very definitely a minority concern. The records of only two earlier groups, the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society and the Christchurch Beautifying Association, have survived relatively intact. Their survival can be accounted for by the fact that both groups have continued to the present although their function has changed in focus so that neither could now be described as nature conservation organisations. The minutes and annual reports of the Dunedin Amenities Society (as it is now known) are held at the Hocken Library.²¹ Those of the Christchurch Beautifying Association are held at the Canterbury Museum, though unfortunately the records from the date of foundation in 1897 to 1904 have been lost.²² The Turnbull Library also holds patchy records of the New Zealand Forestry League, chiefly in the form of correspondence to and from Sir James G. Wilson, the founder of the organisation and reports of the Annual General meetings.²³ Once I was able to identify members of the organisations, the possibility of gaining further information from any surviving papers of such individuals opened a further avenue for archival research. For the great majority of people whom I identified as involved in the movement, even those in executive positions, I was unable to trace any surviving records. Where records have survived, it was invariably because of the importance of the person concerned in some other sphere, so that any records pertaining to membership of conservation organisations which might have existed have not necessarily been preserved. In spite of this, I was able to obtain some useful information in this way. I encountered a similar difficulty with any published biographical accounts of prominent people involved with the movement.

20. Royal Forest and Bird Society of New Zealand, M.S. Papers 444, Alexander Turnbull Library; Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand, M.S. Papers 4030, Alexander Turnbull Library.

21. Dunedin Amenities Society, M.S. 606/A-B, Hocken Library, Dunedin.

22. Canterbury Beautifying Association, Minute Books, Canterbury Museum.

23. McKinnon, L, Papers, Acc 81.159, Alexander Turnbull Library; New Zealand Forestry League, M.S. 2216, Alexander Turnbull Library.

The scarcity of archival material forced me to rely heavily upon contemporary newspaper accounts to gain most of my information about the activities of groups. An important source of information about most modern groups is the literature published by the group itself - newsletters and magazines for example - but that option was not available for the majority of groups discussed in this study. The notable exceptions are the two most recent of those groups, the New Zealand Forestry League and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, or the Native Bird Protection Society as it was known then, both of which had official magazines. The Canterbury Beautifying Association began publishing a magazine in 1924 but that was less useful, being after the time period with which I was primarily concerned. I have found no record of group newsletters or magazines for any other groups and have been unable to locate surviving traces of the few other publications mentioned in group records.

Seeking information in newspapers without reasonably precise dates to work from is akin to searching for a needle in a haystack, so despite the fact that they constituted my major source of information, it was not always practicable to exploit this avenue. The success of my newspaper research was greatly assisted by the widespread practice in the nineteenth and early twentieth century of reporting the annual general meetings and sometimes the ordinary meetings of organisations in the press. This made it possible to gather quite a lot of information even though I had only one concrete date to work from. Provided the date of formation for a group was available, it was often possible to trace the activities of the organisation through successive annual general meetings, based on the assumption that the first annual meeting would take place approximately one year after foundation. This proved a fruitful approach, though often frustratingly time-consuming, particularly where the usual month of a meeting changed for no apparent reason. Frequently the meeting would be found to have taken place in the previous or the succeeding month. Sometimes the thread was recovered in the following year. Once the thread was irretrievably lost, it could not necessarily be assumed that the organisation had ceased to function. In the case of some groups, it was clear from other sources that they continued to function after the last newspaper record of a meeting. Cessation of reporting could mean that the group had become insufficiently active to hold annual meetings, on the one the hand, or it might have resulted from change of policy on the part of the newspaper, perhaps through change of personnel. In the larger centres, with more than one newspaper I found certain papers could be relied upon to report matters of conservation interest while others usually did not, the key factor being the sympathies of the editor. Whatever the reason, once I lost trace of annual general meetings I was forced to abandon further research on the group concerned unless the newspaper indexes to which I have already referred or some other source provided a key to dates of subsequent meetings or reports of activities.

It will be evident from the limitations which I have discussed that this study can make no claims to being comprehensive. It is very much in the nature of a preliminary account which identifies a number of areas worthy of further investigation. In the course of my research I have identified several groups which, for lack of information, remain shadowy organisations, little being known about them beyond the fact of their existence. More intensive research of unindexed newspapers and local archives may in the future cast further light on their activities. Despite its preliminary in nature, I believe this study reveals a hitherto unsuspected breadth and vigour in the conservation movement of the previous century and the early years of this century, which helps us to reassess the position of men such as Potts and Ell who, until now, have been seen as the main actors in the early movement and to assess what the recent movement owes to the efforts of its predecessors.

Before turning to examine the contributions of these early groups, I deal in the following two chapters, with the intellectual climate, both national and international, in which they arose. Their contribution cannot be properly understood without recognizing the beliefs they had to combat or indeed the preconceptions members of these groups shared with the dominant culture which was opposed to conservation. Therefore, I discuss first the key ideas which militated against conservation. Then I look at the ideas which led to the growing conservation consciousness which was an international phenomenon at the end of the nineteenth century. This, I hope, will not only enhance our understanding of the role of these early groups in the development of nature conservation in New Zealand but will also help to place their activities in an international context.

CHAPTER ONE

"Subduing And Replenishing The Earth": The "Heroic Work" Of Colonisation, 1840-1890

Conservation of nature was an issue far from the thoughts of most New Zealanders in the first five decades of colonisation. Thoughts of conservation cannot be expected to spring to the mind of a man confronted by wilderness, whose ability to feed himself and his family depend upon how quickly he can clear sufficient bush to grow a few subsistence crops for himself and a little grass for his livestock to supplement what they can forage from the surrounding forest.¹ Nature still had too much the upper hand. Until it was subdued the European settlers could at best make only a precarious living in their newly chosen land.²

Thomas Kelly, writing in 1877 about forest farming in Taranaki gives us a sense of how immense the primeval forest could seem to the settler, how slight the impact of man. Describing Taranaki as viewed from Mt Egmont he states:³

From this position the relative proportions of the clearings to the primeval forest can be estimated. The clearings are but rugged dots, and the road lines but streaks. The untouched forest seems to absorb the whole.

Even in the more favourably situated provinces of the South Island, whose open grasslands were more accommodating to the European and his accustomed livestock, there was the pressing task to be faced of building in this small southern offshoot of the Empire, a miniature model of all that was best of England, in short, the task of spreading to this corner of the globe the language, the institutions and the system of laws prevailing in the mother country. But it was not only the sheer practicalities of beginning a new life in the colonies which accounted for the general indifference to conservation. It was a matter of ideological conviction. The settler was engaged in no

1. Throughout this chapter I use the masculine pronoun to cover both male and female. I recognise that the trend of modern writing is away from the use of the male form to denote all people, but it seemed to me that the male pronoun better conveyed the values of the age which was determinedly masculine in outlook. The Victorians firmly believed that civilization was the result of masculine vigour and intelligence and that "effeminacy" was a threat to civilization. For further discussion of this see Sandra Siegel, "Literature: the Representation of 'Decadence'," pp. 199-219 in J. E. Chamberlin & S. L. Gilman, eds., *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1985.

2. The difficulties faced by many of the early settlers should not be underestimated. The Bridge to Nowhere in the Upper Wanganui region stands as a mute reminder of failed attempts to subdue the land in that part of the country even in this century.

3. T. Kelly, "Taranaki Forest and Forest Farming," *New Zealand Country Journal*, 1 : 242-245, 1877, p. 243.

lesser task than the ushering in of civilisation by transformation of the wilderness. For the settler the land and its indigenous people were in a state of unredeemed barbarism. He conceived it as a duty to bring both to a state of civilization. That humans had in fact been living off the bounty of the land on these islands for centuries before the arrival of Europeans with only minimal impact upon the natural environment compared to what would follow European settlement, did not and could not provide an alternative model of living in the eyes of the settler. Who could doubt that "the smiling farms and busy marts" of the European were preferable to "the rough clearing and hut of the savage"? The land in its natural state was no fit habitat for civilised man. Only through application of the "energies of the European race" could it be rendered capable of providing for the sustenance of man.⁴

The nineteenth-century Englishman believed that Providence had especially destined him for the magnificent duty of spreading peace, order and civilisation throughout the globe, for after all, was not Britain the highest flowering of civilization?⁵ "We think," said Gladstone in 1855:

that our country is a country blessed with laws and a constitution that are eminently beneficial to mankind, and if so, what can be more desired than that we should have the means of reproducing in different portions of the globe something as like may be to that country which we honour and revere? It is because we feel convinced that our constitution is a blessing to us, and will be a blessing to our posterity... that we are desirous of extending its influence.... If it please Providence to create openings for us on the broad fields of distant continents, we shall avail ourselves... of those openings to reproduce the copy of those laws and institutions, those habits and national characteristics which have made England so famous as she is.⁶

Another theorist on colonisation, Archibald Alison, expressed it thus:

we behold the British race people alike the western and southern hemispheres.... Who is there that does not see in these marvellous events the finger of Providence, or can avoid the conclusion that the British race is indeed the chosen instrument for mighty things, and that to it is given to spread the blessings of civilisation, and the light of religion, as far as the waters of the ocean extend?⁷

4. W. T. L. Travers, "On the Changes effected in the Natural Features of a New Country by the Introduction of Civilized Races," *T.N.Z.I.*, 2 : 229-330, 1869, pp. 312-313.

5. It is noteworthy that the largely Anglo-Saxon settlers of America felt similarly that they had a "manifest destiny" to spread westwards and fully people the American continent. See for example, F. Turner, *Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against The Wilderness*. New York : Viking Press, 1980.

6. Cited in K. E. Knorr, *British Colonial Theories 1570-1850*. Toronto : University of Toronto Press, 1944, p. 367.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 315. The sort of rhetoric exhibited by Alison and Gladstone appeared as a new element in British colonial policy in the nineteenth century. Older motives of power, prestige, and mercantile advantage, of course, continued to fuel colonial policies. Easing of excess populations pressure had also become an important motive since Malthus's assertion in *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798) that population tends to increase faster than the means of subsistence by virtue of irrefutable natural laws. Prior to that, a dense population was considered essential as a source of wealth and power rather than being perceived as a problem. By the mid-nineteenth century, a sizable body of public criticism had developed against colonisation on the grounds of its economic impact upon the mother country. Supporters of colonisation, however, vigorously pushed the providential duty

This claim to being a chosen people was based, it seems, on a belief that the English were a race professing

the purest religion, inheriting the richest literature and proudest history, and endowed by nature with the largest share of personal energy, perseverance, moral courage, self-command, habits of order and industry, and, in a word, possessing the highest degree or aptitude for practical civilisation of any race the world has yet seen.⁸

So widespread was the sense of duty, the belief that the welfare of mankind depended upon Britain and her colonies, that whatever the personal motivations of the settlers in leaving the home country, they could feel that they were participants in the grand and noble design of Providence.⁹

This sense of mission is felt in the Inaugural address given by Governor Sir George Grey to the New Zealand Society, one of the earliest cultural and scientific societies in New Zealand, on 2 July 1851.

We who stand in this country occupy an historical position of extraordinary interest. Before us, lies a future already brilliant with the light of a glorious morn, which we are to usher in to gladden unborn generations. Behind us, lies a night of fearful gloom, unilluminated by the light of written records, of picture memorials, of aught which can give a certain idea of the past... And in the gloom of that night... some of the most fearful spectres which have ever stalked amongst mankind, in the hideous shapes of idolatry, human sacrifice, and cannibalism....¹⁰

It is felt, too, in Kelly's description of converting a bush block to farmland:

"Bushfelling is a noble work, there the effort of colonisation is more palpably displayed than perhaps in any other mode of utilising the wastelands."¹¹ It positively

argument, claiming that the duty should not be evaded even if it entailed some material sacrifice. For further discussion see Knorr (1944) pp. 269-375.

8. S. Laing, *National Distress* (1844), cited in Knorr (1944) p. 315. With attitudes such as these already prevailing it easy to see why Darwin's ideas were so readily seized upon by the Social Darwinists.

9. Most of the British settlers were from labouring and lower-middle-class backgrounds, many from small towns and country areas. They came to New Zealand because they wanted a chance 'to get on', to leave behind the poverty afflicting the rural labouring classes of Britain as a consequence of the changes wrought in rural society by factors such as enclosure, the decline of cottage industry as a result of the Industrial Revolution, and a labour surplus resulting from both a rise in population and a growth in labour-saving devices. Unlike the early settlers of North America, they did not leave in search of religious and political freedom but they did dream of a better world where they could gain self-respect as free men and greater prosperity. The colony offered those with energy and determination a route to self-improvement, the hope of a fresh start, for which there was limited opportunity at home. Dreams of a better world implied, of course, the desire for improvement on some aspects of English society, but emigration was not fundamentally an act of rejection of the society in which they had been raised. By and large, the attitudes and values of the settlers continued to reflect those of the home country. See R. Arnold, *The Farthest Promised Land*. Wellington : Victoria University Press & Price Milburn, 1981; J. Graham, "Settler Society," pp. 112-139 in W. H. Oliver & B. R. Williams, eds., *The Oxford History of New Zealand*. Wellington : Oxford University Press, 1981.

10. Cited in G. F. Bowen, "Inaugural Address of Governor Sir George Ferguson Bowen, G.C.M.G to The New Zealand Institute, as its First President, August 4, 1868," *T.N.Z.I.*, 1: 3-9, 1868, pp. 7-8.

11. Kelly (1877) p. 244.

reverberates through the Inaugural address given by Governor Sir George Fergusson Bowen, as the first president of the New Zealand Institute, on 4 August 1868. No-one listening to this address could have doubted that the Institute was intended as an important instrument to aid in the Englishman's great mission. Given by the Governor of the Colony to an Institute established by Act of Parliament, it carried with it the weight of an official viewpoint:

let me remind you that the main object of the Legislature in funding this Institute, was not merely to make provision for healthy recreation, but rather to provide guidance and aid for the people of New Zealand in subduing and replenishing the earth, - in the "heroic work" of colonization. ¹²

The New Zealand Institute was established by Act of Parliament in 1867 to provide, by means of a corporate structure, permanence of character for those scientific and cultural organisations already established and to encourage the establishment of further societies. It was hoped "to promote the general study and cultivation of the various branches and departments of art, science, literature and philosophy" by the formation of affiliated societies throughout the colony which would hold meetings and sponsor lectures.¹³ The Institute evolved into the Royal Society of New Zealand and has become the preserve of the scientific professional, but in 1868 it was open to anyone wishing to attend meetings. Indeed, it was scarcely meaningful to speak of professional scientists in New Zealand at that time.¹⁴

Although the Institute was intended to promote both the arts and sciences, in fact, it was science which received the greatest attention. In part this reflected the understandable desire of colonists to document the natural resources and natural history of their new country. One of the major objectives of the new Institute was the carrying out of a geological survey of the Colony. It reflected, too, the fact that the dominant intellectual interests of the age lay in the field of natural history.¹⁵

12. Bowen (1868) p. 4.

13. For a detailed discussion of the history of the New Zealand Institute and the role it has played in New Zealand science see C. A. Fleming, "Science, Settlers, and Scholars: The Centennial History of the Royal Society of New Zealand," *Royal Society of New Zealand Bulletin*, 25, Wellington, 1987

14. Science was only beginning to emerge as a profession. In fact, the word 'scientist' had been coined only as recently as 1850 by the English mathematician and philosopher William Whewell. (D. Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 130) There was still ample scope for the enthusiastic amateur. Most of the early contributions to science in the colony came from men engaged in other occupations, for whom science was a hobby, sometimes an all-consuming hobby, but nevertheless, not their means of livelihood.

15. Earlier in the nineteenth century geology and paleontology had been the major focus of interest. These remained important but zoology and botany came into greater prominence as the century proceeded. For more on changing fashions in the study of natural history see D. E. Allen, *The Naturalist in Britain: A Social History*. London : Allen Lane, 1976. See also L. Barber, *The Heyday of Natural History 1820-1870*. London : Jonathan Cape, 1980.

In many ways, the New Zealand Institute was the quintessential Victorian organisation. Through its *Transactions and Proceedings*, it provides valuable insights into the Victorian character and frame of mind. Meetings of the various affiliated societies were important social events and always received coverage in the newspapers. They provided a gathering place for the social and intellectual elite of the colony.¹⁶ But this in no way detracted from their seriousness of purpose. They were an important forum for the exchange of ideas and information. At a time when communication between the various centres of population was still difficult, the publication of the *Transactions and Proceedings* of the Institute was an important national outlet for ideas. From the point of view of nature conservation history, the importance of the Institute lies in the fact that as a body concerned with natural history and resource use, its publications shed valuable light on evolving attitudes towards the environment and nature conservation from the early years of settlement up to the present. Because it provided an influential public platform for early advocates of nature conservation before a sufficient following had built up to support the formation of groups exclusively devoted to the promotion of nature, it is especially important source of information about the dawning consciousness of nature conservation. But the early years of the *Transactions and Proceedings* are of at least as much interest for what they can tell us about the factors militating against nature conservation as for what they reveal about the growth of interest in conservation.

For this reason, it is worth examining Bowen's inaugural address in greater detail. After striking the key note with the assertion that the main object of the Institute is to "facilitate the practical work of colonisation," he goes on to consider the means by which it can promote this task. He is in no doubt that science is of central importance to the whole colonial enterprise:

The intellect of the existing generation appears to be most progressive in the physical and natural sciences; and the treasures won from them seem the richest heirlooms which we can bequeath to our posterity.¹⁷

In common with many Victorian writers on science, he quotes from Lord Bacon, as one of the founding fathers of the scientific method, declaring "knowledge is power."¹⁸

16. Heinrich von Haast, son of Julius von Haast, gives the following account of the inaugural meeting of the New Zealand Institute, based on letters to his father by R. L. Holmes: "The New Zealand Institute and the Wellington Philosophical Society started off in 1868 with a great splash.... Crowded audiences - 400-500 of Wellington's elite, half of them ladies, and Members of Parliament, the Assembly adjourning in the midst of the most exciting debate of the Session, to enable them to attend." H. von. Haast, *The Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast: Explorer, Geologist, Museum Builder*. Published by the author, Wellington, 1948, p. 510.

17. Bowen (1868) p. 9.

While this catchcry of the scientific revolution might represent little more than an assertion of faith for seventeenth-century writers, for the Victorians, flushed with the success of their recent "triumph over time and space" in the shape of "the steam-engine and others of the most wonderful inventions of modern times"¹⁹ and confronted with evidence on all fronts of the great power of science linked to industry, it was a matter of absolute certainty. The address exemplifies what Houghton has described as the Victorians' "ecstatic faith" in science, an unbounded faith in material progress through science, a vision of an "endless continuation of applied science producing greater and greater industrial civilisations."²⁰ Thus Bowen firmly allies the Institute to the utilitarian approach to nature, the necessary concomitant of such a belief.²¹

As the speech unfolds, he elaborates the many tasks confronting the Institute. Foremost among these is the searching out of those natural resources, both plant and mineral, which will aid the "industrial arts" and the study of those aspects of the physical sciences which will help in the understanding and hence the control of nature's "capricious phenomenon." It should also direct its attention to the introduction of useful flora and fauna. New Zealand was "deficient" in animal life and required "replenishing" with those "profitable and useful to man." As for vegetation, the indigenous flora was "fast disappearing before the progress of settlement" and it was "alike the interest and the duty to their successors of the present generation to replace it by a new and remunerative growth."²²

18. Ibid., p. 4. The appeal to Bacon was appropriate. The New Zealand Institute's precursor, the Royal Society of London had been founded in 1660 with Bacon's program of science as a methodology for manipulating and controlling nature as its ruling creed. See Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature; Women Ecology and the Scientific Revolution*. San Francisco : Harper & Row, 1983; Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*. Harmondsworth : Penguin Books, 1984.

19. Ibid., p. 5.

20. W. E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870*. New Haven : Yale University Press, 1957, pp. 35&40. Some of the most striking examples of the faith in science are to be found in T. H. Huxley, "On the Advisableness Of Improving Natural Knowledge," (1866) pp. 1-19 in *Lay Sermons, Addresses and Reviews*. London : McMillan & Co., 1880; C. Kingsley, "The Study of Natural History," pp. 345-366 in *Miscellanies* Vol II. London : John W. Parker, 1859; G. P. Marsh, "The Study of Nature," *Christian Examiner*, 68 : 33-62 (1860). On the utilitarian benefits of the study of natural history in the New Zealand context see also A. Lauder Lindsay, *The Place and Power of Natural History in Colonization; With Special Reference to Otago: Being Portions of a Lecture Prepared for, and at the Request of the Young Men's Christian Association of Dunedin*. Dunedin : John Dick, 1862.

21. There can be no doubt that the framers of the New Zealand Institute Act shared Bowen's utilitarian approach. The preamble to the Act, which sets out its character and objects, places at the forefront the need to make provision for the geological survey of the colony. It is noteworthy that W. T. L. Travers, one of the significant early conservationists, is believed by Fleming (1987) to have been a leading promoter of the Act.

22. Bowen (1868) p. 6.

There is no hint in the speech that the Institute will become the most important organisation to take up the cause of conservation in the period up to 1890. The emphasis is entirely upon subduing and controlling nature. The object of the address is a rallying exhortation to action towards this end, holding up to Members the promise of progress through science towards higher civilisation.²³ But he makes it clear their labours will not be solely for the benefit of civilisation in general or the greater glory of England and her Empire in particular. The prospect of personal salvation is held forth as the reward for those who take part in this heroic task:

the reward is great; above all, for those who "look through Nature up to Nature's God." An able writer has remarked that "at the close of all labour a man must ask to what good end he has given himself. There are few who will find the answer so easy as those who have contributed even the smallest help in widening our knowledge of the order of Nature, and in revealing for our adoration the Divine ideas which are the basis of all things. In the generous efforts they are called to make, they have a hope, better founded than most human expectations, that they will find that education of their faculties for the future, which we may reasonably suppose to be the most important object of our present existence." In a like spirit, Knowledge has been compared to that mystic ladder in the Patriarch's dream; the base of which rested on the primeval earth, while its crest was lost in the glory of heaven.²⁴

I have dwelt on this speech at length because it illustrates a number of important currents of thought influencing Victorian attitudes towards the natural environment. As I have already noted, Bowen shares the Victorian faith in science as the agent of civilization with its resultant utilitarian approach to nature. The Fabian writer, Beatrice Webb, in her autobiographical work, *My Apprenticeship*, gives us a further insight into what it was like to grow up in the 70s and 80s under the influence of what she describes variously as the "cult of science" or the "idolization of science". From the perspective of the 1920s she states:

it is hard to understand the naive belief of the most original and vigorous minds... that it was by science, and science alone, that all human misery would be ultimately swept away.... This unhesitating reliance on the particular type of mental activity, which is always associated with modern, or shall I call it Western science, was by far the most potent ferment at work in the mental environment in which I was reared, whether in the books I read or the persons with whom I associated on terms of intimacy.²⁵

She cites as an example of this fanatical belief in science a widely read book published in 1872 entitled *The Martyrdom of Man* by Winwood Reade which confidently looks forward to the time when, by means of science, "we shall be able to predict the future

23. The enthusiasm with which some of the early settlers did indeed tackle the task of documenting the natural history of the country is well illustrated in the life of William Colenso. With indefatigable energy he tramped over large portions of the most inaccessible and difficult country industriously collecting specimens. When he was no longer fit enough to continue his collecting expeditions he devoted his time to presenting papers to the Hawke's Bay branch of the Institute, his last paper being given at the grand age of 85.

24. Bowen (1868) p. 9.

25. B. Webb, *My Apprenticeship*. Harmondsworth : Penguin Modern Classics, 1971, p. 149.

[and] repress the base instincts and propensities" we have "inherited from the animals below," a time when disease will be "extirpated" and "immortality will be invented," a time when "mankind will emigrate into space" until "finally, men will master the forces of Nature; they will become themselves architects of systems, manufacturers of worlds. Man will then be perfect; he will be a creator; he will therefore be what the vulgar worship as God."²⁶ The breathtaking hubris of the sentiments expressed in this passage seem astounding to the modern reader. Not even the most ardent technocrat today would presume that the perfectibility of man was attainable, though he might share a conviction that man will, for example, eventually colonise space. It may be thought that this example represents an extreme case but it was by no means atypical as the discussions below on progress should make clear.

Imbued with this sort of supreme confidence in science, Bowen and his contemporaries in the New Zealand Institute were able to go forth convinced that they were participating in the activity that more than any other was responsible for England's greatness and which would ensure, too, the success of the colony. Furthermore, they were buoyed by an unswerving self-assurance that just as Providence destined them to spread civilisation, so It had ordained that Englishmen should excel all others in the application of science. Bowen makes the point somewhat less stridently than the Rev. Charles Kingsley. Nevertheless, in his choice of the word "heirlooms" to describe the treasures to be won by science, he seems to be indebted to Kingsley's 1846 lecture "On the Study of Natural History," published in 1859. "Remember," says Kingsley

England is... the nation which above all others has conquered nature by obeying her; that as it pleased God that the author of that proverb, the father of inductive science, Bacon Lord Verulam, should have been an Englishman, so it has pleased Him that we, Lord Bacon's country men should improve that precious heirloom of science, inventing, producing exporting, importing, till it seems as if the whole human race, and every land from the equator to the pole must henceforth bear the indelible impress and sign-manual of English science.

And bear in mind... that this study of natural history is the grammar of that very physical science which has enabled England thus to replenish the earth and subdue it. Do you not see, then, that by following these studies you are walking in the very path to which England owes her wealth; that you are training yourself in the habit of mind which God has approved as the one which He has ordained for Englishmen, and are doing what in you lies toward carrying out, in after life, the glorious work which God seems to have laid on the English race, to replenish the earth and to subdue it?²⁷

One of the end results of this cult of science was not only the exploitation of resources on an unprecedented scale but a positive orgy of specimen collecting in the name of science, bringing many species to the brink of extinction.²⁸

26. W. Reade, *The Martyrdom of Man*. London : Watts & Co, 1932, pp. 421-423.

27. Kingsley (1859) pp. 363-364.

28. The scale of collecting whether for private collections or for scientific institutions exceeded all reasonable bounds and unfortunately the more rare a species the more attractive it was to collectors. The wealthy English collector, Rothschild for example had 80 or 90 stitchbirds in his collection (R. Galbreath, 1989, *Walter Buller: The Reluctant Conservationist*, p. 213) Collecting could be a lucrative

The references to "subduing" and "replenishing" the earth in both Kingsley's lecture and Bowen's address, point to another widely held Victorian attitude, the belief that man had dominion over nature. At its most unsophisticated level this amounted to a belief that God had made the world for the benefit of man. The reference to "subduing" and "replenishing" comes from Genesis 1:28, in which God says to Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Similarly in Genesis 9:1, Noah and his sons are instructed to "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." The Victorians readily interpreted these passages from scripture as sanctioning both the exploitation of natural resources and the colonisation of the far flung corners of the globe by civilized humankind.

Belief that the world had been created for man was not an exclusively Christian viewpoint. In classical antiquity, for example, both Aristotle and the Stoic Philosophers shared this view.²⁹ Nor was it the only Christian viewpoint. The teaching that the world was subordinate to man's purpose existed alongside a doctrine of human stewardship and a duty to act responsibly towards God's creation. Nevertheless, for much of Christian history the attitude of domination has unquestionably been the prevailing strain of thought, finding support and sustenance in other aspects of social belief. This is not the place to explore the contradictions and subtleties of the Christian tradition. Alternative strands of Christian belief have a role to play later in our story but the majority of Victorians did not question their right, indeed, their duty to subjugate nature for the benefit of the species which Divine Providence had placed at the apogee of nature.³⁰

A writer in the *Guiding Star* (Hawkesbury, Otago) on 16 November 1868, felt able to assert:

source of income as two of new Zealand's major collectors, Sir Walter Buller and Andreas Reischek were well aware. Buller for example, in one year sent over 300 specimens plus 28 live birds to Rothschild, for the sum of 542 pounds 9 shillings and 8 pence. (Galbreath, 1989, p.169) It was not only private collectors who were implicated in this destruction. Museums also kept large numbers of birds and frequently used exchange of specimens collected as a means of building up their collections.

29. See for example L. Wilkinson, ed., *Earthkeeping: Christian Stewardship of Natural Resources*. Grand Rapids, Michigan : William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980, Chapter Six; C. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore*. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1967, Chapter One.

30. For more on alternative traditions of Christian thought see in particular J. Passmore, *Man's Responsibility For Nature*. 2nd ed. London : Duckworth, 1980; M. Fox, *Original Blessing*. Santa Fe, New Mexico : Bear & Co., 1983; Wilkinson (1980); Holmes Rolston III, "God and Endangered Species," in L. S. Hamilton, ed., *Ethics, Religion and Biodiversity*. Cambridge : The White Horse Press, 1993.

The fertile wilderness of the Province cries out to man, come, civilize and cultivate us; we were not placed here by Providence to be trampled on by sheep; no, we were created to give sustenance to man, the noblest of animals.³¹

Another writer in the *Saturday Review* (Dunedin) stated:

Nature abhors a vacuum. The earth was made for man. The ocean is his highway to the various countries of which it is composed. Nature in a variety of ways ministers to man's comfort. Nature is a Sphinx. Man must either conquer or be conquered by her. Her operations are based on certain laws. These should be the study of man.³²

Even someone so well educated as Sir William Fox, four times Premier of New Zealand, could say in relation to the hot springs of the thermal district; "Doubtless their sanitary properties were given them for the good of suffering humanity...."³³

In spite of the frequent statements to be found in the writings of the time to the effect that nature existed for the benefit of man, there had been persistent doubters of this stance, especially from the late seventeenth century. As John Ray expressed it in 1691:

It is a generally received opinion that all this visible world was created for Man; that Man is the end of the Creation, as if there were no other end of any creature but some way or other to be serviceable to Man.... But though this be vulgarly received, yet wise men nowadays think otherwise.³⁴

The discoveries of science played an important role in disturbing anthropocentricity. Astronomy revealed that the earth was not at the centre of the universe and was only one solar system among many; the development of the microscope disclosed millions of tiny creatures whose presence was previously unsuspected; travel to the New World revealed numerous creatures which served no apparent purpose for humankind; finally, the slowly accumulating evidence of fossils indicated that innumerable species had existed and become extinct before the arrival of man.³⁵ Henry Baker, a pioneer microscopist, summarized the new point of view admirably in an 1727 poem entitled "The Universe: A Poem Intended to Restrain the Pride of Man":

Come forth, O man, yon azure Round survey,
Bring forth thy Glasses: clear thy wond'ring Eyes;...
And view those Lamps which yield eternal Day.
Look farther:-Millions more blaze from remoter Skies:...
And canst thou think, poor worm! these Orbs of Light,

31. Cited in F. R. J. Sinclair, "Waste, Howling Wilderness" - Explorations in the Issue of Waste Lands in Provincial Otago. M.A. Thesis, (History) University of Otago, 1985, p. 14.

32. Ibid.

33. *A.J.H.R.*, 1874, H-26.

34. Cited in K. Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500 -1800*. Harmondsworth : Penguin Books, 1984, p. 167.

35. Ibid., pp. 166-168.

In Size, immense, in Number, infinite,
Were made for Thee alone to twinkle to thy Sight?³⁶

It is not clear to what extent Victorians literally believed the world had been made for man, notwithstanding numerous expressions to this effect. For many, by this time, such statements may have become mere figures of speech. Certainly the advances in geology, paleontology, and above all the theories of Darwin had given them less reason than people of the seventeenth century to adhere to the belief that the creation was for their benefit alone, but perhaps the recent evidence of the very close connection between humankind and the apes gave some Victorians all the more reason to cling to such a belief. A book entitled *The World a Workshop*, by an American, Thomas Ewbank, published in 1855, suggests that a literal belief that the world was created for man had not been entirely abandoned. Ewbank believed the earth was designed as a factory for the benefit of man.

To meet man's wants through the entire cycle of his destinies, to furnish employment for the varied world of thought within him, to keep pace with his enlarging grasp and power, it was necessary that suitable materials, and objects, and forces, and theatres of action should be provided for him. And so it is, that there is no substance, quality, or condition of matter but what tends to further his operations as a manufacturer; none which does not exhibit the world as a factory, and him in charge of it; and which does not show that such was the grand scope and design of the Creator in preparing it, and placing him on it.³⁷

It was just such a view which Dickens satirized in *Dombey and Son* (1846-48) which suggests these ideas still had reasonably wide currency, at least in some quarters.

The earth was made for Dombey and Son to Trade in, and the sun and the moon were made to give them light. Rivers and seas were formed to float their ships; rainbows gave them promise of fair weather; winds blew for or against their enterprises; stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre.³⁸

However, it is probable that many of those who gave serious thought to the issue could share the sentiments expressed by C. W. Richmond, Judge of the New Zealand Supreme Court, in a lecture given to the Wellington Philosophical Society on the subject of man's place in creation:

Surely we may preserve our faith in Man's great heritage, without pretending to make it clear that all God's other creatures are shut out. Their destiny is nowise our concern. It is a mystery which as yet transcends our Knowledge....³⁹

36. Cited in E. L. Tuveson, *Millenium And Utopia: A Study in the Background of the Idea of Progress*. New York : Harper & Row, 1964, p. 106.

37. Cited in Worster (1977) p. 54.

38. Cited in M. J. Wiener, *English Culture and The Decline of the Industrial Spirit*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 34.

39. C. W. Richmond, "Man's Place in Creation," *T.N.Z.I.*, 2 : 267-281, 1869, p. 279.

Certainly, this was the position of a more sophisticated thinker such as the Reverend Charles Kingsley who in 1866 attacked "the conceited notion which, making man forsooth the centre of the universe, dares to believe that variety of forms has existed for countless ages in abysmal sea-depths and untrodden forests, only that some few individuals of the Western races might, in these latter days, at last discover and admire a corner here and there of the boundless realms of beauty."⁴⁰

Whether or not one accepted the naive belief that the rest of creation existed solely for the benefit of man or recognised that other creatures had their own destiny, independent of man, assuredly the tenor of the age was one of certainty in man's supremacy and of his right to dominion over nature. In an age which suffered from a crisis of faith, the well-worn religious rhetoric of subduing the earth undoubtedly served some merely as a convenient justification for more base commercial motivations. But believers and non-believers alike could agree on man's predominance. The law of development (or evolution) seemed to point to his supremacy just as effectively as the Book of Genesis. The majority lived with the comfortable belief that they were the lords of creation, masters of a world which was apparently designed to support them in that role. So strong was the belief in man's uniqueness and rightful dominance that the Darwinian revolution, though profoundly upsetting, in the end caused only a minor dent in Victorian self-confidence. It would be left to later generations to really grapple with the issues concerning man's role in nature and his place in relation to the rest of creation which were raised by the theory of continuous evolution.

For us, living as we do in a more secular age than our Victorian forebears and long accustomed to considering ourselves closely related to the apes, it is difficult to appreciate the deeply felt emotion caused by the realisation "that these beasts are entitled to put in a detestable claim to cousinship to Man."⁴¹ The traditional religious view of man's place in nature was based on a belief that his mental and moral attributes were characteristics of the soul, which was only temporarily joined to the flesh of the body, thus placing him closer to the spiritual world of the angels than to the world of the beasts who have no spiritual characteristics. But if evolution were accepted the distinction would break down, for the special qualities of man would merely become parts of nature. C. W. Richmond pinpointed the dilemma which faced those seeking to

40. C. Kingsley, *Glaucus; or the Wonders of the Shore*. London : McMillan and Co., 1884 (Charles Kingsley , The Works Vol. V. Anglistica & Americana Reprint, Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung : Hildesheim, 1968) p. 133.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 273. For further discussion of the Victorian reaction to Darwin see P. Bowler, *Evolution: The History of an Idea*. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1984, in particular, Chapters Seven to Ten.

come to terms with the unpalatable closeness to "brute creation" which Darwin's theory forced them to confront:

our blood begins to curdle, and for a time, we are on the way to think that the dignity of Man, his awful responsibilities, his Heavenly hopes, alike are the dreams of Theologians, which the wiser modern world has now left far behind it. "Yea," say we, in such a mood, "yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; all go to one place; all are of dust, and all turn to dust again." and what is worse, we are half tempted to the logical conclusion, "that for a Beast there is nothing better than a Beast's enjoyment," nothing better for a Man than that he "should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour." But rousing ourselves to consider the facts, we cannot but perceive the folly of ignoring the immense chasm which separate the reflecting mind, thus debating with itself these arduous themes, from the highest brute....⁴²

Richmond, like most other Victorians, was unable to let go of the idea of man's unique status. The only way out of the impasse was to reject evolution or to assume something very special had happened in the branch of development leading to man.⁴³ Only the most conservative thinkers rejected evolution outright. The geological and palaeontological discoveries and controversies earlier in the nineteenth century, arising from the work of such people as Cuvier, Lyell, and Chambers had convinced most people to abandon a literal interpretation of the creation story.⁴⁴ Some were prepared to accept evolution provided it stopped short of denying the special creation of man.⁴⁵ Most people accommodated evolution into their thinking through various forms of compromise. The attitudes of Richmond were typical. He accepted Darwinism but like other followers of Darwin at the time he was willing to accept mechanisms other than selection to cover difficult cases.⁴⁶ He believed that nature, "in passing upward from the Brutes, to what is, as yet, her crowning work upon this planet, has taken one of her great strides, and made a difference in kind."⁴⁷ He took comfort from the fact that the "very emotion of disgust raised by our nearest neighbours on the scales, those 'blurred copies' of ourselves, is not we may be sure, without a salutary purpose in the divine

42. Richmond (1869) p. 277.

43. Bowler (1984) p. 216.

44. Ibid., p. 206.

45. A typical example of this sort of attitude is provided by W. M. Maskell. In a lecture entitled "Christianity, Modern 'Science' and Evolution", delivered in Christchurch in 1881 (Hocken Library Pamphlets 151/4) he explains that he would not be concerned about Darwin's theory if it applied only to the evolution of plants and all animals except man. "When a brute dies, he dies and there is an end of him. He has no soul to be lost or saved,... whether he was originally created as a separate species or whether one single organism was originally created from which all others developed is a matter of such supreme indifference, in itself, apart from Man, that all the Darwins and Huxleys in the world might quarrel about it to their heart's content..." For a discussion of the attitudes of scientists and theologians to Darwin in New Zealand see J. Stenhouse, "The Wretched Gorilla Damnification of Humanity," *New Zealand Journal of History*, 18(2) : 143-162, 1984.

46. Bowler (1984) pp. 204-205.

47. Richmond (1869) p. 278.

economy."⁴⁸ It would give additional encouragement to man to strive above the stirrings of the brute within.

It is evident that Richmond saw evolution as directional, moving upward to ever higher forms, with man at the summit, a characteristic he shared in common with most other Victorian thinkers. As Peter Bowler, a leading historian of the idea of evolution, has pointed out, few Victorian thinkers of any persuasion could tolerate the idea of evolution as anything but an essentially progressive system. Evolution had to have a purpose in which the emergence of man played a key role, whether or not one attributed that purpose to a supernatural creator.⁴⁹ By clutching at the progressive nature of evolution, they were able to accommodate the theory to the general mental outlook of the age while glossing over its implications for those very beliefs. In fact, the logic of Darwin's theory threatens both the idea of progress and the idea of a hierarchically structured universe. The mechanism of natural selection works toward branching evolution rather than strict hierarchy and is opportunistic rather than progressive. The concept of adaptation through natural selection gives little basis for ranking forms as higher or lower, especially given the fact that some "low" forms have survived over vast periods of time. T. H. Huxley saw plainly enough that the "theory of evolution encourages no millennial anticipations."⁵⁰ But the majority of Victorians opted for a teleological response. Darwin himself concluded *The Origin of Species* on this hopeful note: "as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection."⁵¹ Alfred Russell Wallace, co-founder of the theory of natural selection also stated his conviction that

the whole purpose, the only *raison d'etre* of the world - with all its complexities of physical structure, with its grand geological progress, the slow evolution of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and the ultimate appearance of man - was the development of the human spirit in association with the human body. Beings thus trained and strengthened by their surroundings, and possessing latent faculties capable of such noble development, are surely destined for a higher and more permanent existence.⁵²

The relationship between belief in man's right of dominion over nature and the accommodation of Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection to that mental framework, by emphasising the progressive nature of evolution, brings us to the third

48. Ibid., p. 280.

49. Bowler (1984) p. 209.

50. T. H. Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays*. London : McMillan, 1894, p. 85.

51. C. R. Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. 4th ed. London : John Murray, 1866, p. 577. This also appeared in the first edition.

52. A. R. Wallace, *Darwinism: An Exposition of the Theory of Natural Selection with some of its Applications*. 2nd ed. London : McMillan & Co., 1889, p. 477.

point illustrated in Bowen's address, a belief in the doctrine of progress. It will be evident from what I have just written that for many the idea of progress was inextricably bound up with religious belief, but it was held equally by those who had abandoned the idea of a supernatural creator.

The faith in progress can aptly be described in the words of J. B. Bury, the foremost historian of the idea of progress, as "the animating and controlling idea" of the age.⁵³ Indeed, the cult of science was but one manifestation of the belief in progress. A general idea of progress, implying forward or onward movement, usually with the implication that it means advance to a better state, is a familiar enough one still, encapsulated in such phrases as "the progress of civilisation" or "the progress of knowledge." It is commonplace to hear some action or another exhorted in the name of progress or to find actions which some may criticize (for example, clearance of bush through a scenic reserve in order to straighten a bend in the road) justified through the necessity of progress. Nevertheless, the idea of progress no longer has the dominant hold over our imagination that it had in the second half of the nineteenth century. The events of the twentieth century have taken the edge off the optimism of the nineteenth century and we cannot recapture the fervour of the Victorian faith in progress, many aspects of which now seem not only quite unfamiliar but also misguided.

For the Victorians the idea of progress meant that civilization had moved, was moving, and would continue to move in a desirable direction. It involved the belief that history follows a continuous, necessary and orderly course of change operating in accordance with a causal law which has brought and will continue to bring improvement in the condition of mankind.⁵⁴ As Bury has pointed out, even assuming we can agree on precisely what the desirable outcome of the progress of civilization should be, the question of whether it is in fact moving in the right direction is no more capable of proof than the assumptions on which the doctrine rests, the possibility of continuous progress in humankind's knowledge of the environment or the necessity of orderly change in accordance with laws of causality.⁵⁵ Belief in progress may have been an act of faith but few Victorians were inhibited by doubt. Progress, they were convinced, was evidenced by the advance of humankind from the state of savagery, through barbarism to ever higher levels of civilization. Each group must pass through the same stages but manifestly not all races had advanced at the same rate. Certain groups, too, might relapse from civilization to barbarism or worse, a point which I will

53. J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into its Origin and Growth*. London : McMillan & Co., 1924, p. vii.

54. G. H. Hildebrand, "Introduction: The Idea of Progress: An Historical Analysis," pp. 3-30 in F. J. Teggart, ed., *The Idea of Progress: A Collection of Readings*. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1949, p. 4.

55. Bury (1924) pp. 2-5.

return to below, but they were in no doubt that the general upward momentum of the human race as a whole would continue. Uniformity of the operation of the human mind and similarity of wants was assumed to apply for those at the same level of advancement.⁵⁶ All, however, were believed capable of attaining the highest levels of civilization and they looked forward confidently to the eventual union of humanity when all the peoples of the world would be linked by progress in material comfort, happiness and peace, achieving what Tennyson expressed in *Locksley Hall* as "the Parliament of Man; the Federation of the World."⁵⁷ This aspiration was no mere flight of poetic imagination. It was endorsed at the highest level of the Establishment by no lesser person than Albert, the Prince Consort. Opening the great Exhibition of London in 1851, which he originated, he explained its significance in these terms:

Nobody who has paid any attention to the peculiar features of our present era will doubt for a moment that we are living at a period of most wonderful transition, which tends rapidly to accomplish that great end to which all history points - the realisation of the unity of mankind.... The distances which separated the different nations of the globe are rapidly vanishing before the achievements of modern invention, and we can traverse them with incredible ease; the languages of all nations are known, and their acquirements placed within the reach of everybody; thought is communicated with the rapidity, and even by the power, of lightning.... Gentlemen, the Exhibition of 1851 is to give us a true test and a living picture of the point of departure at which the whole of mankind has arrived in this great task, and a new starting-point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions.⁵⁸

The idea of progress is of such central importance for understanding Victorian attitudes towards nature that it is essential to look at the doctrine and its consequences for the natural environment in greater depth. To fully understand the significance of the idea, it is helpful to have some understanding of its origins.

The idea began to take a firm hold in the late seventeenth century. From the outset it was connected with the growth of modern science, the rise of rationalism and the struggle for political and religious liberty.⁵⁹ Belief in progress was not unknown in antiquity but was much less dominant than two alternative ideas; the theory of a cyclical pattern of history and the theory of decadence (or the Golden Age theory) which held that man and nature had declined since the destruction of the earthly paradise (represented by the Golden Age). The Biblical tradition of the Fall from the Garden of Eden, of course, fitted into the decadence theory and thus the orthodox Christian world

56. M. Lewis, *Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress From Savagery Through Barbarism to Civilization*. New York : Henry Holt & Co, 1878, Preface.

57. A. Tennyson, *The Poetical Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson*. London : McMillan & Co., 1899, p. 101.

58. Cited in Bury (1924) p. 330. See also Tennyson's "Ode Sung At The Opening Of The International Exhibition"(p. 223), which voices similar sentiments and looks forward to the time when all men will "work in noble brotherhood... ruling by obeying Nature's powers, And gathering all the fruits of earth and crown'd with all her flowers."

59. Bury (1924) p. 348.

view focussed on the earth as decadent. This was combined with a Providential view of history, which represented history as the unfolding of a Divine Plan and allowed for the direct intervention of the Deity in the affairs of men. By the seventeenth century, however, the findings of the so-called New Science had begun to pose a serious challenge to the notion of the active participation of Providence in nature's processes. E. V. Tuveson has convincingly demonstrated the path by which this traditional Christian view was transformed by millenarian writers, in response to the challenge of science, to form a new orthodoxy, a faith in progressivism (the belief in the inevitability of progress as the method of Providence). God's plan for the working out of human salvation came to be viewed as "a gradual, general redemption of man by means of progressive betterment of human nature through a series of ascending epochs of history."⁶⁰ The whole race of men could look forward to a paradise regained in this world. The advance of science becomes, under this view, an important aspect of the ascent of man. The route to Christian salvation no longer lay in a turning away from the material temptations of the world, a conscious freeing of one's self from immersion in matter, but quite the contrary, it lay in actively seeking to understand God's wonderful universe and in this way coming closer to a knowledge of God himself. Here the link is made between increasing intellectual understanding of the world and growth in moral stature, so characteristic of the Victorian faith in progress.

During the eighteenth century the workings of Providence became increasingly secularised or disguised in the form of natural laws. God's role is confined to setting the laws of nature in motion and leaving them to unfold. It was but a short step from this view to the completely secularised view that nature's method was that of progress, although most thinkers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were not prepared to totally dispense with God. Thus, by the end of the eighteenth century the other-worldly dreams of earlier theologians (which had deflected emphasis from material improvement in the world) had been turned around to view the advance of the species "from rudeness to civilization"⁶¹ as the method of salvation. The idea had been born that "advance in technology, standard of living and other purely material aspects of culture is advance religiously and spiritually as well - that man gets better and better as he controls nature more and more."⁶² Bowen's reminder to his audience that they could hope to attain personal salvation through their efforts for science and civilization stands firmly within this tradition.

60. Tuveson (1964) p. ix.

61. A. Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, (1767), cited in Tuveson (1964) p. 195.

62. Tuveson (1964) p. vi.

The special contribution of the nineteenth century to the idea of progress was to firmly link it with the idea of evolution and in so doing to establish a natural mechanism by which progress is achieved. The most influential exponent of the argument from evolution to progress was Herbert Spencer. In his 1851 work, *Social Statics*, he put his position clearly:

All imperfection is unfitness to the conditions of existence. This unfitness must consist in having a faculty or faculties in excess; or in having a faculty or faculties deficient; or in both....

But it is an essential principle of life that a faculty to which circumstances do not allow full exercise diminishes; and that a faculty on which circumstances make excessive demands increases. And so long as this excess and this deficiency continue, there must continue decrease on the one hand, and growth on the other.

Finally, all excess and all deficiency must disappear; that is, all unfitness must disappear; that is, all imperfection must disappear.

Thus the ultimate development of the ideal man is logically certain.... Progress, therefore, is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of civilization being artificial, it is part of nature; all of a piece with the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower. The modifications mankind have undergone, and are still undergoing, result from a law underlying the whole organic creation.... As surely as the tree becomes bulky when it stands alone, and slender if one of a group... so surely must the human faculties be moulded into complete fitness for the social state; so surely must the things we call evil and immorality disappear; so surely must man become perfect.⁶³

Here is the doctrine of progress at its fullest flowering, with the absolute confidence in the perfectibility of man asserted as an inevitable law of nature, which we have already encountered in Winwood Read, a follower of Spencer. *Social Statics* preceded the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, but it was this latter event which was decisive in gaining widespread public support for the doctrine of progress. During the second half of the nineteenth century it became a general article of faith, part of the mental outlook of every educated person.⁶⁴ It seemed that a convincing natural mechanism to explain how the law of progress operated, which had long been sought by theorists of progress, had at last been found. For the general public Darwin and evolutionary theory were synonymous. But it was Spencer who created the popular belief that evolution denoted an essentially progressive process.⁶⁵ Spencer, in fact, was a Lamarckian rather than a Darwinist, but the distinction was lost on most people.⁶⁶ In the minds of most, Darwinian biological evolution was combined with

63. H. Spencer, *Social Statics or the Conditions Essential to Human Happiness Specified and the First of Them Developed*. (1851) Reprints of Economic Classics. New York : August M. Kelley, 1969, pp. 64-65.

64. See Bury (1924) Chapter Nineteen.

65. Bowler (1984) p. 225.

66. Bowler makes the point that the so-called social Darwinism should be seen rather as a form of social Lamarckism (p. 272) but the confusion of terminology which has persisted up to the present illustrates the point that Darwin and evolution had become synonymous.

Spencer's application of evolutionary thinking to the progress of society to form the characteristic belief in the progressive moral and spiritual perfection of man. Tennyson encapsulated this belief in "The Making of Man":

Where is one that born of woman,
altogether can escape
From the lower world within him, moods
of tiger, or of ape?
Man as yet is being made, and ere the
crowning Age of ages,
Shall not aeon after aeon pass and touch
him into shape?
All about him shadow still, but, while
the races flower and fade,
Prophet-eyes may catch a glory slowly
gaining on the shade,
Till the peoples all are one, and all
their voices blend in choric
Hallelujah to the Maker."It is finish'd.
Man is made."⁶⁷

From the viewpoint of the late twentieth century, when events throughout the century, including the horrors of two world wars, have shaken any conviction that intellectual and material advance necessarily results in social, moral or spiritual progress and the perfectibility of man seems an idle dream, the views of the Victorians seem at best naive, at worst overbearingly arrogant. It is true that in the hands of a writer such as Tennyson the idea of progress could be a noble impulse, with its desire for the spiritual improvement and general unity of mankind. In practice it provided the intellectual underpinning's for the worst excesses of *laissez-faire* capitalism, epitomized by the ideology of social Darwinism with its unrelieved anthropocentrism and emphasis on progress through competitive struggle. The consequences of that philosophy were adverse both for the less fortunate groups in society and for the natural world. But even for those who found social Darwinism uncongenial, belief in progress remained a guiding principle. It gave the Victorians their driving sense of mission. Colonists, manufacturers, cultivators of the soil, artists, artisans, workers, all were engaged together, each working in his own way to carry society forward, part of a "vast crusade to subdue nature for the benefit of man and thus to strengthen England and further the progress of civilization."⁶⁸ Thomas Carlyle, in *Past and Present* (1843) spoke for many Victorians when in a characteristic gospel of work, he equated the task of civilising with worship:

'Laborare est orare' Work is Worship.' Older than all preached Gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable, for ever-enduring Gospel-Work, and therein wellbeing. Man,

67. Tennyson (1899) p. 628.

68. Houghton (1957) p. 250. For examples of this attitude see S. Smiles, *Self-Help* (1859) Centenary ed. London : J. Murray, 1958, Chapter 1 and T. Carlyle, *Past and Present*. London : Collins, n.d., Chapter Eight.

Son of Earth and Heaven, lies there not, in the innermost heart of thee, a Spirit of active Method, a Force of Work; and burns like a painfully smouldering fire, giving thee no rest till thou unfold it, till thou write it down in beneficent Facts around thee! What is immethodic, waste, thou shalt make methodic, regulated, arable; obedient and productive to thee. Wheresoever thou findest Disorder, there is thy eternal enemy; attack him swiftly, subdue him; make Order of him, the subject not of Chaos, but of Intelligence, Divinity, and Thee! The thistle that grows in thy path, dig it out, that a blade of useful grass, a drop of nourishing milk, may grow there instead. The waste cotton-shrub, gather its waste white down, spin it, weave it; That, in place of idle litter, there may be folded webs, and the naked skin of man covered.⁶⁹

Settlers homesick for cherished faces and places in the old country and for whom the new country did not, perhaps, live up to all their hopes and expectations could at least gain some consolation from the fact that they were participants in a grand design.

Given the widespread belief in the inevitability of progress and man's eventual perfection, the great fervour with which the Victorians pursued their quest for ever higher levels of civilization would seem contradictory. The result, one might suppose, would be the same regardless of effort. The key to this apparent paradox lies in the fact that Darwinian theory was seen to provide a satisfactory mechanism by which progress was achieved. The idea of a competitive struggle to survive provided the basis for the belief that the future depends largely on our own efforts, a belief which the view of progress as an inevitable law of nature might otherwise undermine.⁷⁰ Competition explained why some cultures were more successful than others, why they progressed at different rates and why some had declined. Civilization represented successful adaptation but it could only be maintained with constant vigilance against the brute forces both within and without that threatened to drag man downwards. Struggle against the brute forces, whether represented by external nature or the "lower" instincts of man himself, was an ever present theme of the age. Though nothing could thwart the general advance of humanity under the doctrine of progress, races and nations could fall by the wayside in the great march and struggle upwards.⁷¹ Underlying all the apparent optimism of the age was a deep sense of anxiety, a fear of being overtaken in

69. Carlyle, Chapter Twelve, pp. 222-223.

70. It is easy to see why Victorians saw in Darwin's ideas the solution to the problem of a satisfactory mechanism for progress as the idea of competitive struggle accorded well with two of the cardinal Victorian virtues, Carlyle's "gospel of work," which I have already referred to and the virtue of "self-help," which was epitomized in Samuel Smiles 1859 book by that very title.

71. The persistence of this idea can be seen in R. Briffault, *The Making of Humanity*. London : George Allen & Unwin, 1919. "Civilizations, not civilization, are destroyed. That which is unadapted perishes, that which is adapted is preserved. Trample out Minoan culture, it shoots up again in thousand fold splendour in the glory of Greece.... We see one race stepping into another's place in the van of the march, but nothing of the continuous inheritance is lost. Every treading down of the seed results in a richer harvest than the last.... Like individuals, races, empires, civilizations pass away, but humanity proceeds onward." (p. 27)

the struggle to survive and an even more dreadful fear of the possibility of relapse to barbarism, the spectre of degeneration.⁷²

The most successful civilizations were those that had succeeded best in controlling nature and the more hard won the victory over nature the higher man rose. Struggle was the necessary condition for achievement. Those who exerted less energy would fall behind. To leave the land idle and resources unused was to deny the very essence of humanity, which consisted in establishing independence from nature, and to sink to the level of the brute. A recurrent theme in the writing of the period is the contrast between the failure of indigenous people to develop their land, leaving it to lie idle, and the abundant energy of the European race. The inevitable result was that aboriginal races must succumb under pressure of competition from the more "vigorous race."

It is indeed a fact, which does not admit of doubt, which is even presented to us a law of nature,-as a necessity,- that wherever a white race comes into contact with an indigenous dark race, on ground suitable to the former, the latter must disappear in a few generations.⁷³

If they could adapt and "bear a part in the accelerated progress of the human race," claiming a place for themselves in the commonwealth of nations, so much the better. If they could not, one must accept with resignation the extinction of a people "in an apparently aimless and unprogressive state [who had] accomplished so imperfectly every object of man's being." The replacement of scattered tribes living in this state by "the millions of a populous country, with the arts and letters, the matured policy, and the ennobling impulses of a free people" was a state of affairs to be welcomed.⁷⁴ Sir Walter Buller spoke for many when he stated in reference to the "inevitable"

72. Tennyson summarised the fears of the age in lines from *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After* : "Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good. And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in the Mud." The spectre of degeneration threatened from all sorts of sources; the insane, the criminal element of society, the urban poor, women moving out of their 'proper' sphere, half castes, the savage or barbarian races that Europeans encountered in their colonising quest, and wild nature itself. Constant effort was required to ensure victory for the forces of progress against the downward dragging forces of degeneration. Victorian anthropologists such as James Frazer believed that many survivals of savagery existed in modern life and these functioned as a constant reminder of what reversion might mean. Belief in the existence of degenerates formed a major factor in the treatment of the insane, the criminal and the poor and influenced attitudes towards the changing role of women in society. A number of prominent social thinkers felt that the masses were capable of only slight improvement, that progress had depended on the rise of a rational elite and subordination of the masses. For a fuller discussion of the concept of degeneration in the nineteenth century see the essays in J. E. Chamberlin & S. L. Gilman (1985).

73. Travers (1869) p. 308.

74. All the quotes come from Travers' 1869 lecture. When he speaks of a "free people" he means, it would seem, not merely political freedom but freedom in the sense of independence from nature, a necessary prerequisite for political freedom. The fact that he was one of the leading early spokesmen for conservation in New Zealand illustrates how all-pervasive the belief in progress was.

displacement of the Maori race by a more highly organised and civilized one, that "if true to our watchword of progress - social, intellectual, and physical - he could scarcely believe that even the most earnest Philo-Maori would deplore the change."⁷⁵

Just as one must accept the passing of indigenous people with resignation, so too, the passing of the indigenous flora and fauna, regrettable though it might be, was an essential, indeed inevitable, aspect of the path towards "the kingdom of man." The existence of wild, untamed nature was an affront, a reminder that man still had some way to go before achieving his full perfection. Domesticated plants and animals were the appropriate accompaniments of humankind. In a period which was fascinated with the history of the growth and decline of civilizations, the domestication of plants and animals was perceived to have played an important role in the slow ascent of man from savagery to civilization.

It is an interesting... fact, that the domestication of the organic world, so far as it has yet been achieved, belongs, not indeed to the savage state, but to the earliest dawn of civilization, the conquest of inorganic nature almost as exclusively to the most advanced stages of artificial culture.⁷⁶

In the same way that the European would succeed in the struggle for existence, "on which every progress in the world depends" on the basis of his moral power and mental superiority,⁷⁷ so too, indigenous plants and animals would give way before the influx of domesticated species accompanying European settlement because northern hemisphere species were believed to be stronger, more "fit" than southern hemisphere species which, it was thought, were less numerous and therefore had not been subjected to so much competition.⁷⁸

75. T.N.Z.I., 17 : 444, 1884.

76. G. P. Marsh, *Man and Nature*. (1864) Cambridge, Massachusetts : Belknap Press, 1965, p. 39, n. 36. The association between domestication and the rise of civilization was popularized by Count Buffon in the eighteenth century in his *Histoire Naturelle* (1749-1804). He was convinced that the domestication of both plants and animals was the most important way man had converted nature into an environment suitable for civilization. See also, Edward Gibbon in *The History of the Decline and Fall of The Roman Empire*: "Our toil is lessened and our wealth is increased by our dominion over the useful animals." Cited in Thomas (1984) p. 28. Gibbon's work was first published in six volumes between 1776 and 1788 and went through numerous editions in the nineteenth century. It was just one example of a genre which became very popular during this period, a history of mankind, tracing the successive stages of man's advance towards civilization. Other works in this mode were Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Sketches of the History of Man* (1817); J. G. von Herder, *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Man* (1784-1791); Sir John Lubbock, *The Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man* (1870); and Lewis (1878).

77. F. von Hochstetter, *New Zealand, Its Physical Geography, Geology and Natural History*. Translated by E. Sauter, Stuttgart : J. G. Cotta, 1867, pp. 196-7.

78. Darwin believed this. Hooker, Wallace and Agassiz also subscribed to the idea of a dominant northern hemisphere flora and fauna, which, as a consequence became the accepted orthodoxy. For further discussion of this belief see Chapter Eight.

The mania for acclimatization which characterized the early years of settlement in New Zealand needs to be viewed in the light of the doctrine of progress. The devastating impact of this craze upon the indigenous flora and fauna has been frequently noted and remains all too apparent. The motivation is usually attributed to nostalgia for the familiar features of the home country and the straightforward utilitarian motive of introducing plants and animals suitable for food, recreation and development of the economy.⁷⁹ These motivations are important and were clearly articulated at the time but the preceding quotation suggests there might have been a deeper, more ideological motive, connected with the dogma of progress. The transfer of species to regions of the world where they did not naturally occur was yet another palpable demonstration of man's mastery over organic matter, a point which is emphasised by the fact that the mania for acclimatization was an international phenomenon. The traffic was never entirely one way from the old world to the new and the lists of species introduced to the colony included many which had no possible connection with the homeland.⁸⁰ The fact that man's mastery over nature sometimes had undesirable consequences was recognised but did not unduly daunt the majority of Victorians. They confidently believed that they could restore any temporary imbalance and indeed the efforts of the acclimatisation societies were welcomed as a means of restoring "the balance of life which has been so rudely disturbed by our colonisation."⁸¹

Another factor which lay behind the craze was a different idea of diversity from that which prevails today. Diversity rather than uniformity was recognised as a law of nature, but the conclusion drawn from this was that diversity should be increased by adding forms which were lacking in the natural environment, in contrast with the

79. For a general history of acclimatization in New Zealand see J. Druett, *Exotic Intruders: The Introduction of Plants and Animals into New Zealand*. Auckland : Heinemann, 1983.

80. A Société Impériale d'Acclimatation formed in France in 1854. In England an Acclimatization Society had been established in 1860 with the aim, like its French counterpart, of domesticating exotic species as new food sources. Societies were also established throughout the colonies and in America. See Barber (1980) Chapter Ten and N. V. Pears, "Familiar Aliens: The Acclimatization Societies' Role in New Zealand Biogeography," *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 98(1) : 23-34, 1982. In the colonies, the societies were less interested in seeking out new food sources than in establishing the familiar food and game species of Europe in the new world, although this primary preoccupation did not preclude attempts to introduce species from all parts of the world. For example, the list of birds introduced by the Auckland society in its second year included Java sparrows, Solomon Island cassowaries, New Caledonian pigeons, and Cape cardinals. (C. R. Ashby, *The Centenary History of the Auckland Acclimatisation Society, 1867-1967*. Auckland : Auckland Star Commercial Printer, 1967)

81. W. L. T. Travers, "Presidential Address to Wellington Philosophical Society," *T.N.Z.I.*, 4 : 356-362, 1871, 358. See also R. W. Fereday, "On the Injuries to Vegetation by Insects," *T.N.Z.I.*, 5 : 289-294, 1872. "Man, in his blindness, is ever breaking, or throwing out of gear, some wheel of the great cosmical machine, and disorder necessarily follows...." (p.289) One result in New Zealand was the rapid increase of destructive insects. "I consider it to be our duty not only to protect the few indigenous birds that yet remain, but to continue to introduce others, until we have restored the balance which has been disturbed." (p. 293)

modern concept of protecting gene pools and ecosystems, in which the aim is to conserve populations and distinctive ecosystems in as pure a form as possible.⁸² The nineteenth-century attitude, illustrated by a statement of Sir David Monroe, perhaps derives from the principle of plenitude with its idea that the world is better the more things it contains.⁸³

There are many noble specimens of the vegetable world peculiar to New Zealand, and deserving of the utmost care. But there are also deficiencies which may be filled up by judicious introductions.... There is no reason whatever why there should not be seen growing together in one and the same wood, in New Zealand, its own peculiar evergreen conifers, contrasted with the deciduous trees of Europe and Asia, the Eucalypti and Acaciae of New Holland, the Proteaceae of South Africa, and other trees and shrubs from all but the strictly tropical latitudes.... And so with regard to its pastures. The progress of settlement is daily introducing not only English meadow grasses, but grasses from other countries.... Half a century hence... the Middle Island of New Zealand will present a richer and more varied appearance.⁸⁴

The full import of ideas on progress for attitudes towards the natural environment are captured in an 1860 article entitled "The Study of Nature"⁸⁵ by George Perkins Marsh, who has been described as "the mighty prophet of modern conservation."⁸⁶ The article is comparatively little known and tends to be glossed over where it is mentioned.⁸⁷ The result is that commentators have focussed on Marsh's role at the forefront of the conservation movement but have downplayed the extent to which his concerns and the concerns of those who took up his warnings were fully grounded in the prevailing ethos of the inevitability of progress and of man's rightful dominion over nature. His views on these issues were clearly articulated in "The Study of Nature."

82. For discussion of the modern concept of diversity within the New Zealand context see K. F. O'Connor et al., *Land Evaluation for Nature Conservation: A Scientific Review Compiled for Application in New Zealand*. Conservation Sciences Publication No. 3. Centre for Resource Management, Lincoln University, 1990.

83. The term plenitude was coined by A. O. Lovejoy in *The Great Chain of Being: The Study of the History of an Idea*, (Harvard : Cambridge University Press, 1948) to cover the idea, the origin of which he traces back to Plato, that the abundance of the creation must be as great as the possibility of existence and commensurate with the productive capacity of a "perfect" and inexhaustible Source, and that the world is better the more things it contains.

84. Sir D. Monroe, "On the Leading Features of the Geographical Botany of the Provinces of Nelson and Marlborough, New Zealand," *T.N.Z.I.*, 1 : 6-17, 1868, p. 16. Similarly, Firth argued that the New Zealand vegetable kingdom was full of forms of rarest beauty but was yet destitute of a thousand fruits and vegetables and trees for which our unrivalled climate offered a congenial home. ("Anniversary Address to the Auckland Institute," *T.N.Z.I.*, 8: 420-25, 1875, p. 424)

85. G. P. Marsh, "The Study of Nature," *Christian Examiner*, 68 : 33-62, 1860.

86. D. Lowenthal, "Introduction and Note on the Text," pp. ix-xxix in G. P. Marsh, *Man and Nature*. Cambridge, Massachusetts : Belknap Press, 1965, p. x.

87. Lowenthal (1965) for example, makes only passing reference to the earlier work. He does not analyse its significance. Worster (1977) also refers to the article but does not examine its relationship to the *Man and Nature*.

Marsh's deserved reputation as an early conservationist rests on a monumental work entitled *Man and Nature: Or Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action*, published in 1864, but it is important to bear in mind that this book was substantially conceived by spring of 1860, the same year as the essay.⁸⁸ *Man and Nature* is a graphic and scholarly documentation of the damage man had done and was continuing to do to the earth, warning of the need for caution in undertaking large-scale modifications of the earth's surface. The view of man as a destructive agent was not new. By the end of the eighteenth century it had become conventional to regard nature unmodified by man as being in equilibrium and to recognize that man could disrupt the balance with his activities. This point of view is expressed in the lines from Schiller which the great geographer Humboldt chose to preface his *Views of Nature*.

On the mountains is freedom! the breath of decay
Never sullies the fresh flowing air;
Oh! nature is perfect wherever we stray;
'Tis man that deforms it with care.⁸⁹

The significance of Marsh's work was to show that once man had upset the natural equilibrium, nature did not necessarily heal herself, at least not in a time frame useful to humankind, but was frequently degraded to man's detriment.⁹⁰ He was able to draw upon a vast body of scientific literature which had been accumulating since the late seventeenth century to illustrate his point. The great value of his work lay in his ability to present the findings of this research in an eminently readable way, to perceive clearly the lesson to be learnt from it and to spell them out in a way that was accessible to a wide audience. By emphasising the long term damage the activities of man can inflict upon nature, Marsh was the first person to undermine nineteenth-century confidence in the inexhaustibility of resources, a belief that flowed naturally from the eighteenth-century conception of a plenteous and beneficent nature.⁹¹

David Lowenthal, the editor of the standard modern edition of *Man and Nature*, states that few books have had more impact on the way men view and use the land.⁹² From its first publication in 1864 it was widely influential. As early as 1868 it was being cited in the New Zealand parliament by T. H. Potts in support of forest conservation

88. Lowenthal (1965) p. xviii.

89. A. von Humboldt, *Views of Nature, or Contemplations on the Sublime Phenomena of Nature. With Scientific Illustrations*. Translated from the German by E. C. Otte and H. G. Bohn. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1850. The lines cited by Humboldt come from Schiller's "Bride of Messina."

90. Lowenthal (1965) p. xxv.

91. *Ibid.*, p. ix.

92. *Ibid.*

measures.⁹³ The following year it inspired the series of lectures to the New Zealand Institute by Travers to which I have already referred. Because the ideas in *Man and Nature* were taken up so quickly, at least by some, and because its lessons are taken so much for granted today, it is easy to misread the significance it had for Marsh and his contemporaries. A close reading of the earlier article is essential for a full understanding of the later book because the concerns of the two are closely intertwined.

His was no sentimental view of Nature. Bounteous she might be, but only, it seems, when she is made to yield her bounty to man's control.⁹⁴

The life of man is a perpetual struggle with external Nature. Her spontaneous and unelaborated products yield him neither sufficient nor appropriate food, nor clothing, nor shelter; and all her influences, if untamed and unresisted, are hostile to his full development and perfect growth, to his physical enjoyments and his higher aspirations, and even to his temporal existence. While obedience to her dictates is the law of all lower tribes of animated being, it is by rebellion against her commands and the final subjugation of her forces alone that man can achieve the nobler ends of his creation.⁹⁵

This is not the beneficent nature of Gilbert White or Humboldt. Marsh, in common with many others in the mid-nineteenth century, had a much grimmer view of nature than writers of eighteenth century. Evidence arising from the advance of physical science and increased European exploration of the globe revealed a side of nature previously little known to Europeans in their relatively geologically stable, harmonious, long-tamed environment. Tennyson's memorable phrase "nature red in tooth and claw"⁹⁶ admirably summarised the new perception, which was gaining ground before Darwin's hypothesis of natural selection by survival of the fittest helped to fix it firmly in the public mind. Increasingly, the older perception of "the beneficent motherliness and healing power of 'Nature'" was yielding place to the scientific view... of a neutral Nature... completely devoid of moral intelligence."⁹⁷ Marsh's emphasis on the fact that unaided nature did not necessarily spontaneously repair what man had destroyed in a way that would ensure its continued usefulness to humankind helped to reinforce this changing perception.

"The Study of Nature" exemplifies what Houghton has described as the Victorian "worship of force."⁹⁸ The language is pugnacious, aggressive. Marsh speaks of

93. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 4, 1868, pp. 188-193.

94. In the Preface to *Man and Nature* he makes reference to man being "nourished at the table of bounteous nature."

95. Marsh (1860) p. 33.

96. Tennyson (1899) p. 261. (*In Memoriam*, LVI)

97. K. R. Chatterjee, *Studies in Tennyson as Poet of Science*. New Delhi : Chand & Co, 1974, p. 43.

98. Houghton (1957) Chapter 9.

"warfare" against nature, assuming an "aggressive attitude" towards her, enslaving, subduing, compelling, controlling, subjugating and subjecting her to man's uses, all within the space of two short paragraphs.⁹⁹ As Worster rightly perceived, civilization itself became a holy crusade as the Victorians "set out to conquer nature and the savage world."¹⁰⁰ The "pacification" of the land served as "a kind of visible, external evidence of their accession to grace."¹⁰¹

Conquest of "brute and unconscious nature," Marsh argued, is essential for man to reach his full potential. It was only by "subjugation of the inferior animals and the inanimate world" that he could conserve his energy for the cultivation and development of the "powers and faculties that distinguish the human from the brute creation."¹⁰² The "extent of his victories over Nature" becomes, in Marsh's view, "a measure not only of his civilization, but of his progress in the highest walks of moral and intellectual life." He acknowledged that man cannot amend the laws of nature but, he believed, if he makes those laws "the rule of his life," if he moulds his action "to her bidding, he descends from the sphere of true humanity [and] abdicates the sceptre and the purple with which the God of nature has invested him.... Wherever he fails to make himself her master, he can but be her slave."¹⁰³ In this "warfare," he continued, "there is no drawn battle."

Within, the sensuous or the intellectual must triumph; without, intelligent energy or brute forces must prevail. In fact, this struggle and this victory constitute so necessary a condition of all other great human achievement, that man rises higher in proportion to the magnitude of the physical inconveniences and wants he successfully combats and finally vanquishes. Humanity has exhibited her loftiest examples of heroism, and wisdom, and virtue, and great exploit, on those soils and in those climates where the earth, with the latent capacity of yielding the most, does yet spontaneously yield the least....

The study of Nature's laws, therefore, a knowledge of her products and her powers, an independence of her influences, a control over her action, is an indispensable means of the first attainment and subsequent extension of high civilization and social improvement, of every form, - in short, of general human progress, as well as of individual culture; and hence this study becomes one of the most obligatory duties, as well as the most imperious necessities, of our condition.¹⁰⁴

Like so many of his contemporaries, he looked forward to the day when "the peoples all are one."¹⁰⁵ when local interests would "give place to universal and truly human

99. Marsh (1860) pp. 34-36.

100. Worster (1977) p. 179.

101. *Ibid.*, pp. 178-9.

102. Marsh (1860) p. 34.

103. *Ibid.*

104. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-36.

105. Tennyson (1899) p. 628. (*The Making of Man*)

sympathies." Once material progress had set men free of "mere material influences... the horizon of their philanthropy" would be widened, they would become "cosmopolite in sentiment, and feel, emphatically, that the human family has a common interest, and tends to a common destiny."¹⁰⁶ Knowledge of how to extract a "larger amount of physical good out of the resources of Nature" was merely an incidental advantage in Marsh's view. The great object was to make "victories over the external world a vantage-ground to the conquest of the more formidable but not less hostile world that lies within. The applicability of science to the uses of material life is a base and degrading test of its true value; it should be pursued for what it helps us to become, not for that which it enables us to do."¹⁰⁷

"The Study of Nature" gives forceful expression to the reasoning behind the fervour with which organisations such as the New Zealand Institute undertook the study of natural history. The connection between the conquest of nature, material progress and moral progress is made explicit. The article reveals how potent the mix of belief in progress, faith in science and man's right of dominion over nature could become in the hands of the morally earnest Victorians. But what is the relationship between this article and the later *Man and Nature*? The clue is to be found in the long introductory section to *Man and Nature*.

Marsh began the Introduction with a discussion of the present physical decay of many of the countries of the Old World in comparison with their former fertility, as related by the geographers and historians of antiquity. He considered the cause of this decay and concluded that the greater proportion of it had resulted from the activities of man rather than from geologic, climatic or other natural causes. He developed the theme that man is a disturbing agent different in degree and kind from wild animals. He viewed nature untouched by man as being in a state of balance or equilibrium. But wherever "man plants his foot, the harmonies of nature are turned to discords."¹⁰⁸ The lesson to be derived is not that man should cease to transform nature. He is just as convinced as he was in "The Study of Nature" that

man, the domestic animals that serve him, the field and the garden plants the products of which supply him with food and clothing, cannot subsist and rise to the full development of their higher properties, unless brute and unconscious nature be effectively combated, and, in a great degree, vanquished by human art. Hence, a certain measure of transformation of terrestrial surface, of suppression of natural, and stimulation of artificially modified productivity becomes necessary.¹⁰⁹

106. Marsh (1860) p. 36.

107. Ibid., p.56. Similar sentiments were expressed by T. H. Huxley (1880) pp. 18-19.

108. Marsh (1864) p. 36

109. Ibid., p. 38.

The essential difference between the earlier work and the later one lies in his very clear perception in *Man and Nature* that man can go about transforming the earth in the wrong way. In the earlier work he recognised that man is bound by natural laws but he emphasised the need to interpret them and turn them to his advantage. He gave no hint of where, if anywhere, the line of conquest should be drawn. In the later work he attempted to draw the line by reminding humankind that the earth was given to us for "usufruct alone, not for consumption, still less for profligate waste."¹¹⁰ If we overstep the mark, he warned, nature is capable of unleashing powers that will rebound to man's disadvantage.

The ravages committed by man subvert the relations and destroy the balance which nature had established between her organized and her inorganic creations; and she avenges herself upon the intruder, by letting loose upon her defaced provinces destructive energies hitherto kept in check by organic forces destined to be his best auxiliaries, but which he has unwisely dispersed and driven from the field of action.¹¹¹

The result of having already overstepped the mark was that vast areas of the earth were now too deteriorated to be reclaimed for human use "except through great geological changes, or other mysterious influences or agencies of which we have no present knowledge, and over which we have no prospective control."¹¹² The key point followed:

The earth is fast becoming an unfit home for its noblest inhabitant, and another era of equal human crime and improvidence, and of like duration with that through which traces of that crime and that improvidence extend, would reduce it to such a condition of impoverished productiveness, of shattered surface, of climatic excess, as to threaten the depravation, barbarism, and perhaps even extinction of the species.¹¹³

Here is the Victorian fear of degradation to a state of barbarism which I have previously suggested underlies the desperate faith with which they adhered to the doctrine of progress. Marsh went further and adverted to the possibility not only of a reversion to barbarism but the ultimate fate, extinction of the species, thus giving voice to the most deep-seated fear of the age.¹¹⁴

110. Ibid., p. 36.

111. Ibid., p. 42.

112. Ibid., p. 43.

113. Ibid. My emphasis. Note the strong moral overtones of the word depravation, which implies deterioration, perversion, or corruption of moral character or habits. Marsh reinforced his point with a quote from James M. Martineau's "The Good Soldier of Christ" in *Endeavours after the Christian Life* (1858). "And it may be remarked that, as the world has passed through these several stages of strife to produce a Christendom; so by relaxing in the enterprises it has learnt, does it tend downwards, through inverted steps, to wildness and the waste again." If people give up the contest with moral evil, Martineau goes on to say, the "portion they had reclaimed from the young earth's ruggedness is lost; and failing to stand fast against man, they finally get embroiled with Nature, and are thrust down beneath her ever-living hand."

114. This fear also surfaces in the poetry of Tennyson. See in particular *Lucretius*, (1868) *Despair*, XV (1881) and *Vastness*, (1885).

The paradox revealed in *Man and Nature* is that the very conquest of nature, which is identified in "The Study of Nature" as essential to the attainment of ever higher civilization, can, if pursued unwisely, lead back to the state which civilised man aspires to rise above and, at the very worst, can lead to extinction. Adverse impacts, he noted, may be "in some degree, inseparable from every attempt to control the action of natural laws" but the resources of science must be called upon to make every effort to mitigate such evils.¹¹⁵ The book proceeded to catalogue many examples of man's reckless or ignorant waste and wanton destruction, with particular emphasis on excessive forest clearance and destruction of plants and animals beyond what has been required for food and commerce. The important point he wanted to drive home was that past civilizations had failed because they mistreated their environment and modern civilization, too, had the same fate in store unless it heeded the lessons of his book.

It would be a mistake to regard *Man and Nature* as advocating a "hands off" approach to nature. Resource management rather than nature preservation is the direct descendant of Marsh's approach. Much of the book is taken up with discussion of works for improving nature, including a final chapter on "Projected or Possible Geographical Changes by Man." Wilderness redeemed through control of nature is as much the goal of *Man and Nature* as it is of "The Study of Nature" but with cautionary warnings as to how that control should be exercised. This point was made clear in his discussion of forests. One of the key lessons the book conveys is the adverse consequences of excessive forest clearance. Nevertheless, Marsh did not argue for the preservation of large tracts of indigenous forest to restore the balance of nature. He favoured artificially managed forests.

Notwithstanding the difference of conditions between the aboriginal and the trained forest, the judicious observer who aims at the preservation of the former will reap much instruction from the treatises I have cited, and I believe he will be convinced that the sooner a natural wood is brought into the state of an artificially regulated one, the better it is for all the multiplied interests which depend on the wise administration of this branch of public economy.¹¹⁶

However, he was not opposed to sanctuaries unviolated by the hand of man. While he recognised their value as refuges for species threatened with extinction and the value to man of solitude in the presence of untouched nature, these issues were not central to his concerns.

Upon the whole, the importance of the [non-timber] class of vegetables, as physic or as food, is not such as to furnish a very telling popular argument for the conservation of forests as a necessary means of their perpetuation.... But he whose sympathies with nature have taught

115. Ibid., p. 50.

116. Ibid., p. 260. Marsh reiterated his belief in the superiority of artificial forests on more than one occasion. Lowenthal records a letter written just three days before his death in which he once again stressed "the superiority of artificial forest, both in quantity and quality, as compared with that of the natural and spontaneous growth." (p. 261, n. 233)

him to feel that there is a fellowship between all God's creatures;... he who has enjoyed that special training of the heart and intellect which can be acquired only in the unviolated sanctuaries of nature, "where man is distant, but God is near" - will not rashly assert his right to extirpate a tribe of harmless vegetables, barely because their products neither tickle his palate nor fill his pocket....¹¹⁷

In spite of the grim warnings contained in *Man and Nature*, it shared the basic optimism and faith in science that characterised "The Study of Nature." His warnings were meant to apply in the present limited state of scientific knowledge but he did not wish "to set limits to the ultimate power of man over inorganic nature." Mechanical philosophers, he noted, have suggested the possibility of harnessing "some of the greater natural forces, which the actions of the elements puts forth with such astonishing energy."¹¹⁸ In his imagination he was able to look forward to a time when science might yet reveal the means of harnessing "the pressure of a square mile of sea water at the depth of five thousand fathoms, or the moment of the might of an earthquake or a volcano." Then it might be possible to reduce "great Alpine precipices to such slopes as would enable them to support a vegetable clothing...."¹¹⁹ He had no inhibitions about massive transformations of nature, provided they could be carried out without ill consequences for humankind! The importance of Marsh's ideas for the development of nature conservation is not disputed, nor is his appreciation of the beauties of nature, but for him man remained the lord and master over nature and other species. He would not have sympathised with Aldo Leopold's call for man to become a "plain citizen" of the biotic community.¹²⁰

Marsh's warning of the threat of regress to barbarism as a result of inattention to the destructive processes which can be set in motion by man's attempts to subjugate nature was not lost on some contemporary readers. Travers, whom we have already noted was closely influenced by Marsh, specifically quoted that passage and made it the basis of a duty to preserve the colony from the destructive processes caused by man's ignorance or wantonness:

it becomes our positive duty, imposed upon us as a sacred trust, not merely to abstain from wanton destruction of the natural resources of this country, and from undue interference with those operations which in the past have tended so much to fit it for the abode of mankind, but also, in all cases in which, through recklessness, or carelessness, or accident, anything has been done tending to injure them, that we should endeavour to effect all the reparation in our power.¹²¹

117. Ibid., pp. 248-249.

118. Ibid., p. 44.

119. Ibid.

120. Aldo Leopold will be discussed further in the following chapter.

121. W. T. L. Travers, "On the Changes effected in the Natural Features of a New Country by the Introduction of Civilized Races. Part III.," *T.N.Z.I.*, 3:326-336, 1870, pp. 328-329.

Thus the idea of progress, which as I have argued above, was in so many ways a destructive influence for the environment, contained, through its emphasis on the future of mankind and thus of the well-being of future generations, a seed which, in the minds of men such as Marsh, began to grow into a concern for conservation. I will return to this point in the next chapter.

Before turning to an examination of some of the counter-currents of Victorian thought which were more conducive to the development of a conservation consciousness, it is necessary to examine some of the factors which, in the New Zealand context, reinforced the general cultural climate opposed to conservation.

In New Zealand, the interrelated beliefs about civilization, progress, the advance of science and man's dominion over nature were channelled into a vision of a rural Arcadia which gave pride of place to the sturdy independent yeoman or small holder who, through honest toil, would tame the wilderness and bring forth the fruit of the soil.¹²² In the Arcadian vision, nature was conceptualized as a cultivated, domesticated garden, a new Eden, to be contrasted with untamed nature, which was associated with the Maori and social misfits, in other words, the bestial elements of human nature, an association that I have previously highlighted in discussing the Victorian fear of degradation to an uncivilised state. But the city, too, was perceived as a threat to civilization in the Arcadian vision. It was "impure," a "cancerous growth" on the land which "trapped and sustained the unfortunate, the degenerate, the weak-willed and the idle."¹²³

The interrelationship between the Arcadian vision, the belief in progress, civilisation and the dominance of man was encapsulated in a book by Josiah Clifton Firth entitled *Nation Making. A Story of New Zealand: Savagism v. Civilization*. The gospel of work was the charter by which humanity held its dominion and secured its progress, he argued, but the surest path to progress was through the cultivation of the soil. This

122. See M. Fairburn, "The Rural Myth and the New Urban Frontier; An Approach to New Zealand Social History, 1870-1940," *New Zealand Journal of History*, 9 : 3-20, 1975; M. Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society: 1850-1900*. Auckland : Auckland University Press, 1989, Part 1 in particular; Arnold (1981). Fairburn (1975) identifies three initially discreet Arcadian visions; the Victorian suburban Arcadia of the middle-class sentimental family; a Dickensian humanitarian vision of resettlement of the victims of the factories and slums of Britain in a land of bountiful and surplus pasture, where limitless opportunity would convert the families of the urban poor into stocky yeomen; the aspiration of rural labourers and domestic servants who entered the colony as assisted immigrants to acquire land, regarding it as a key source of social opportunity and material security. All three merged to create the common rural myth.

123. Fairburn (1975) p. 4. The city, Fairburn claims, was viewed by New Zealanders as a breeding ground for disease, a cradle of crime, a procreator of poverty, and a threat to social control. The town was acceptable as a civilizing influence so long as it retained its village character but New Zealanders grew alarmed when the town became the city.

was the earliest foundation upon which nations had been built and if we were tempted to abandon that path and direct energy to factories and cities, the result would be the "degradation and decay of man."¹²⁴

The impact of the Arcadian vision in Britain had a beneficial effect on conservation. By placing value on traditional rural practices rather than industrialisation of the land or indeed of farming methods, it tended to help preserve wildlife and a landscape which had been molded by the hand of man over thousands of years. The impact was quite different in New Zealand where the attempted rapid conversion of the indigenous landscape to a domesticated garden of Eden gave little time for adaptation and inevitably involved massive destruction.¹²⁵ We may speculate whether, had New Zealand been settled by colonists with a proud tradition of urban culture, or by the Swiss or Germans, with their recognition of forestry as a viable land-use option, the early and rapid onslaught against the bush and the lowland landscape in general might not perhaps have been so widespread or so devastating. Even larger estates in the European aristocratic tradition might have led to greater retention of indigenous vegetation for aesthetic reasons and as shelter for game, a luxury which small holders could not afford. But such was the strength of the Arcadian vision that there was an ever-increasing demand for small-holdings, supported by a growing array of legislation designed to assist the small-farmer, pushing settlement into ever more rugged and less fertile land and this despite the fact, as Fairburn has noted, that until the mid-1890s, the family-sized farm tended to be uneconomic.¹²⁶ There were other factors involved in the growing encroachment into bushland, of course, the need to develop to enlarge the national wealth and to provide new sources of taxation and to assert European settlement over the Maori, for example, but the Arcadian myth, supported by the Victorian faith in progress, science and man's rightful place at the apex of creation remained the dominant factor.¹²⁷

124. J.C. Firth, *Nation Making. A Story of New Zealand: Savagism v. Civilization*. London, Longmans Green & Co., 1890, pp. 331-332.

125. Contemporary figures on bush clearance can be found in *A.J.H.R.*, 1874, H-5. These were estimates of deforestation between the years 1830 to 1873 collated by James Hector. They reveal major impact in Auckland and Hawke's Bay and serious impact in Wellington, Marlborough, Canterbury and Nelson provinces. When serious efforts were made to preserve scenery at the turn of the century, little suitable land was found to be left in some provinces.

126. Fairburn (1975) p. 11. Fairburn also points out that although the economics of family farms improved after the mid-1890s, just under one quarter of dairy farms in the 1930s were considered to be uneconomic units and about one third of the soldiers put on the land between 1915 and 1933 failed. The family farm was intended less to serve an economic function, he concludes, than to fulfil a social ideal. (pp. 11-12)

127. See S. H. Franklin, "The Village and the Bush; The Evolution of the Village community, Wellington, Province, New Zealand," *Pacific Viewpoint*, 1(2) : 143-182, 1960.

The Arcadian vision was built around a myth of natural abundance. Early promotional literature on New Zealand unfailingly referred to the natural bounty of the colony, the points most emphasised being the great natural fertility of the soil, evidenced by the lush "tropical" growth of the bush and the benign climate, which not only favoured luxuriant growth but was also believed to be particularly health giving.¹²⁸ The agricultural potential of the country was emphasised by frequent comparison with the climate and latitude of southern France, Italy and Spain and favourably contrasted with the aridity of much of Australia. The perception of the great fertility of New Zealand was fostered by a widespread belief in a close association between the height and luxuriance of vegetation and the underlying soil fertility.¹²⁹ A comment by William Yate may be taken as a typical example:

The forest-land is peculiarly rich: indeed, were it not so, it would be utterly impossible that the immense vegetation constantly going on should be supported.¹³⁰

Even a scientific man such as the Colonial Geologist, Dr Hector, could state in reference to the Taranaki and Wanganui districts:

The noble character of the forest growth which generally covers the area, proves the great productiveness of its soil.¹³¹

This encouraged continued clearing of forest rather than development of fernlands and tussock, although there too, a hierarchy of fertility from tallest to shortest was held to exist. The areas that were less favoured with natural soil fertility under this association between height and fertility were believed to have any deficiency "amply compensated for by the magnificence of the climate."¹³² European plants and animals were widely held to grow bigger and fatter or more rampantly here, an idea which the rabbit plague

128. For a general discussion of the images of New Zealand promoted in the literature available for intending immigrants see J. A. Johnston, *Images and Appraisals of New Zealand, 1839-1855. A cognitive-behavioural approach to historical geography*. Ph.D Thesis (Geography) University of Auckland, 1975. The salubrity of the New Zealand climate was popularized by A. S. Thomson, an army surgeon, who produced statistics showing the rate of infections, diseases and mortality among his troops was lower than at any other station in the Empire in a book entitled *The Story of New Zealand - Past and Present - Savage and Civilized*. 2v. London, 1859 (rpt.1974).

129. Johnston (1975) pp. 148-153; B. C. Peters, "Changing ideas about the use of vegetation as an indicator of soil quality," *Journal of Geography*, 72(2) : 18-28, 1973.

130. W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand and of the Church Missionary Society's Mission in the Northern Island*. 2nd ed. London : R. B. Seeley & W. Burnside, 1835, pp. 17-18. For further examples see Johnston (1975) pp. 148-153.

131. J. Hector, "Description of Climate and Mineral and Agricultural Resources of New Zealand," pp. 35-44 in J. Vogel, ed., *The Official Handbook of New Zealand*. London : Wyman & Sons, 1875. p. 39.

132. Ibid. Charles Hursthouse, in *New Zealand, the "Britain of the South,"* (London : Edward Stanford, 1861), was more realistic than most in his assessment of the natural soil fertility of the country. "It is a virgin soil of fair average fertility, but nothing more." (p. 193) Nevertheless, he believed that the climate more than compensated for this average fertility. (pp. 192-194)

certainly did nothing to diminish, providing unmistakable proof, it was believed, of the country's outstanding natural fertility.¹³³ Even mountainous areas, of no discernible value for agriculture, nevertheless had their contribution to make to the great natural abundance of New Zealand by virtue of anticipated stores of vast mineral wealth and the promise of tourism, which was emphasised by frequent comparison with the great scenic areas of Europe - Switzerland, the Norwegian fjords, the Scottish highlands and the English lake district.¹³⁴ In short, intending immigrants were assured that they would find "no country so suitable as New Zealand... for no colonization field has so mild a climate, or so fertile a soil to recommend it as this Austral-Britain."¹³⁵

One might suppose that the reality of life in New Zealand might soon have induced more realistic assessments of the natural abundance of the country. Inevitably adjustments had to be made but the myth of abundance continued to have a powerful hold. Fairburn cites an article published in a reader intended for school children, published in 1895, which extolled the "sumptuous fertility" of the country, with its "astonishing soil, so catholic in its fertility that it will grow everything worth growing, and so rich that it grows everything well."¹³⁶ More realistic assessments were available, but by and large, these seem to have been ignored. Colenso, for example, was of the opinion that "few indeed, are the districts, which can in any sense be termed fertile" in spite of the soil being represented as "possessing fertility unparalleled, and such abounding to an almost unlimited extent."¹³⁷ Diffenbach, as early as 1843, warned that the Kauri land was infertile and also warned against the practice of burning the vegetation cover, in the belief that it would improve the condition of the soil,

133. We should not assume that all these early claims were wildly exaggerated in an attempt to encourage further settlement. There were no doubt sound ecological reasons for observed growth rates. Initial crops planted in the burnt over remains of virgin forests benefitted from the store of nutrients released by burning and many newly introduced animals thrived in the absence of the competition they had to contend with in their places of origin. But the rhetoric continued even after the initial phases of settlement when new ecological balances began to assert themselves, bringing about less prodigious growth. When this phenomenon was observed with the trout fisheries, for example, shags were seized upon as a scapegoat to account for reduced yields and smaller sized fish rather than recognition that a state of equilibrium with the new environment had been reached.

134. A typical example of the belief that abundant mineral riches awaited discovery is provided by Rev. Richard Taylor: "Of the rocks of the Middle Island little is at present known; but as they are reported to be chiefly primitive, it is very probable all the precious metals will be found there in abundance." *Te Ika A Maui: New Zealand and its Inhabitants*. (1855) rpt. Wellington : A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1974, p. 244. For further examples of the belief in great mineral riches see Fairburn (1989) pp. 31-32. For examples of the comparison between New Zealand's scenery and the best of Europe see Johnston (1975) p. 131. See also Sir G. Bowen, "Anniversary Address of the President," *T.N.Z.I.*, 4: 1-15, 1871.

135. Taylor (1855) p. 460.

136. Fairburn (1989) p. 30.

137. W. Colenso, "Excursion in the Northern Island of New Zealand, in the Summer of 1841-2; together with part of 'Early Crossings of Lake Waikaremoana'," pp.1-57 in N. C. Taylor, ed., *Early Travellers in New Zealand*. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1959, p. 55. (First published in 1844)

pointing out that on all but the small extent of true alluvial land, "repeated conflagrations" would soon cause the land to become "perfectly exhausted" and that already large districts had been "rendered very poor in this manner."¹³⁸

Notwithstanding his warning and subsequent warnings by others, burning remained the standard practice.¹³⁹

* * * * *

The group of interrelated beliefs discussed in this chapter formed part of the intellectual baggage that accompanied the European settlers to New Zealand during the nineteenth century. The thrust of my argument has been that these broad trends of thought predisposed the earliest settlers against conservation. This in turn was important in shaping the environment that we, the descendants of those early settlers, would eventually come to inhabit. I do not wish to claim that these were the only ideas which were influential.¹⁴⁰ I will have occasion to discuss some of the other ideas and attitudes which ran counter to conservation as I examine in detail the growth of the conservation movement in New Zealand. I have been concerned in this chapter to outline the dominant ideas. Nor do I wish to contend that it is ideas alone, whether about conservation or adverse to conservation, which influence environmental impact. It is self-evident that ideas have an impact upon the environment but the relationship between specific ideas or attitudes and particular environmental outcomes may not be at all clear cut.

The relationship between beliefs, including environmental beliefs, and changes to the landscape are complex and seldom reducible to a simple one to one relation between a given belief and a particular environmental outcome. It needs to be remembered that

138. E. Diefenbach, *Travels in New Zealand; with contributions to the geography, geology, botany, and natural history of that country*. Vol. 1. London : John Murray, 1843, pp. 228 & 367-368.

139. Diefenbach's early warnings were taken up later by the German geologist Hochstetter (*New Zealand, Its Physical Geography, Geology and Natural History*, German ed. 1863, English ed. 1867, op. cit.) and by Thomas Potts, who was the first to raise the issue in Parliament (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 4, 1868, pp. 188-193). The botanist, John Buchanan, warned of the dangers of repeated burning of tussock grasslands in a paper before the Otago Institute in 1868. ("Sketch of the Botany of Otago," *T.N.Z.I.*, 1 : 22-53, 1868, p. 23). Two years later W. T. L. Travers denounced the reckless waste of thousands of acres of flax in a vain attempt to substitute grass where often the only result was land so injured by fire as to be unfit for any other crop. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 1870, p. 327) In 1871 the botanist, Thomas Cheeseman, also denounced "the pernicious practice of burning off the vegetation every summer" causing patches of bush near streams to diminish and plants of the open country to become local or extinct. ("On the Botany of the Titirangi District of the Province of Auckland," *T.N.Z.I.*, 4 : 270-284, 1871, p. 271)

140. For example, the widely held belief that swamps were ruinous to health provided as much incentive to drainage as the desire to recover potential arable land. The association of swamps with illness was based on a belief not without foundation in some parts of the world but with little applicability to New Zealand. Thus the swamp at the back of Napier was held by one commentator to be a "black spot" on the beauty of the region, "poisoning the otherwise pure air with fever-laden malaria...." (Anon., "Notes on Hawke's Bay," *New Zealand Country Journal*, 2 : 87, 1878)

human beliefs constitute only one of the factors influencing environmental change. As Jeanne Kay has correctly pointed out, different environments are more or less sensitive to human impact.¹⁴¹ For example, New Zealand's insular biogeography with its high proportion of endemic species including an unusual numbers of flightless or near flightless birds which evolved in the absence of mammalian predators and a flora which evolved in the absence of grazing ungulates made it especially susceptible to the changes introduced by Europeans. On the other hand, this same vulnerability helped to raise awareness of the need for conservation at a relatively early stage. The impact a society has on its environment is also related to other factors such as technology, population size, economic issues and available information about sound resource management practices. The profligate waste of timber in nineteenth-century New Zealand, for example, was fostered not only by the ideas I have been discussing but also by a lack of an infrastructure for transporting timber to markets and an uncertain economic climate, which encouraged the maximisation of returns in the short term. Of course, factors of these sorts, are, in turn, influenced by beliefs. In addition, actions are frequently at odds with professed beliefs and there is seldom complete logical consistency between the range of operative beliefs that influence any society.¹⁴² Contradiction seems inherent in the human condition. This was evident in nineteenth-century attitudes towards the environment. Beliefs which favoured exploitation and those which favoured conservation were often held by the same individuals and though many of the ideas favouring conservation rose in reaction to the consequences of exploitation, others derived from those very ideas which drove men to conquer nature. It is now time to look at some of the beliefs which encouraged a more favourable approach to the environment.

141. J. Kay, "Preconditions of Natural Resource Conservation," pp. 22-33 in D. Helms & S. Flader, eds., *The History of Soil and Water Conservation*. Washington DC : The Agricultural History Society, 1985, pp. 27-28.

142. Several authors have noted the disparity between a groups environmental beliefs and its impact upon the environment. See for example, C. J. Glacken, "Reflections on the Man-Nature Theme as a Subject for Study," pp. 355-371 in F. F. Darling & J. P. Milton, eds., *Future Environments of North America*. Garden City, New York : The Natural History Press, 1966; Yi-Fu Tuan, "Treatment of the Environment in Ideal and Actuality," *American Scientist*, 58:244-249, 1970; Kay (1985). A good example of the complexity of the relationship between environmental beliefs and environmental impact is demonstrated in William Cronon's ecological history of colonial New England, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. (New York : Hill and Wang, 1983) He demonstrates that though the Indians retained environmentally benign beliefs following contact with the colonists, under the influence of European material culture and economic institutions they, nevertheless, severely depleted wildlife populations which were valuable for skins and pelts.

CHAPTER TWO

Towards The Liberation Of Nature: 1840-1890

All attempts at generalisation represent only part of the truth. Useful though it may be to seek coherent patterns, overriding themes, dominant ideas, these inevitably entail some degree of simplification. My characterisation of the period from 1840-1890 as one in which the dominant attitudes of the colonists to the New Zealand environment can be encapsulated in the expression "subduing and replenishing the earth" is no exception. The ideas and attitudes towards nature which are summed up in that phrase led to large scale landscape transformations, changes of which contemporary commentators were aware and saw, on the whole, little reason to regret. The extent of the changes can in part be gauged from figures on the percentage of land covered with forest given in the *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* for 1874.¹ These showed that by 1873 only 27% of the land was covered in forest compared with 68% in 1830. They do nothing to reveal the extent of the transformations which took place in the non-forested landscape through swamp drainage and changes to the indigenous grasslands caused by burning, overgrazing or conversion to pasture. It is true that a few of the more perceptive and cautious observers recognised potential problems and sounded warnings, but by and large these were swept aside in the general enthusiasm to create a new Britain in the South Pacific.²

1. *A.J.H.R.*, 1874, H-5.

2. One of the most perceptive early commentators was the German explorer, naturalist and employee of the New Zealand Company, Ernest Dieffenbach. We have already seen that he gave early warning of the impact of forest destruction. He was also severely critical of the whaling industry, which he believed would be ruined unless strict conservation measures were taken, including a closed season and a ban on all in-shore whaling, which took place when the whales came into shallow waters to give birth and suckle their young. (*Travels in New Zealand*, 1843, pp. 53-4, 227-8, 367-8.) This issue was taken up by the Otago Institute in 1870, again to no apparent effect. Hochstetter, Potts, Travers and Buchanan, to whom I have already referred, added their voices to the need for conservation. Two early papers read before the philosophical societies reveal that the potential problems forecast by Dieffenbach belonged, not to some distant future, but had already begun to manifest themselves by 1870. J. T. Stewart in 1869 drew attention to the serious reduction in flow during dry summers which he had observed in some Wairarapa rivers. He believed it was important to preserve the bush in the upper catchments particularly of smaller streams. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 2 : 198-203, 1869) A. D. Dobson, the Provincial Engineer for Nelson, pointed to the loss of land which was taking place through the rapid widening of stream beds. In the course of twenty years the Motueka river had grown from a couple of chains to half a mile in width at some points. Dobson attributed this acceleration of the natural process to the clearance of forest from upper catchments. It was imperative to protect the woods clothing the mountain drainage basins for without this measure any steps taken to protect the lower levels of the rivers would be to no avail. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 4 : 153-157, 1871)

Yet those same decades were also important for the development of less exploitative ideas about nature, ideas which would lead to a growing demand for nature conservation. The development of a nature conservation consciousness was as much a part of the legacy of European colonisation as the massive exploitation and transformation of the landscape. The tangata whenua, of course, had their long-held traditions of conservation, but with minor exceptions, it is only in recent years that a conscious effort has been made to tap into those traditions.³ In this chapter, therefore, I want to round out the picture I presented in the first chapter by examining those elements of the intellectual culture of the immigrants which were favourable to the development of a nature conservation consciousness.

Throughout the period there was a persistent minority countercurrent of thought which denied the subservience of nature to the needs of humankind, challenged the striving after complete conquest and valued nature for itself. This attitude was a legacy of the Romantic movement which emerged at the end of the eighteenth century in response to changed and changing views of humankind's place in the universe and as reaction against the rationalism and materialism of the developing industrial culture fostered by the scientific revolution.⁴ Romanticism was a complex, many faceted movement unified by a shared emphasis on the subjective, irrational and emotional as opposed to the rational and objective and an affirmation of faith in man's innate powers of creativity. One of the most characteristic features of the movement was a new sensibility towards nature, an attempt to redefine man's relationship to nature, though certainly not all those who can be labelled as Romantics shared identical beliefs about nature. This new sensibility manifested itself in a number of ways.

Since the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, nature in the West had been seen primarily through the spectacles of mechanistic science.⁵ The mechanistic world-view likened the universe to a Cosmic Machine set in motion by a remote Deity reduced

3. In his 1878 article, "National Domains", Potts suggested that "considerable areas of land might be set aside and held under tapu as to dog and gun" in order to preserve native fauna. (*Out in the Open*.

p. 35) Though adopting the Maori term 'tapu', he did not seriously explore Maori concepts of conservation. Despite the magnificent gift of Tongariro, the relationship between the Maori and the early conservationists was often one of conflict. Pigeon hunting and attempts to acquire native land for conservation purposes were common sources of discord, however Tongariro was by no means an isolated example of the Maori and the conservation movement working together. For further examples see Chapters Four and Six.

4. For origins of more favourable attitudes towards the environment which precede and influence the the Romantic sensibility see C. J. Glacken (1967); C. Merchant (1983); J. Passmore (1980); K. Thomas (1984).

5. Carolyn Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England*. Chapel Hill and London : University of North Carolina Press, 1989, p. 5. See also Merchant (1983)

to an abstract first cause. The result was "a dead universe of matter and motion, virtually untenanted Creation of its God" and hence removing any barriers to unrestrained exploitation, sanctioning the "free competition for the spoils of the world," which continued to dominate the nineteenth-century approach to nature.⁶ The machine analogy was profoundly abhorrent to the Romantics and their slightly later counterparts in the United States, the Transcendentalists. They did not accept that nature could be accounted for on purely mechanical grounds. They returned to an earlier organic approach to nature based on the idea of a vital animating principle binding together the whole cosmos.⁷ For them nature was animated and unified by a spiritual principle, a creative power flowing throughout the natural world, conceived by some as an entity distinct from but created by the supreme being, by others as a mere expression of the divine power, and for yet others as God himself present in nature. The pantheistic strain of Romantic thought was immortalised by Wordsworth in lines from Tintern Abbey:

I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains; and all that we behold
 From this green earth; of all the mighty world...⁸

Thus, love of nature became, in essence, an act of worship and the woods and mountains natural temples.⁹

There was nothing new in the idea of viewing nature as a route to spiritual understanding. Nature had long been conceived as a book which could be read alongside the Bible to improve our understanding of God, but many of the Romantics went further.¹⁰ Nature, for them, became the prime source of revelation. For example

6. Basil Willey, *The Eighteenth Century Background: Studies on the Idea of Nature in the Thought of the Period*. London : Chatto and Windus, 1965, pp. 35-36 & 17.

7. For discussion of medieval examples of this world view see C. Merchant (1983).

8. D. Wright, ed., *The Penguin Book of English Romantic Verse*. Harmondsworth : Penguin Books, 1968, p. 111-112. In New Zealand the belief that nature was animated by a spiritual principle is expressed most powerfully in the poetry of Blanche Baughan. For further discussion see Chapter Eight.

9. For example, the American Romantic poet, William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878) described forest groves as "God's first temples" in his poem "A Forest Hymn." William Colenso admired the poetry of Bryant, which he cited in his article "On a Collection of Ferns," and like Bryant, he viewed the woods as a " great temple of Nature." ("On a Collection of Ferns," 15 : 311-320, 1882, p. 314)

the German writer, Wilhelm Wackenroder, stated in "Outpourings from the Heart of an Art Loving Friar" (1797):

Since my early youth, when I first learned about God from the ancient sacred books of our faith, *Nature* seemed to me the fullest and clearest index to His being and character. The rustling in the trees of the forest and the rolling thunder have told me secrets about him which I cannot put into words. A beautiful valley enclosed by bizarre rocks, a smooth-flowing river reflecting overhanging trees, a pleasant green meadow under a blue sky - all these stirred my innermost spirit more, gave me a more intense feeling of God's power and benevolence, purified and uplifted my soul more than any language of words could have done.¹¹

Wackenroder's belief that more can be learnt from nature than from words may appear superficially similar to the sentiment expressed by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, one of the most celebrated churchmen of the Middle Ages, who taught that "you will find more in the woods than in books; trees and stones will teach you what no other teacher can."¹² But what Bernard had in mind was the medieval belief that nature was a system of symbols which one could learn to read. This differed fundamentally from the Romantics' goal of direct communing through the senses with God, the Life Force, the Over-Soul or however else they might choose to express it, "in Nature's realms of worship, earth and air."¹³ It differed too, from the urge to unravel the rules governing the laws of nature set in place by the Supreme Engineer or Artificer, the image of the Deity conjured up by the Scientific Revolution, in the belief that technological mastery over nature could be equated with spiritual advance. Both involved standing apart from nature, looking in upon it. In contrast the Romantics sought to identify with nature imaginatively, emotionally, "to mingle with the universe" and feel intensely the bond of kinship that unites all parts of it.¹⁴ Byron pithily encapsulated the Romantic immersion in nature when he said, "I live not in myself, but I become Portion of that around me... Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part of me and of my soul, as I of them?"¹⁵

10. For more on nature as a book see Glacken (1967) pp. 202-205 and W. J. Mills, "Metaphorical Vision: Changes in Western Attitudes to the Environment," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 72(2) : 237-53, 1982.

11. Cited in B. Novak, *Nature and Culture, American Landscape and Painting, 1825-1875*. London : Thames & Hudson, 1980, p. 14.

12. Cited in W. J. Mills (1982) p. 241.

13. The quotation comes from Lord Byron, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Canto III, Stanza XCI. A similar state was experienced by a few medieval mystics such as Meister Eckhart or Hildegard of Bingen but they were not part of the theological mainstream. For more on medieval mysticism see Matthew Fox, *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*. Melbourne : Collins Dove, 1989.

14. "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Canto IV, Stanza CLXXVIII.

15. *Ibid.* Canto III, Stanzas LXXII & LXXV.

This strong sense of kinship, of interconnectedness and interdependence with the living and non-living parts of the universe set the Romantics apart from the humanist tradition and orthodox theology, which concentrated not on humankind's links with nature but on that which sets us apart. Traditional theology, as we have seen, emphasised an absolute division between the holy and the physical world and between man, who was endowed with an immortal soul and the rest of creation, which was not. This was reinforced by the Cartesian doctrine that animals were mere automata with neither minds nor souls. Thus the dominant scientific and religious worldviews shared a desacralised image of nature which, when coupled with the belief in man's dominion over nature and his perfectibility through continued progress, actively encouraged control and exploitation. This contrasted strongly with the Romantic sense of reverence for all nature and its many life forms, its acknowledgement of their claims to moral sympathy, its recognition that nature has value independent of man and his demands upon it. The Romantic sense of the sacredness of nature and its fundamentally biocentric outlook, did not of course preclude man's right to take and use what he needed from nature, but it implied a denial of the validity of unnecessary exploitation and wanton destruction. In the words of the American Transcendentalist, Henry Thoreau, man should "tread gently through nature."¹⁶

The emphasis of the Romantics on attachment rather than detachment, the reintegration of man's consciousness to the physical world in place of what they viewed as an alienating dualism, led them into conflict with the scientific approach which objectified nature and sought only facts, leaving no place for delight or wonder. The rationalist principle of objectivity denied the validity of subjective knowledge deriving from intuition, imagination, the senses. It placed value only upon knowledge which was quantifiable. The Romantics refused to accept scientific objectivity as an adequate account of reality or the only path to truth. They believed the direct inspirations of nature received through the impressions of the senses, the imagination, intuition and sympathy offered a more reliable path to true understanding than science or book learning. Theirs was an integrative, or to use the more modern term, an holistic approach to the study of nature. They felt a deep distrust of the fragmentation of knowledge into specialties and the study of the part at the expense of the whole. A memorable line from Wordsworth summed up the objection to the mechanical materialism of the scientific approach:

16. Cited in Worster (1977) p. 88. Interestingly, Colenso used similar words, in a quite literal sense, to describe his practice when visiting favoured haunts in the woods. See note 97 below. Thoreau also recognised that use of nature could partake of the nature of a sacrament. Whilst berry picking he reflected: "Wines of all kinds and qualities, of noblest vintage, are bottled up in the skins of countless berries, for the taste of men and animals. To men they seem offered not so much for food as for sociality, that they may picnic with nature.... We pluck and eat it in remembrance of Her. It is a sacrament, a communion. Cited in W. J. Wolf, *Thoreau: Mystic, Prophet, Ecologist*. Philadelphia : United Church Press, 1974, pp. 155-156.

Our meddling intellect
 Misshapes the beautiful form of things:-
 We murder to dissect.¹⁷

The Romantic critique of science did little to deflect the mainstream of science from its reductionistic course. Weighing, counting, measuring, dissecting and classification remained the norm, the dead museum specimen more important than the living object in its natural environment. One of the clearest statements of the Romantic position came towards the end of the century from a man who was not himself a scientist but an influential figure in the late nineteenth-century socialist movement, Edward Carpenter. His strictures against contemporary science reveal what little progress had been made towards the more balanced approach desired by those of the Romantic frame of mind. Modern science, he recognised, had produced many admirable results and was valid enough so long as these were recognised as means not ends. True science, as he conceived it, had to do with the emotional and moral part of man as much as the logical and intellectual. He called for the transformation of science so that it involved not just the use of the intellect but also

patient listening and the quiet eye, and of love and faith, and of all deep human experience,... and filial walking with nature, rather than tearing of veils aside - the life of the open air, and on the land and the waters, the companionship of the animals and the trees and the stars, the knowledge of their habits at first hand and through individual relationship to them, the recognition of their voices and languages, and listening well what they themselves have to say; the keenest education of the senses towards the physical powers and elements, and the acceptance of *all* human experience, without exception - till Science becomes a reality.¹⁸

The influence of the Romantic position was felt most among the ranks of the amateur naturalists. Others to criticise the reductionist tendencies of science included the great amateur botanist, geologist and pioneer conservationist, John Muir, the nature writer, ornithologist, and bird protectionist, William Henry Hudson, the nature writer John Burroughs, and biologist Liberty Hyde Bailey. Of these, only Bailey was a professional scientist and all were writing towards the end of the century or in the early twentieth century. Such criticism influenced the early conservation movement in New Zealand, particularly the Native Bird Protection Society, and has continued as a persistent and powerful thread of criticism in the modern environmental movement.¹⁹

17. This passage comes from "The Tables Turned." Thoreau made a similar point. "Science is inhuman. Things seen with a microscope begin to be insignificant.... With our prying instruments we disturb the balance and harmony of nature." Cited in Wolf (1974) p. 149. Colenso, in New Zealand, though not so overtly critical of science as either Wordsworth or Thoreau, clearly expresses the Romantic belief in the importance of the senses: "it is the *feeling* that teaches or evokes the *true seeing*; for whoever possesses the heart to feel will also have the eye to see." ("On a Collection of Ferns," T.N.Z.I., 15 : 311-320, 1882, p. 314)

18. In *Civilization, Its Cause and Cure*. London : Swan Sonnenschein & Co, 1893, p. 92.

19. An early issue of *Forest and Bird*, for example, contrasted two types of scientist: "One type sees a bird simply as a collection of feathers and bones.... To him the bird is rather a 'specimen' than a living bird of interesting habits. The other type studies the bird from a commonsense viewpoint, and

The most prevalent manifestation of the Romantic influence on science was felt in the doctrine of Vitalism, propounded by the the Frenchman, Henri Bergson. This doctrine was based on the belief that plants and animals act according to an indwelling mysterious power or vital principle distinct from chemical and other physical forces. Its indebtedness to Romantic ideas was obvious in the rejection of mechanical and materialistic explanations of life and the shared sense of reverence for life. The sense of reverence for life was taken up and emphasised by the protection movement of the late nineteenth century. Vitalists refused to accept the bleakest aspects of Darwinism which saw struggle, competition and bloodshed everywhere and instead emphasised the "web of life" aspect of the theory. They aimed to study nature as a single, integrated and living force, emphasising co-operation rather than competition, dynamic rather than static relationships, summarised by early conservationists in the popular expression "the balance of nature." Above all, they aimed to study living nature rather than the dead nature of the anatomists and taxonomists. The holistic approach of the vitalists exercised an important influence on the move in the biological sciences towards greater emphasis on behavioural studies and development of the discipline of ecology. Ecology and ecologists played a prominent role in promoting public awareness and acceptance of nature conservation at the turn of the century and continues to do so even though the modern scientific discipline has grown away from its roots in Vitalism and the holistic ideals of the founders of the science.²⁰

The Romantics distrust of science was part of a wider distaste for the industrial society it supported, fed by the same recoil from gross materialism. Critics sought to dismiss their social criticism of industrialisation as the product of overly refined aesthetic sensibilities or nostalgia for a vanishing way of life but a mere concern with aesthetics or an unthinking nostalgia for the past can scarcely explain the continuing influence romanticism holds over our thought. At a deeper level the antagonism sprang from the perception that industrialisation threatened the very wellsprings of humanity, "the primary, unmodified forces and energies of man, the mysterious springs of Love, and Fear, Wonder, of Enthusiasm, Poetry and Religion, all of which have a truly vital and *infinite* character."²¹ It also sprang from the recognition that it would cause further

gains helpful knowledge of the bird's functions in nature's scheme of things." The latter practices a science "which looks in to the heart of things and does wonderful work for humanity," the former a science which is "fussily superficial." (*Forest and Bird*, 33 :13, 1934)

20. From the 1930s the holistic model increasingly went out of favour amongst practising ecologists. Paul Colinvaux, in a well known ecological text book, *Introduction to Ecology*, published in 1973, went so far as to describe the holistic view of the community as an "heresy." However the holistic approach continues to strongly influence popular ecology.

21. Thomas Carlyle, "Signs of the Times," pp. 3-29 in *Sartor Resartus and Selected Prose*. Introduced by H. Sussman. New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970, p. 16.

alienation of man from nature and man from his fellow men. Leading Romantic thinkers saw long before Marx the tendency for industrialisation and capitalism to objectify not only nature but men as well, who were degraded into mere cogs in a machine. Coleridge, according to his son, never ceased to condemn the system which considered men as "things, instruments, machines, property."²² Throughout the century a number of prominent thinkers, including Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin and William Morris, attacked the predatory and competitive nature of commerce and what they considered the unseemly attachment to material accumulation and the false god of technology. For these thinkers the machine became a major symbol of anti-industrial sentiment.

Carlyle set the tone in his 1829 essay, "Signs of The Times."

By our skill in mechanism, it has come to pass, that in the management of external things we excel all other ages; while in whatever respects the pure moral nature, in true dignity of soul and character, we are perhaps inferior to most civilised ages.²³

Unlike the majority of Victorians, who welcomed industrialisation and technology as the means to man's complete mastery over nature, Carlyle feared that it was causing man to grow "mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand" or as Emerson would later say, after an initial enthusiasm for the promise of technology, "the machine unmans the user."²⁴ They did not deny a place for the machine in modern life but were concerned that it be the servant not the master. One way in which this could be achieved was to place material accumulation in perspective. Ruskin denounced the acquisitive society, what he called the "gospel of whatever we've got, to get more" and urged all men to seek not greater wealth but simpler pleasures.²⁵ William Morris advocated the re-establishment of skilled craft labour as the cornerstone of social life, limiting wants and satisfactions to what can be provided with the least possible reliance on mechanical assistance. Although Morris himself was more concerned with the fate of the working classes than with humankind's impact upon nature, he was not unmindful of the advantages of his ideas for the environment. Across the Atlantic, Henry Thoreau was the leading spokesperson for the reduction of material demands. In his own time he was not widely known outside his immediate circle, but through *Walden*, the record of his experiment in living in harmony with nature, he has become

22. Cited in H. G. Schenk, *The Mind of the European Romantics*. London : Constable, 1966, p. 25.

23. In Carlyle (1970) p. 21.

24. *English Traits* (1856) cited in William Leiss, "Technology and Degeneration: The Sublime Machine," pp. 145-164 in Chamberlin & Gilman (1985) p. 152.

25. Cited in M. J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 39.

perhaps the best known advocate of the doctrine of simple living and restraint in the demands made upon nature. These thinkers were important intellectual leaders of a branch of the conservation movement which has achieved greater prominence since the 1960s, a movement opposed to rampant consumerism, calling for the limitation of wants and the adoption of appropriate small-scale technology.

Given the close association between the rise of industrialisation and the growth of cities, it is scarcely surprising that the distaste for industrialisation exhibited by the Romantics was accompanied by an equally strong anti-urban cast of mind. The city for the Romantics was no longer a symbol of civility and the highest human accomplishments but symbolised alienation, the loss of community with nature and fellowmen, the soullessness of materialism and all that was wrong with modernity. The countryside, in contrast, embodied for them the values of community, cooperation, stability, simplicity and goodness. It was seen as a source of psychic balance and refuge. The idealization of the countryside, which had appealed to a number of intellectuals throughout the nineteenth century, became more widespread following the depression of the 1880s which punctured a little of the Victorian self-confidence. Weary with the relentless pace of change which had characterised the early years of Victoria's reign, many of her subjects increasingly saw in the countryside a symbol of continuity, unchanging values, the real essence of England. Industrialism, though born in England, came to be seen as a threat to the survival of Englishness, which was identified with the pastoral vision. The human wealth of a populous countryside was seen as the source and condition of the nation's greatness.²⁶

The disillusion with industrialisation and its urban culture became the basis for a major back-to-nature movement at the end of the century. This found expression in the promotion of the virtues of village life and the development of the nearest urban equivalents, the suburbs and the garden city. As early as 1857, the Reverend Charles Kingsley envisioned the interpenetration of city and country, in anticipation of what would later be called the garden suburb, where the workman might get away from the "pall of smoke" to the "soothing and purifying influences of those common natural sights and sounds which God has given as a heritage... and of which no man can be deprived without without making his life a burden to himself, perhaps a burden to those around him."²⁷ The sprawling megalopolis of the twentieth century has cast doubt upon the suburb as the means to restore nature to the city dweller but by the end of the nineteenth century garden suburbs and garden cities were widely perceived as a panacea

26. Ibid. Chapters Four and Five.

27. C. Kingsley, "Great Cities and Their Influence for Good and Evil," pp. 318-345 in *Miscellanies* Vol II. London: John W. Parker & Son, 1859, p. 341.

for the problems of the nineteenth century industrial city with its crowded, unhealthy living conditions which bred disease and fostered crime. More importantly from the perspective of nature conservation history, it also helped to encourage a growing interest in outdoor recreation activities such as picnicking, camping, backpacking, as well as more vigorous activities such as mountaineering, which in turn created a demand for protection of open space in the vicinity of settlements and further afield. Around 1865 a strong organised movement to protect open space began in England, which was an important influence on the growth of nature conservation consciousness in New Zealand, helping to off-set the drive to transform the landscape, which ironically the back-to-nature movement at the same time encouraged through the support it lent to the dominance of the Arcadian ideal.²⁸

By the end of the century there was a growing conviction that it was possible to have too much of civilization. Few would go so far as Edward Carpenter, who saw civilization as a "kind of disease". He looked forward to the time when the "Civilization-period" had passed away and man would "once more feel his unity with his fellows... his unity with the animals, with the mountains and the streams, with the earth itself and the slow lapse of the constellations, not as an abstract dogma of Science or Theology, but as living and ever-present fact."²⁹ Carpenter was at the radical extreme of the back to nature movement, but the need to feel a greater unity with nature was increasingly widely shared and the words "over-civilization" were being articulated more and more frequently.³⁰

The "recapitulation" theory of childhood development promoted by genetic psychologists in the 1890s lent support to the idea that it was possible to have too much civilization. The essence of the theory was that just as the human embryo had evolved through a series of stages, so the human psyche must recapitulate the cultural stages of human history. It was believed that in childhood play we "rehearse the activities of our ancestors, back we know not how far, and repeat their life work in summative and

28. The open-space movement in Britain and its influence in New Zealand is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

29. *Civilization, Its Cause and Cure*. London : Swan Sonnenschein & Co, 1893, p. 1. Carpenter, like Thoreau and Morris, saw the need to reduce and simplify our material demands upon nature but the key point for him was the need for reintegration with nature and one's fellows. Thoreau had also expressed the opinion in his Journals that "Society is always diseased." (Wolf, 1974, p. 152.)

30. In spite of the growing strength of the back to nature movement, the vehement responses of some of its detractors remind us that older attitudes continued to flourish. "Return to nature! It is not possible to compress more absurdity into fewer words. On our earth Nature is our enemy, whom we must fight, before whom we dare not lay down our weapons." Max Nordau, *Degeneration*. London : Heineman, 1895, p. 163.

adumbrated ways."³¹ This led to a fear that children could not grow up properly in an urban world, isolated from nature. Children denied access to nature and the ancestral experiences it could provide such as fishing, hunting, exploring, climbing, digging, building huts, were at the risk of hooliganism, juvenile crime and gang warfare. Civilization, it was feared, might short-circuit itself. Playgrounds, athletic sports and social games provided a partial palliative, but most of all, it was believed the child needed an introduction to the out-of-doors, to explore the "field, forest, hill, shore, the water, flowers, animals, the true homes of childhood... from which modern conditions have kidnapped and transported him."³² Children who grew up without the knowing the country, it was believed, grew up defrauded of "that without which childhood can never be complete or normal."³³ Recapitulation theory influenced the open-space movement. It also led to a strong nature study movement in schools at the end of the century, which aimed to teach from living nature but all too often degenerated into sterile text-book lessons which perhaps did more harm than good.³⁴

One of the major legacies of Romanticism for nature conservation lay in its reversal of the long held antipathy to wild nature. In their championship of country life over city life, the Romantics revealed their strong affinity with the gentle pleasures of domesticated nature but they characteristically sought their greatest inspiration in wild nature. If the countryside provided psychic balance against the spiritual and social ills of industrialisation, wild nature was an even more necessary antidote to contemporary civilization. For them the wilderness was a place of purity, innocence and harmony, not a grim scene of struggle and bloodshed as for so many Victorians. It was a place where man could feel in touch with the life pulse of the universe, a source of spiritual, mental and physical rejuvenation. But contact with wild nature was more than mere therapy for jaded and despairing people, it was as necessary for the complete development of the self as contact with human society. This was one of the key ideas behind the move to create national parks. For these thinkers, wilderness was also strongly associated with freedom. The Danish writer Mallet, for example, in 1770 regarded forests as fostering independence, whereas clearing favoured human submission to collective restraints. Partial clearance was linked to civilizing change in manners and liberation from submission to the environment but total clearance, he

31. G. S. Hall, "The Natural Activities of Children," *Adresses and Proceedings of the National Education Association*, 1904, cited in P. J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America*. New York : Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 79.

32. G. S. Hall, *Adolescence*, 1904, cited in Schmitt (1969) p. 80.

33. G. S. Hall, "The Contents of Children's Minds on Entering School," *Pedagogical Seminary*, (1891) cited in Schmitt (1969) p. 78.

34. For more on the nature study movement see Chapter Eight.

believed, destroyed the necessary remnants of freedom-giving woodland and brought slavery.³⁵ Thoreau, one of the most articulate and influential spokesmen for the values of wild nature, emphasised the association between wilderness and freedom.

I love nature partly because she is not man, but a retreat from him. None of his institutions control or pervade her. There a different kind of right prevails. In her midst I can be glad with an entire gladness. If this world were all man, I could not stretch myself, I should lose all hope. He is constraint, she is freedom.³⁶

In the face of the rigid and stultifying conventions of Victorian society it is not difficult to see the attraction of this way of thinking. When the idea of setting aside wilderness areas was first taken up widely in the United States in the 1930s and much later in New Zealand, these ideas were still strongly influential.³⁷

We are so much the inheritors of this new Romantic sensibility towards wild nature that it is difficult to recapture the sense of total indifference or active antagonism towards uncultivated land which dominated European consciousness up to the end of eighteenth century. Until then the appreciation of scenery was synonymous with appreciation of tamed, productive landscapes. Wild nature was deplored as uncultivated waste. Mountains were particularly feared by many as the haunt of dangerous, wild beasts and uncivilized peoples.³⁸

35. Cited in Kenneth Olwig, *Nature's Ideological Landscape*. London : George Allen & Unwin, 1984, p. 18. The idea derived from Montesquieu, who saw the primitive stage of human society as the product of a wild environment and liberty as its greatest treasure and from the Ossianic cult which valued the peripheral, uncultivated landscapes of Europe as remnants from an heroic past which was lost after the emergence of agriculture. One result of the cult of the uncultivated landscape was the clearance of vast areas as hunting reserves and for sheep. Olwig points out that it is no surprise that McPherson, who 'collected' the Ossian tales, was one of the first to clear his highland estates. (p.36) The social reality of the glorification of wild nature for many in Europe was not freedom but eviction from one's ancestral land and loss of livelihood. For discussion of conservation as a justification for displacing indigenous peoples see R. H. Grove, "Scottish Missionaries, Evangelical Discourses and the Origins of Conservation Thinking in Southern Africa, 1820-1900," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15(2) : 163-187, 1984.

36. From his Journals. Cited in Wolf (1974) p. 154.

37. The seminal article advocating the setting aside of wilderness areas in the twentieth century was published in the *Journal of Forestry* in November, 1921. Written by Aldo Leopold, it was entitled "The Wilderness and Its Place in Forest Recreation Policy." He envisioned the setting aside of areas with no roads or trails, large enough for two weeks backpack trips, a place to experience frontier conditions. He hoped to ensure that wilderness could continue to feed a culture's idea of freedom. His efforts resulted in the formation of the Gila Wilderness area in 1924 and the formation of the Wilderness Society in 1935. In the New Zealand context see, for example, Les Molloy, "Wilderness Recreation - The New Zealand Experience," pp. 4-19 in L Molloy, ed., *Wilderness Recreation in New Zealand*, Proceedings of the Federated Mountain Clubs 50th Jubilee Conference on Wilderness, Rotoiti Lodge, Nelson Lakes National Park, 22-24 August 1981, Federated Mountain Clubs, 1983. The Federated Mountain Clubs began to seriously advocate the setting aside of wilderness areas in the 1950s.

38. K. Thomas (1984) pp. 254-265.

The change in perception towards mountains and wild nature in general came about partly as result of theological controversy in the seventeenth century as to whether there had been a deterioration in nature since the fall of man. This view, common in the Middle Ages, was restated by Thomas Burnet in his *Sacred Theory of the Earth* (1681). Burnet believed the earth had originally been smooth until deformed as a result of the Flood. For him, the postdiluvian world, with its barren mountains and deserts which were neither useful nor beautiful, served as a reminder of man's fall from grace. Burnet's views were challenged by a number of theologians, anxious to prove that the earth, far from having degenerated, was orderly and well-planned in design as evidence of the Creator's beneficence. They began to point to the utility of the mountains in terms that took on increasing aesthetic connotations.³⁹ By 1757, when Edmund Burke published his *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Idea of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, mountains were firmly associated with the aesthetics of the sublime, the ability to arouse a sense of awe, wonder and intimations of the Divine. By the end of the Romantic period it was widely accepted that to come close to God, He had to be sought in his own creation, wild nature. Virgin forests and mountains were held to be natural cathedrals, presences inspiring reverence and awe. But mountains especially were widely perceived as the highest objects of natural beauty, places where man could come closest to God.

Such was the change in taste toward mountains that by the mid-nineteenth century mountaineering had become an established pastime. The worlds first mountaineering club, the Alpine Club, formed in England in 1857. This was soon followed by a number of other clubs throughout Europe and the United States.⁴⁰ The writings of John Ruskin did much to popularise the Romantic view of mountains in the mid-nineteenth century. Though not a mountaineer himself, preferring to admire mountain views from the valley floor, many mountaineers acknowledged their debt to him. The great scientific mountaineers, men such as Saussure in France, Forbes and Tyndall in Britain and Muir in the United States, also helped spread the message. Drawn to the mountains to study

39. The best known and most influential work was John Ray's *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation* (1691). Burnet's work gave impetus to the debate but George Hakewill (1635) and Henry More (1653) had already produced arguments in rebuttal of the theory of decay, which included evidence for the utility of mountains. For further discussion see Glacken (1967) Chapter Eight and K. Thomas (1984) pp.259-260.

40. The Swiss Alpine Club, the Société des Touristes Savoyardes and the Italian Alpine Club formed in 1863, the Société Raymond in 1865, the Austrian Alpine Club and the German Alpine Club in 1869 and the Appalachian Mountain Club in 1876. The New Zealand Alpine Club formed in 1891. Though mountaineering became an end in itself the objectives of most of these organisation included study of the mountains. The New Zealand Club maintained close contact with other clubs around the world, including the Sierra Club, through exchange of club literature. (*The New Zealand Alpine Journal*, Vol.1, No. 6 1894) Unlike the Sierra Club, it was not active in pursuit of conservation goals as an organisation until the formation of the Federated Mountain Clubs in 1930. Indeed the New Zealand society had little opportunity to pursue the sorts of activities the Sierra Club did under the leadership of Muir, because it lapsed in 1896 and did not revive until 1921.

geological phenomena, they had succumbed to the Romantic sense of veneration and awe which they conveyed powerfully through their scientific writings.⁴¹ No less importantly, they helped develop the techniques of mountaineering. Though scientists and explorers were prominent amongst the early mountaineers, the Romantic identification of mountains as temples of worship also attracted significant numbers of clergymen. The Rev. Hereford Brooke George, the first editor of the *Alpine Journal* saw in what he called the climbing spirit the means by which men could see more clearly "that above and beyond all law rises the supreme will of the Almighty lawgiver."⁴² Mountaineering satisfied the demands of those seeking respite from the materialism of the age. For Europeans it provided a rare opportunity for wilderness experience where man could meet nature on nature's terms. But the special attraction of the mountains for the Victorians cannot be explained simply in terms of Romantic influence. The majority came to seek spiritual enlightenment and contact with nature, but there were other motivations too. Mountains satisfied a powerful Victorian urge for action, which Rev. George recognised as having made England "the great coloniser of the world."⁴³ As mountaineering techniques developed more came to pursue what Kircher has described as the Darwinian approach to mountain scenery.⁴⁴ Overcoming difficulty became a means of proving to oneself and others one's fitness to live and the conquest of ever more difficult peaks was yet another manifestation of the march of man's progress against nature. Fierce competition ensued between climbing nations to be the first to conquer peaks. The Victorian fascination with mountains illustrates well the complexity of their response to nature.⁴⁵

Mountains hold an important place in early conservation history. The lessons learned by the scientific mountaineers inspired the writings of Marsh who did so much to

41. Tyndall was a good case in point. He came to the mountains as a self-confessed materialist but found there a sense of wonder and humility. "It is worth pausing to think what wonderful work is going on in the atmosphere during the formation and descent of every snow-shower; what building power is brought into play! And how imperfect seem the productions of human minds and hands when compared with those formed by the blind forces of nature! But who ventures to call the forces of Nature blind? In reality, when we speak thus we are describing our own condition. The blindness is ours; and what we really ought to confess, is that our powers are absolutely unable to comprehend either the origins or the end of the operations of Nature." (*The Forms of Water in Clouds and Rivers, Ice and Glaciers*, 9th Ed. 1885, pp. 31-2)

42. Cited in Ronald W. Clark, *The Victorian Mountaineers*. London : B.T.Batsford, 1953, p. 23.

43. Ibid.

44. W. Kirchner, "Mind, Mountain and History," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XI(4) : 412-447, 1950, p. 434.

45. Something of that complexity of response is captured in an account by Dr R. Ledenfeld of an expedition to the central Southern Alps. "The grandeur of the scenery aroused in us an idea of the sublime; we felt ourselves nearer the Absolute, and felt proud and happy with the thought that all the grand glaciers and rocks around were conquered by our energy and skill. This is the secret of mountaineering, and therein lies the otherwise unattainable happiness to be felt on the summit of a mountain." Dr R. Ledenfeld, "An Expedition to the Central Part of the Southern Alps," *New Zealand Journal of Science*, 1 : 504-512; 558-560, 1883, pp. 558-9.

influence the course of utilitarian based conservation through pointing out the importance of mountainlands in maintaining climate and protecting lowland areas. Many who went to the mountains for science or for recreation became leading conservationists. John Muir is probably the best known example but it was no less true in New Zealand. Arthur Harper, one of the founders of the New Zealand Alpine Club, was involved with the Christchurch Beautifying Society, played a leading role in the Native Bird Protection Society and was the inspiration behind the formation of the Federated Mountain Clubs. Other early New Zealand conservationists with a special love of mountains included G. M. Thomson, Leonard Cockayne and Blanche Baughan. A love of Mt Egmont played an important role in the establishment of the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society just as a love of the Sierra Nevada led to the establishment of the better known Sierra Club in the United States. I believe the explanation for the importance of mountainlands as objects of conservation effort in the nineteenth century is not, as some have cynically suggested, because they were perceived as having no utilitarian value, but rather because the Victorians were preoccupied with them as powerful symbols of both nature worship and nature conquest.⁴⁶

In the New World mountains filled another function as well. In an age in which tourism had become an important cultural activity, mountains along with other natural wonders, deep canyons, exceptionally large caverns or waterfalls and the largest trees, became important cultural monuments, the new world's answer to the man-made monuments of the Old World. Indeed, it was often argued these natural wonders made man-made creations seem puny and as sanctuaries they came closer to heaven because God created them.⁴⁷ The impulse to treat natural wonders as important cultural monuments was by no means confined to the New World. The Romantic emphasis on the unique, its recoil from the standardisation of industrialism helped to foster an

46. Mountains were, in fact, perceived as having utilitarian value for protecting climatic conditions and the lowlands, as the early protection of Mt Egmont for this purpose demonstrated. This does not, of course, negate the argument of the cynics, who have in mind, sacrifice of economic values. On the other hand, we need to remember the optimism of the nineteenth and early twentieth century in the matter of resource use. Forested mountain areas, which even the most extreme exponents of nature conquest would have recognised as unsuitable for settlement, could still be contemplated as timber resources. For example, in the report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for Westland to the 1909 Commission on Timber and the Timber Building Industries, it was indicated that 50,000 acres of alpine forest (grassline down to 2,000 ft) had been set aside as timber reserve under the Land Laws Amendment Act 1907 with a view to utilising it for wood pulping. This, despite the fact that it was recognised a few paragraphs later that areas of lowland forest were periodically destroyed by avalanches and landslides of saturated soil. (A.J.H.R., 1909, H-24, p. 270) It seems that we should not assume too readily that mountainous areas were perceived as having no utilitarian value. But even if we accept that, on the whole, protection of mountainous areas was perceived as entailing little economic sacrifice, this does not of itself account for the desire to protect.

47. John E. Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. Scenic tourism emerged as an activity at the end of the eighteenth century, another legacy of the Romantic movement.

appreciation of the contribution of natural monuments to a sense of identity. Germany, in particular, was conscious very early on of the importance of protecting natural monuments. In 1840 orders were issued protecting glacial boulders and other remarkable rocks. In 1842 the felling of avenues of trees was prohibited without authorisation. Limes, oaks, beeches and elms standing in country villages and towns were protected in 1852 and in 1855 foresters were required to preserve all interesting natural features.⁴⁸ By the end of the century the emphasis on natural monuments as a source of national identity increasingly focussed not just on geologic and scenic rarities or natural curiosities and rarities such as the flightless birds of New Zealand, but on whole plant and animal associations.⁴⁹

So far I have discussed the way in which Romantic ideas helped to shape the growing nature conservation consciousness at the end of the nineteenth century. Paradoxically, even those beliefs which I identified in the previous chapter as inimical to the practice of nature conservation, contained within them other ideas, which given the right set of circumstances, were able to nurture more favourable attitudes to the environment. I have already referred to the positive and negative aspects of the Arcadian vision. The doctrine of progress, though so closely implicated in the assault against nature, also had positive implications for nature conservation to the extent that it promoted concern for future generations, an essential attribute of the idea of conservation.

Concern for posterity in the sense of feeling a disinterested obligation to look to the interests of future generations, as opposed to a concern to have one's merits recognised beyond one's own generation, or a concern to ensure the future well-being of one's own particular descendants, has become such a fundamental aspect of our world view that it is easy to overlook the extent to which the moral force we accord to the concept grew out of nineteenth-century beliefs about progress and degeneration. Ruskin articulated this sense of duty clearly in his *Seven Lamps of Architecture*:

The idea of self-denial for the sake of posterity, of practising present economy for the sake of debtors yet unborn, of planting forests that our descendants may yet live under their shade, or raising cities for future generations to inhabit, never, I suppose, efficiently takes place among publicly recognised motives of exertion. Yet these are not the less our duties; nor is our part fitly sustained upon the earth, unless the range of our intended and deliberate usefulness include, not only the companions but the successors of our pilgrimage. God has lent us the earth for our life; it is a great entail. It belongs as much to those who are to come after us; and we have no right, by anything that we do or neglect, to involve them in unnecessary penalties, or deprive them of benefits which it was in our power to bequeath.⁵⁰

48. H. Conwentz, *The Care of Natural Monuments with Special Reference to Great Britain and Germany*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1909.

49. For further discussion of the influence of these ideas in New Zealand see Chapters Five and Eight.

50. John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. London : J. M. Dent, n.d., pp. 189-190.

The nineteenth century was deeply aware of change, of becoming rather than being. "The chief phenomenon of our time is the feeling of transitoriness", said Jacob Burckhardt, one of the foremost contemporary historians.⁵¹ The consciousness developed more strongly than at any previous time in history, that the present was built upon the past and that the future was built upon the present, an idea which was a key element of Darwin's theory of evolution. This perception, fuelled by the obvious pace of change in the age, was given philosophical basis in the doctrine of progress. But to understand the relation between progress and concern for posterity, it is necessary to recall the fear of degeneration, which for all the apparent optimism of the age, was never far from the surface. The law of progress, as I have previously indicated, offered no guarantees to particular individuals, nations or races, and thus present generations incurred a responsibility to future generations to ensure the continued pace of progress or risk stagnation, or worse, retrogression to a state of barbarism. For the Victorians the spectre of degeneration threatened from all sorts of sources, the insane, the criminal elements of society, the urban poor, women moving out of their "proper" sphere, half castes, the races that Europeans encountered in their colonising quest, and untamed nature itself. Constant effort was required to ensure victory for the forces of progress against the downward dragging forces of degeneration.⁵² Thus it was that the pervasive dread of the possibility of degeneration, which haunted the Victorian mind as the inevitable counterpart of progress, lent particular moral force to the concern for posterity.

For most of the nineteenth century, though fear of degradation gave moral force to the concern for posterity, it provided a justification for conquest rather than protection of nature, as I have shown in the previous chapter. The rise of civilization was synonymous with the domestication of nature. Few doubted that continued material improvement through increased mastery over nature was the best inheritance one could bequeath to one's descendants. The idea that we should protect natural areas and living species for the benefit or enjoyment of future generations seems so natural to us that it is easy to forget, for example, that scientific collectors justified driving many species to

51. Cited in Modris Eksteins, "History and Degeneration: Of Birds and Cages." pp. 1-23 in J. E. Chamberlin & S. L. Gilman, eds., *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress*, New York : Columbia University Press, 1985, p. 2. Eksteins points out that in the classical world view time was thought of as an endless cycle of recurrence in which posterity can have little meaning. The medieval Christian world view, though linear, likewise had little place for the future except in the theological conception of the afterlife. Even the eighteenth century, with its belief that human nature was uniform, was basically present minded. (p. 3)

52. For a fuller discussion of the concept of degeneration in the nineteenth century see the essays in J. E. Chamberlin & S.L.Gilman (1985). Survivals of savagery into modern life in the form of criminals, the insane and the poor functioned as constant reminders of what reversion might mean. The belief that these people were degenerates formed a major factor in the way they were treated.

the verge of extinction in the interests of future generations of scientists. The fact that a species was rare simply added greater weight to the need to ensure that it was recorded in a museum, even if that meant taking the last living specimen.

By the end of the century the situation was changing. More and more often the fear of degeneration was channelled into a concern for conservation. The writings of Marsh were enormously influential in bringing about this change. As we have already seen, he specifically invoked the fear of degeneration to encourage changed attitudes to environmental exploitation. Past civilizations, he argued, had failed because of ignorant waste and wanton destruction of natural resources. Present civilizations were likewise threatened with a return to barbarism or worse if they continued either knowingly or unwittingly to cause destruction beyond nature's capacity for self-restoration. They owed a duty to posterity to ensure that the balance of nature was not irreparably disturbed. The advance of civilization required the subjugation of "brute creation" but Marsh had become convinced from his wide reading that limits must be recognized if the gains were to be sustained. He cast serious doubt upon the comfortable and widely held belief that human life can be enriched indefinitely through continued conquest of nature.

Thus, concern for posterity prompted by the spectre of degeneration, became an important impetus for a more considered approach to resource use, tempering the inherent tendency of laissez-faire capitalism to promote the immediate use of resources and opening the way for regulation in the long-term interest. As evidence mounted that many existing resource use policies were causing harm and the inevitability of future shortages became increasingly apparent, more and more people began to question whether continued material improvement at the expense of the environment was the best inheritance one could pass to one's descendants, doubts which were reinforced by the Romantic critique of materialism. It was not so much a threat of immediate timber famine as a concern for posterity which induced supporters of nineteenth-century forestry legislation to urge the need for setting aside timber reserves. In contemporary economic terms it was not really meaningful to talk about burning of forest for conversion to pasture as "waste." The land under its indigenous cover had little or no immediate market value. It was effectively "wasteland"⁵³ which formed an impediment to "higher" economic use. The changing perception of forests embodied in the shift from the belief that they were "wastelands" to the idea that it was "wasteful" to convert them to pasture without using the timber was largely predicated upon consequences for

53. The term waste lands was used in nineteenth-century New Zealand as a synonym for public lands in a natural, uncultivated state. The term derived from medieval legal usage, referring to land not in any man's occupation but lying in common. This in turn derived from an old French word meaning uncultivated or uninhabited land. However, over time the expression also acquired a stronger implication and could be used to mean land incapable of habitation.

future generations, although in some parts of the country local timber shortages were beginning to be felt. Similarly the justification for climatic reserves to protect against adverse climate changes, soil deterioration and flooding was based more on potential future harm than immediate risk in most localities.

In the twentieth century Aldo Leopold perceived like Marsh, that "the reaction of land to occupancy determines the nature and duration of civilization...."⁵⁴ His reflections upon man's role in altering the earth led him to propose a distinctive definition of civilization in an article entitled "The Conservation Ethic."

A harmonious relation to land is more intricate, and of more consequence to civilization, than the historians of its progress seem to realise. Civilization is not, as they often assume, the enslavement of a stable and constant earth. It is a state of *mutual and interdependent cooperation* between human animals, other animals, plants and soils, which may be disrupted at any moment by the failure of any of them. Land-despoliation has evicted nations and can on occasion do it again.⁵⁵

This entailed a radically different ethic towards nature which he refined in his later and more famous essay, "The Land Ethic," first published in 1949 shortly after his death. To avoid the impoverishment of land and people, he believed land use must no longer be governed by ruthless competitive economic self interest. Economic expediency must be replaced by concern for the health of the biotic community, by which he meant its capacity for self-renewal. He summarised his ethical test in the following maxim: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."⁵⁶ He believed that an ecological interpretation of history showed that man is only "a member of a biotic team."⁵⁷ He must therefore desist from the role of conqueror of the land community and act as a plain member and citizen of it, both as a matter of enlightened self interest and out of respect for the inherent value of his fellow members and the community as such.⁵⁸ Leopold's land ethic may seem a long way from Victorian beliefs about progress and degeneration. In fact he united muted fears of degeneracy (in the reference to the self-defeating nature of the role of conqueror and the potential impoverishment of man if he fails to adopt a new ethical stance towards the biotic community) with a belief in moral progress and an ecologically informed sense of the interdependence of the living and

54. "The Conservation Ethic," *Journal of Forestry*, 31 : 634-43, 1933, p. 635.

55. Ibid.

56. *A Sand County Almanac With Essays on Conservation from Round River*. New York : Ballantine Books, 1970, p. 262.

57. Ibid., p. 241

58. Ibid., p. 240 & 261.

non-living environment to form one of the most profound statements ever made about what our relationship should be to the natural environment.⁵⁹

The idea of degeneracy was linked to the development of nature conservation consciousness in other ways. Though for many "brute creation" was one of the threatening sources of degeneration, for those imbued with the Romantic idea that to lose touch with nature "was to invite disease of the body and disintegration of the soul,"⁶⁰ it was loss of wild nature which threatened degeneration. Areas of untouched nature offered the possibility of spiritual and physical regeneration and so it was important that some should be reserved. The theme of degeneracy was also implicit in the Romantic critique of industrialisation, capitalism and the machine, in the idea that these things involved a threat to the essence of our humanity. The writings of Darwin brought the issue of what was unique about humanity into much sharper focus so that later critics of industrial society tended to link their criticisms more explicitly with the fear of degeneration.

We saw in the previous chapter that by the end of the century the city was widely perceived as a place that sustained the degenerate (those who had relapsed to the bestial element of man's nature). It was feared that cities and the industrial culture they supported would lead to the "degradation and decay of man."⁶¹ J. C. Firth, for example, saw the trust system, the company system, the sweating system and the other attributes of nation making "on survival of the fittest lines" as elements of cannibalism "surviving among civilized people." For him they "emphasised our relations with wild beasts" and he feared that too much emphasis on factories and city would lead to decline.⁶² It became important to mark off the boundaries between man and brute all the more clearly by emphasising those characteristics which were regarded as distinctly human: the cultivation of reason, philosophy and art, the pursuit of knowledge,

59. The continuing influence of the idea of degeneration is also evident in the literature of the Native Bird Protection Society. For example, in an article on forest destruction, it was argued that those who wish to exploit our forest heritage before ensuring its conservation will convert the land to a "man-made desert of rocks, shingle and useless weeds" and the "Lord of all nature will then say to us, 'You have failed to cherish that heritage which was so bounteously bestowed. You have but grasped at the shadows, the reality is now no more, and with it you and your race must die.'" *Birds*, 10 : 6 [n.d.]

60. Worster (1977) p. 83.

61. See Chapter One, pp. 41-42.

62. J. C. Firth (1890) pp. 400-401. Engels also viewed capitalism as exhibiting barbarism of the most savage kind but was more optimistic in the conclusions he drew from this. He saw free competition as the normal state of the animal kingdom which humanity must rise above through conscious organisation of social production. However, precisely because it was degenerate he believed capitalism would eventually be weeded out by evolution. See S. C. Gilman, "Political Theory and Degeneration: From Left to Right, from Up to Down," pp. 165-198 in J. E. Chamberlin & S. L. Gilman (1985), p. 178.

including the study of nature, the existence of aesthetic appreciation, religious feeling and moral capacity, including the concern for future generations.⁶³

The early Victorians had been intoxicated by the material advance of the age but for increasing numbers by the end of the century this was no longer a satisfactory index of progress. To build a civilized nation was seen to require among other things "parks for recreation, ready access to the beautiful in art, to the noble in literature, to the grand in nature."⁶⁴ Bowen, in his inaugural address to the New Zealand Institute drew a clear link between absence of facilities for moral and intellectual culture and the possibility of degradation, though his comments were made in reference to museums and libraries rather than parks or reserves. After congratulating the Institute on already having a museum and library, he added that these are "facilities for that moral and intellectual culture, without which no advantage of genius or of wealth can confer personal happiness, and no political privileges can secure immunity from *national decay*." ⁶⁵

Fear of degeneration and the need felt, as a consequence, to control the animal elements in human nature and cultivate those attributes which were distinctively human were vital elements in the development of the animal protection movement in the later part of the nineteenth century. With the nature "red in tooth and claw" image fixed so firmly in the Victorian mind, it is scarcely surprising that asserting kindness and sympathy to one's fellow humans and fellow creatures became an important hallmark of what was distinctively human. Compassion was deemed to be a civilized emotion and cruelty, whether to man or beast, a "barbarous" characteristic. Darwin believed that humanity to animals was not only one of the noblest moral qualities but one of the last to be acquired by savages.⁶⁶ Kindness towards animals became "the surest refutation of the human being's bestial savagery."⁶⁷

Nowhere are the brutish passions of man more displayed than in cruelty. Just so far as man is cruel does he show loss of the human nature and more of the animal nature which exist together in him - just so far does he show that he has forgotten that it is the glory of the human to control the animal nature.⁶⁸

63. Bishop Suter of Nelson, in an address to the Nelson Philosophical Society, explicitly acknowledged that the pleasure derived from the study of nature, the pursuit of knowledge and the cultivation of art was "so unique as to be one of the most distinguishing features of man above all other beings." (*T.N.Z.I.*, 16: 574, 1883)

64. J. C. Firth, "Anniversary Address to the Auckland Institute," *T.N.Z.I.*, 8: 420-25, 1875, p. 424.

65. Bowen (1868) p. 4.. My italics.

66. C. R. Darwin, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*. 2nd ed. London : John Murray, 1901, p. 188.

67. James Turner, *Reckoning with the Beast: Animals, Pain, and Humanity in the Victorian Mind*. Baltimore : John Hopkins University Press, 1980, p. 77.

68. *Animal World*, 1874, p. 6 (the publication of the RSPCA) cited in Turner (1980) p. 69.

The campaign against cruelty depended on two important changes in belief: recognition that animals could feel pain, notwithstanding the contrary views of the Cartesians;⁶⁹ and the idea that sensation gave the basis to a claim for moral consideration. For reasons that are not entirely clear, in the eighteenth century there developed an unprecedented abhorrence of suffering. Benevolence and kindness became a key virtues. Educated people began to feel that all sentient beings should be respected and treated with kindness. This idea also lay behind the movement to abolish slavery and the prison reform movement. The issue of whether or not animals had souls or were capable of reason, which had formally governed our moral obligations or lack of them towards the animal kingdom, was no longer relevant. If it was accepted that animals could suffer they were brought within the sphere of human moral concern.

Supporters of the anti-cruelty movement were motivated as much by concern for human morality and the maintenance of civilization as by concern for the fate of other species. When the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals formed in 1824, its founders had much more in mind than the mere defense of animals, they aimed to civilise the lower classes. The significance of humane education for the future of the human race concerned them as much as the impact of cruelty upon the animals themselves. In 1868 a leading supporter of the American SPCA noted: "the man is even a greater gainer than the animal, by being made to realise the possibility of self-control; and society are greater gainers still, by the subjugation of the demons of passion and violence in their midst."⁷⁰ In the early years of the movement, the Society's actions were targeted almost exclusively against cruelty occasioned by lower class occupations and pastimes such as overloading of horse drawn buses or bull-baiting, while ignoring examples of cruelty whose abolition would have a direct impact upon the economic structure or upper class sports such as game shooting. Cruelty to animals by the lower classes evidenced a lack of civilization and morality which not only served as a constant and unpleasant reminder that even in "civilized" countries there were many people who were but a short step away from a state of savagery but also threatened the disruption of the factory system, which depended upon a compliant

69. Under the Cartesian doctrine, apparent symptoms of pain in animals were said to be external reflexes unconnected to sensation.

70. Cited in Turner (1980) p. 69. See also B. Harrison, "Animals and the State in Nineteenth-Century England," *English Historical Review*, 88 : 786-820, 1973, p. 815. The Society did not receive its Royal Charter until 1840. An American Society For the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals formed in 1866 and two years later a Massachusetts society formed. See R. W. Doughty, *Feather and Fashions : A Study in Nature Protection*. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1975, p. 43.

and disciplined or "civilized" body of workers.⁷¹ The major exception to this focus on the lower classes was a campaign against vivisection.

The publication of the *Origin of Species* in 1859 provoked fears of the wild beast lurking within to new heights. Paradoxically, one way in which the movement approached the fears sparked off by the fact of kinship with animals was to "elevate the beast," to downplay what was vicious or cruel in animal nature and instead to emphasise their ability to show affection, loyalty and helpfulness to humankind.⁷² The higher animals were elevated, the less acceptable cruelty became. The long standing image of beast as symbol of uncaring nature was replaced by a new image of animals as the symbol of faithful affection, exemplars of behaviour for the human race and fully deserving of our compassion. By constructing this new image the Victorians were able to convince themselves that humans were not beasts and nature was not devoid of sympathy and love.

Pets and domestic animals were the greatest beneficiaries of these changing attitudes. Indeed, it became commonplace for animal lovers to compare pets and domestic animals favourably with savages and less civilized peoples.⁷³ But wild animals also benefitted. In fact so far were roles reversed by some animal supporters that beasts were no longer to be dreaded as the terror of the forest, rather it was man who was dreaded by our "shy friends" and it was he who must attempt to win back their trust which he had forfeited.⁷⁴

Amongst wild creatures "our feathered friends" were the focus of the greatest attention. They were of course readily visible, they easily appealed to the aesthetic sense and it was relatively easy to point to features which could be given the seal of moral approval; most were good parents, building nests and tending for their young until ready for independence, many mated for life and they shared with humans the capacity to make song. Moreover, many were industrious, hardworking helpers of man, helping to keep down insects. They were also under considerable pressure from pot-hunters, feather

71. Turner (1980) suggests that concentration on cruelty to animals also provided an alternative outlet for humanitarian sentiment which did not threaten the economic structure as the earlier anti-slavery and prison reform movements had.

72. Turner (1980) Chapter Four. Turner notes that this change in attitude was accompanied by a linguistic change. By the twentieth century the word "brute" as a synonym for animal had virtually disappeared.

73. For example, one commentator observed that to compare the savages of Siberia or Tartary with "horses or any of our domestic animals would be doing them too much honour." For this and other examples see Keith Thomas (1984) pp. 187-8 .

74. Turner (1980) p. 72.

hunters, bird-catchers, sportsmen, scientific collectors and bird nesters. In 1869, the RSPCA with the support of the East Riding Association For the Protection of Sea-Birds (formed in 1868, possibly the first wildlife society in the world) and the British Association which had begun to be concerned at the possibility of extinction, took up the issue of the large-scale slaughter of seabirds by sportsmen during the breeding season. They successfully promoted the Sea Birds Protection Act 1869 on both utilitarian and humanitarian grounds. The slaughter of sea birds was seen as particularly repugnant because they were simply used as targets, injured birds perhaps suffering for hours before dying, the waste and cruelty of this compounded by the fact that their young were exposed to death by hunger. Professor Alfred Newton of Cambridge, in a speech before the British Association in 1868, asked: "Could men blaze away hour after hour at those wretched birds without being morally the worse for it?"⁷⁵ During the following decade the RSPCA continued to work with the British Association and the newly formed Association for the Protection of British Birds (1870) to promote additional legislation, culminating in the Wild Birds Protection Act 1880, which consolidated the previous legislation and provided a closed season for all birds.⁷⁶

By this time cruelty was no longer the sole focus of concern for the animal protection movement. The beliefs of those involved had slowly begun to shift ground. The reluctant acceptance, following Darwin, of the commonality of humans and animals and the growing sense that both formed part of an interdependent web, a comprehensive system of mutual support, led to an increasing stress on the important role performed by animals in preserving the balance of nature. This, in turn, reinforced the view that we should return thanks for their aid to us by treating them kindly.

The balance of nature issue was central to the debates surrounding bird protection from the outset, supplementing but certainly not displacing the movement's earlier emphasis on cruelty. Before long supporters were going further, using the idea of interdependence and the autonomy of animals which that concept presupposed, to argue that it was not only wrong to treat animals cruelly but that so long as they did not endanger human life or imperil our means of subsistence (predators would remain beyond the pale for some time yet) wild animals had the same right to life and liberty as man himself. This was a perception shared with the growing number of

75. Professor A. Newton, "On the Zoological Aspects of Game Laws," *British Association Reports*, 108-9, 1868. The British Association is the British counterpart of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science.

76. For more detail see J. Sheail, *Nature in Trust: The History of Nature Conservation in Britain*. Glasgow : Blackie, 1976; P. D. Lowe, "Values and Institutions in the History of British Nature Conservation," pp. 329-352 in *Conservation in Perspective*. A. Warren & F. B. Goldsmith, eds. Chichester : John Wiley & Sons, 1983.

conservationists who were concerned at the increasing threat of extinction for many species from the combined onslaught of sportsmen, collectors and the plumage trade. The two movements had already co-operated to protect sea birds and other birds from wanton slaughter. They continued to work together to fight the plumage trade which, it was claimed, was responsible for the deaths of up to 200 million birds a year, often under circumstances of thoughtlessly inflicted cruelty.⁷⁷ For example it was a common practice for fowlers to tear the wings from live birds, less from deliberate cruelty than from the lingering belief amongst the less educated that they had no feeling.⁷⁸

The plumage issue led to an upsurge of interest in birds. By the 1890s only pets aroused greater interest among animal lovers. This was reflected in the formation of several important new groups dedicated to the protection of birds, including the Selbourne Society (1885) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (1889) in England and the Audubon Society (1896) in the United States.⁷⁹ But the alliance between those who were concerned primarily with cruelty and those who were primarily concerned with diminishing populations of wildlife was always an uneasy one. In recent decades the inherent difference of focus between conservationists and those who today term themselves animal rights supporters has developed into an open breach. Both share the perception of the sacredness of life but amongst conservationists the focus is upon the fate of species and the ecosystems which support them while the latter focus on the fate of the individual. This leads to irreconcilable conflicts over certain conservation issues such as culling and control of exotic species.⁸⁰

77. R. W. Doughty, *Feather Fashions and Bird Preservation: A Study in Nature Protection*. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1975, p. 153.

78. This practice is described by Ruth Tomalin in a biography of W. H. Hudson, a prominent ornithologist, the author of many widely read books on birds and an important campaigner for bird protection. *W. H. Hudson. A Biography*. London : Faber, 1982, p. 143.

79. The Selbourne Society for the Protection of Birds Plants and Pleasant Places was an amalgamation of the Plumage League and the Selbourne League, both of which had formed earlier in the same year. The RSPB was also an amalgamation of two earlier groups, a Manchester based Society For the Protection Of Birds and the Fur, Fin and Feather Folk of Croydon, both formed in 1889. The Royal prefix was added to the Society in 1904. Its first meeting was held in the offices of the RSPCA. Initially it was an exclusively female group although W. H. Hudson acted as their patron and adviser and wrote a number of pamphlets for them. See Lowe, (1983) pp. 331-2, and Sheail (1976) pp. 11-15. I give the date 1896 for the foundation of the Audubon Society as this marked the beginning of the modern Audubon movement. It was preceded by an earlier but short-lived Audubon Society, formed in 1886. For a history of the Audubon Society see C. W. Buchheister and F. Graham, "From the Swamps and Back : A Concise and Candid History of the Audubon Movement," *Audubon*, 75(1) : 4-45, 1973 and see also Chapter Ten, note 39. The American Ornithologist's Union, founded in 1883, also took an active interest in bird protection.

80. A recent example of this conflict was the opposition by animal rights activists to a proposal to clear rats from a small island in the Hawaiian group using techniques developed in New Zealand, in order to assist the recovery of endemic species. Graeme Taylor, personal communication.

In New Zealand, the upsurge of interest in bird protection at the end of the nineteenth century produced calls to protect indigenous species but it did not give rise to bird protection societies comparable to those which developed in Britain and the United States until the early twentieth century. The initiative remained with individuals, the most prominent being Thomas Potts, until the 1890s when the philosophical societies began to advocate the need for sanctuaries.⁸¹ The New Zealand SPCA, unlike its British and American counterparts, was not vigorous in defending native species from pot hunters, plumage seekers, collectors or wanton destroyers. It appears to have confined its activities to cruelty against domestic species. Nor was bird protection the dominant focus of concern for the earliest nature conservation groups which formed from the late 1880s, though in seeking to protect the bush they also helped to protect the birds which were dependent on forests. It is not clear why no bird protection groups formed here. It cannot be accounted for by the absence of the sorts of issues which motivated the formation of overseas groups.⁸² Feather fashions, which provided such an important stimulus to the formation of groups in Britain and America, were probably much less conspicuous here. Perhaps, too, issues such as the plumage trade or even cruelty, seemed of less significance in the face of the most obvious causes of decline in the numbers of indigenous birds, loss of habitat and the depredations of introduced competitors. Hence the early emphasis on sanctuaries. The key factor was probably the widespread belief in the inevitable displacement of native species.

Arguments based on cruelty did not feature as prominently in the debates here concerning wildlife protection. Utilitarian motives and the threat of extinction were more influential. Nevertheless the moral arguments raised by the anti-cruelty movement and the new attitudes it encouraged towards animals could not fail to influence attitudes towards wildlife in this country. Thomas Potts was well aware of the issues. He spoke out against the "reckless gunner frequently killing for the mere love of slaughter," the "barbarity" of slaughter for the feather trade and the "wounding and maiming in the interests of museums."⁸³ Anti-cruelty rhetoric continued as a

81. The role of individuals and of the philosophical societies is discussed further at pp. 78-79 below.

82. From the writings of Potts and others it is clear that sportsmen were just as prone to wanton slaughter here as elsewhere, that young boys treated bird nesting and killing of birds as a popular pastime, that pot hunting accounted for large losses and the plumage trade had a significant impact on some populations of birds. A Hamilton, for example, in 1878, pointed out that the demand for feather trimmings and kiwi skin muffs had caused great slaughter in South Westland. (*T.N.Z.I.* 11 : 386-391, 1878, p. 389) See also the references in Note 83 below.

83. *T.N.Z.I.*, 2 : 40-78, 1869 p. 43 ; *T.N.Z.I.*, 5 : 171-205, 1872, p. 193; *Out in the Open*, p. 35. Potts was always particularly critical of the vast scale of the slaughter carried out in the name of science.

minor theme in the propaganda of the Native Bird Protection Society when it formed in 1923.

Today, the significance of this movement is easily underestimated for we have, by and large, unconsciously assimilated the lessons it had to teach. It is difficult for us to imagine now the sheer numbers of birds and other animals which were slaughtered, not for food, nor because they were believed to do harm, but simply for the pleasure of killing.⁸⁴ We can no longer believe that animals are only made to be killed by us or accept that they feel no pain. Wanton killing of wildlife is not tolerated any more, though hunting which respects a code of sportsmanship remains acceptable to all but the most extreme animal rights supporters. Years of hard work and constant propaganda by groups such as the SPCA and the many bird protection societies which formed in the final decades of the nineteenth century, has made cruelty to animals morally repugnant to almost all of us, a fit subject for legal intervention, even if for the majority the concern is confined to higher animals and is readily displaced by arguments of necessity.⁸⁵

Just as the adverse impact of the doctrine of progress upon the natural environment was blunted somewhat by the end of the century through its interdependence with the concept of degeneration, the cult of science also played an ambivalent role in the history of nature conservation. Through its alliance with the doctrine of progress and its goal of conquest and through the mania for collecting which it encouraged, it was responsible for widespread destruction of nature. Yet, as we have seen, the British Association and individual scientists such as Professor Alfred Newton were at the forefront of the move to protect birds. Similarly, in the United States, scientists were prominent in the movement and in 1884 the American Ornithological Union set up a bird protection committee which collected data on the decline of species and formulated model bird protection laws.⁸⁶ In New Zealand too, a high proportion of early conservationists came from the ranks of natural scientists, amateur and professional. With a minor exception, the earliest organisational calls for conservation came from the scientific societies which comprised the New Zealand Institute and the first identifiable environmental organisation was sponsored by the Otago Institute.⁸⁷

84. Tomalin (1982) p. 143, cites as an example of the mindless killing, the slaughter of 1,900 birds in 1868 by one highland sportsman alone. Apart from the depredations of the so-called sportsman and the equally great threat from collectors, bird nesting was a common pastime for country children.

85. For example, the institutionalised cruelty of many scientific experiments performed on animals is tolerated by more people than wanton cruelty against pets.

86. Doughty (1975) pp. 100-105.

87. The initiatives of the constituent bodies of the New Zealand Institute up to 1890 are set out in the Appendix. The earliest organisational calls for conservation appears to have come from the Otago

The important role of natural scientists in promoting conservation is scarcely surprising. No-one was better placed (except in some cases hunters) to observe the rapid decline in the numbers of certain species or to observe the unplanned consequences of man's attempts to control nature. Marsh's influential plea for conservation was based on the observations of scientific travellers, botanists, plant geographers, geologists, agronomists, hydrologists, meteorologists and foresters about the impact of man's activities upon the environment. For example, the importance of reserving forests for climatic reasons began to take shape in the mid-eighteenth century as a result of the observations by naturalists working in the tropical colonies of France and Britain, of a link between deforestation and dessication of the climate. Maps of Tobago, in the Carribean, dating from the year 1764, show 20% of the forest reserved for rain, making these reserves, which still exist, probably the oldest of their kind in the world.⁸⁸ The particular vulnerability of insular ecosystems to the ecological changes promoted by colonial enterprise in these small island colonies helped lead to the early recognition of the problem. The German naturalist, traveller and geographer, Alexander von Humboldt, gave an account of the hydrological effects of deforestation in his *Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent, 1799-1804*, published in London in 1819, making what was already known to administrators in the tropics accessible to a wider European audience. By the end of the eighteenth century it had become increasingly apparent that the hydrological impact of deforestation was not confined to tropical countries. The adverse effects of deforestation in the mountainous regions of Europe had become difficult to ignore. By the time Marsh published his work there was a substantial body of literature on what had come to be termed "forest influences."

The familiarity of scientifically-minded colonists in New Zealand with these ideas is evident from a perusal of the early volumes of the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*. They reveal the importance of the early scientific societies in

Acclimatization Society. On 30 May 1867 it passed a resolution which called upon the Government to prevent the destruction of indigenous insect eating birds. The same Society, in its previous annual report, had expressed concern at the destruction of native birds through the use of swivel guns. Aside from the Hawke's Bay Society, which in 1887 urged the need for a license to shoot native game to help stem indiscriminate shooting, the Otago group was the only acclimatization society to give serious consideration to the need for the preservation of native birds in the nineteenth century. In the 1890s the acclimatization societies also began to address the issue of water pollution because of its impact upon acclimatized fish.

88. R. H. Grove, "Origins of Western Environmentalism," *Scientific American*, 267(1) : 22-27, 1992, p. 25. An earlier example exists of an attempt to protect trees for timber. In 1713 redwoods were protected on the Island of St Helena. (Grove, p. 25) The French administrators of Mauritius also took steps at an early date to protect forests for climatic purposes. In 1769 laws were passed requiring 25% of all landholdings to be kept in forest and all forest within 200 yards of water to be protected. (Grove, p. 24)

drawing attention to incipient and potential environmental problems in the new colony.⁸⁹ This was not solely on account of ideas such as those discussed above, which they brought with them. The habit of close observation, which science fostered, also ensured that scientists were quicker than many others to cast off preconceptions derived from experience of land use in a homeland which was geologically more stable, with a flora and fauna longer adapted to the presence of man than that of their new country.

More important still, developments in science allowed them to give more precise definition to the concept of interdependence, recognition of which was such an important catalyst for the growth of conservation consciousness. At the beginning of the century the intuitive belief of the European Romantics and the American Transcendentalists in the interconnectedness of all aspects of nature had been given mystical expression in the idea that the earth was a living whole, animated and unified by a vital force suffused through all things. Throughout most of the century and into the twentieth century the ill-defined concept of the "balance of nature" expressed an idea of interconnection which had roots in the theological idea of the great chain of being. Recognition that man could upset the "balance," indeed could scarcely avoid doing so in the legitimate pursuit of his interests, induced some sense of caution, though just as often it encouraged further intervention to "correct" the balance.⁹⁰ The need for large predator control was accepted on this basis by early conservationists and non-conservationists alike.⁹¹ Those like John Muir, who supported large predators were a minority and tended to base their objections more strongly on the right to exist than on scientific grounds. Ecologists did not develop sufficient conceptual tools to make a strong case for the more threatening large predators before the late twenties.⁹²

89. See examples in Chapter One, note 139 and Chapter Two, note 2 and further discussion below.

90. It will be recalled that restoring the balance of nature was one of the many reasons cited for importing exotic species into New Zealand. See Chapter One, note 81.

91. The attitude expressed by E. A. Goldman as late as 1925 was not atypical. From the fact that man has overturned the balance by creating artificial conditions he argued that "practical considerations demand that he assume effective control of wildlife everywhere" and concluded that "large predatory mammals... no longer have a place in our advancing civilization." "The Predatory Mammal Problem and the Balance of Nature," *Journal of Mammalogy*, 6(1) : 28-33, 1925.

92. In 1926, August Thienemann introduced the terms "producer," "consumer," "reducer," and "decomposer," to describe the nutritional interdependence between species. A year later Charles Elton elaborated on these insights in his important book, *Animal Ecology*, which introduced the concepts of "food chains," "food webs," "the pyramid of numbers," (denoting the fact that species at the base of the food chain must be more numerous than those at the top) and "niche," which formed the basis for an understanding of population dynamics and helped more sharply to define the interrelationship between species, with beneficial results for the large predators. In the early 1930s, influenced by these ideas, Aldo Leopold, his student, Paul Errington and Olaus Murie, were able to demonstrate through pioneering field work, the importance in the ecosystem of the larger and more dangerous predators which humankind has long waged war against. In spite of his work, Leopold did not become fully

However, towards the end of the nineteenth century a growing number of field naturalists were beginning to question the ruthless slaughter of the lesser predators whose only threat to humankind consisted in competing for game. Their function in the economy of nature was seen to carry both benefits and disadvantages for man. In New Zealand the earliest and most persistent critic of the attack by farmers and acclimatization societies on birds of prey was Thomas Potts, who argued that the good they did in keeping down vermin outweighed any harm they caused.⁹³ Some indication of the extent of the slaughter can be gained from an article by him in 1869 in which he claimed that up to 1,000 hawks a year had been killed at Cheviot Hills station during the past two or three years.⁹⁴ Although at this point he did not directly condemn the practice, he found it no surprise that rats were most abundant on this run. A few years later in the articles he wrote for the *New Zealand Country Journal* he became much more forthright in his criticism of the killing of hawks as well as shags.⁹⁵

The full implications of interdependence, recognition of which had been growing throughout the century, did not become apparent until after the *Origin of Species* established the kinship of man and animals. The immediate aftermath of Darwin was an emphasis on competitive interdependence, in the form of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest which, as we have seen, was not conducive to nature conservation. But it was gradually realised that the predilection to find evidence of competition and instability everywhere in nature represented only part of the truth.

In 1895, Eugenius Warming, published his ecological classic, *Plantesamfund*, dealing with the communal life of organisms. He outlined co-operative forms of behaviour such as commensalism and symbiosis and stressed the complex nature of the linkages between the plants and animals constituting a community, whose lives were so interwoven into one common existence that change at one point might bring far-

convinced of the need to protect all predators until 1936. For more on changing attitudes towards predators see T. R. Dunlap (1984, 1986) and Worster (1977) Chapter Eight.

93. Farmers killed large numbers of hawks because they sometimes attacked poultry and were believed to kill lambs. The Acclimatization Societies offered bounties for hawks, because they attacked pheasants and other imported game birds. Many of the societies also imposed bounties on shags because of the impact they were believed to have on the trout population. Eels, kingfishers and wekas were also subject to persecution in some areas. Colenso and Potts were both critical of the attacks on kingfishers and Potts opposed persecution of the weka. (Potts, "On the Birds Of New Zealand Pt II," *T.N.Z.I.*, 3 : 59 -109, 1870, pp. 70 &101 ; Hawke's Bay *Daily Telegraph*, 4 August 1876) Potts' pleas were entirely ineffectual. The Native Bird Protection Society was still forced to argue the case for protecting these species well into the twentieth century. See Chapter Ten.

94. T. H. Potts, "On the birds of New Zealand," *T.N.Z.I.*, 2 : 40-78, 1869, p. 52.

95. See *Out in the Open*, pp. 47-48, 117-18, 185, 193, 212 & 294.

reaching changes at other points. By the 1890s, therefore, pioneer ecologists were beginning to give more concrete expression to the idea of interdependence in ways which argued a need for conservation.

As the focus of interest in science shifted towards greater emphasis on studying the interactions between species and their habitats, the interests of the discipline itself demanded some attention to preservation. In a speech before the Biological Section of the British Association at Manchester in 1887, Professor Newton urged the protection of New Zealand native birds in the interests of science.

I would ask you to bear in mind that these indigenous species of New Zealand are, with scarcely an exception, peculiar to the country, and from every scientific point of view, of the most instructive character. They supply a link with the past that, once lost, can never be recovered.... The forms we are allowing to be killed off, being almost without exception ancient forms, are just those that will teach us more of the way in which life has spread over the globe than any other recent forms, and for the sake of posterity, as well as to escape its reproach, we ought to learn all we can about them before they go hence and are no more seen.⁹⁶

Increasingly it was perceived that dead museum specimens could no longer be considered an adequate legacy for future scientists on scientific, let alone aesthetic or spiritual grounds. More and more scientists saw that preservation was not only in their own interest but also in the interest of succeeding generations of scientists, who must surely be better equipped than themselves to unravel nature's laws and principles. Thus, the progress of science now provided a practical justification for a concern with preservation for those who sought to conserve nature for what many would have seen as esoteric or sentimental reasons. For example, Vitalists, who felt all life to be equally deserving of reverence and those who, having fallen under nature's spell while in pursuit of the material advance of humankind or in search of sermons in brooks and stones, wished to protect especially cherished spots so that they and others after them might continue to enjoy the pleasures of nature study.⁹⁷

96. Cited in *A.J.H.R.*, 1892, H-6 (Memorandum by Lord Onslow Respecting the Diminution of Native New Zealand Birds and Suggestions for their Preservation) This Memorandum was prepared by Buller, who reinforced Newton's plea that conservation was necessary in the interests of science. The previous year Professor A. P. W. Thomas of Auckland had presented a paper to the Biology Section of the 1891 meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science held in Christchurch, arguing the desirability of establishing reserves for flora and fauna "in the interests of science."

97. The example of amateur botanist, William Colenso, attests to the powerful hold nature could take over some of those who came to study her. In his earliest contribution to the New Zealand Institute, written in 1864, he described the general appearance of North Island vegetation, with which he was familiar, as "not on the whole of a pleasing character." "Brown fern clad plains... and dark-green almost gloomy looking forests... yield not an agreeable prospect" though the huge bulk of some of the vegetable giants, he conceded, "strike the beholder with astonishment and awe : a feeling sense of his own littleness and span-like existence...." ("On the Botany of the North Island of New Zealand," *T.N.Z.I.*, 1 : Pt III, Essays, 1868, pp. 4-5. Awe was not the same as love, but this developed with greater familiarity. In 1882 he wrote: "I may be permitted to make a brief allusion to my own invariable mode of acting on revisiting those grand old woods, where fancy leads me to imagine that the trees and plants, ferns, mosses, and flowers both recognisably and smilingly welcome me. Although in my saying this I lay myself open to be laughed at rather than to be followed, 'wearing my heart upon my sleeve for daws to peck at,' I take off my hat and salute them feelingly, and so again on

The significance of these formative years in the development of conservation understanding is easily overlooked because the ideas had limited impact where it mattered, on the interaction between settler and nature, in the five decades which I am surveying. Judged in purely instrumental terms, there was little enough to show in the way of policy or legislation and even less in terms of actual protection. Nevertheless a beginning was made during this period. Protection was given to certain indigenous game birds under the Wild Birds Protection Act 1864, the list being extended from time to time with little apparent logic.⁹⁸ In reality the protection this afforded was minimal because the law was seldom enforced, much greater attention being devoted to the protection of acclimatised species. These initial moves were utilitarian in motivation, but the first step towards provision of an island sanctuary was taken in 1881, when Little Barrier Island was proclaimed as under negotiation for purchase by the Crown as a bird sanctuary.⁹⁹ Negotiations were protracted, complicated by Maori ownership, so that purchase was not completed until 1896. By this time Resolution Island had already been reserved for five years in response to a resolution of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science in 1891.¹⁰⁰

leaving them for the last time. I also take care not wantonly to break off or pull up to cast aside any specimens, and always tread carefully among the lovely ferns, mosses, etc. Feelings of a similar nature must have possessed the ancient Greeks, as well as the ancient New Zealanders, who always make a deprecatory speech, addressed to the guardians (or *genius loci*) of those grand old unfrequented woods, whenever they entered them to fell a tree for a canoe or any particular purpose." ("On a Collection of Ferns," *T.N.Z.I.*, 15 : 311-320, 1882, p. 314) John Muir would have recognised a kindred spirit here. In his many writings Colenso from time to time expressed regret at the loss of beauty spots he had known. There is no evidence that he was more actively involved in the conservation movement but through his writing and personal example he encouraged love of nature in others. As an Inspector of Schools he encouraged practical nature study and to this end offered prizes for natural history collections. For more on Colenso see A. G. Bagnall & G. C. Petersen, *William Colenso: Printer, Missionary, Botanist, Explorer, Politician. His Life and Journeys*. Wellington : A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1948.

98. The 1864 Act provided a closed season for native ducks and pigeons, however penalty for breach of the provision was set at only one pound compared with twenty pounds for offences relating to imported game. Later bittern, black and pied stilts, plover, dotterel, teal curlew, quail and tui were added to the list. In 1867 an attempt was made to protect native insectivorous birds to help combat the insect nuisance which was a major concern at that time. A list of birds was drawn up by Buller but was not incorporated into the final legislation because of opposition in Parliament. A compromise was reached by which the Governor General was empowered to proclaim native species protected. The power was never exercised. Indigenous species did not gain absolute protection until 1910. Potts, in his 1878 article "National Domains" was scathing of the list of protected species, noting that it did not even include those of greatest value to farmers. The failed 1867 initiative may have been prompted by the 1867 resolution of the Otago Acclimatization Society.

99. W. M. Hamilton, "The Little Barrier Island. Hauturu," *D.S.I.R. Bulletin 54*, 1937, p. 11.

100. The resolution sought the establishment of Little Barrier Island and Resolution Island as reserves for the preservation of New Zealand flora and fauna in the interests of science. Professor A. P. W. Thomas of the Auckland Institute moved the motion which was seconded by G. M. Thomson. It was forwarded to the Government on 16 March 1891 which responded on 22 May by temporarily reserving Resolution Island. Intensive lobbying by the Otago Institute in 1893, spear-headed by the

The provision of island sanctuaries developed as a distinctive feature of conservation in New Zealand, an adaptive response to conservation problems posed by a highly endemic flora and fauna thrust into sudden contact with imported species. The idea was not entirely novel. Earlier in the century, the British naturalist and paleontologist, Hugh Edward Strickland, who had done research on the extinct dodo, suggested that the whole of New Zealand be made a reserve.¹⁰¹ Whether Strickland's suggestion was known to the New Zealand proponents of island sanctuaries is not certain. Nor is it clear who first suggested the idea here. Thomas Kirk claimed in 1895 that he and Professor Hutton had pointed out the desirability of having Little Barrier Island proclaimed a reserve for the protection of birds in 1868.¹⁰² However, W. M. Hamilton, in his history of the reserve, states that Mr F. D. Fenton suggested setting the island aside as a sanctuary at a meeting of the Auckland Institute in 1875.¹⁰³ The idea was promoted again by Reischek at an 1886 meeting as a result of which the Institute took up the matter with the government.¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, in 1878, Potts had taken up the call for the use of islands as reserves in his important article "National Domains." A few years later Hugh Martin strongly urged the same in two papers presented to the Nelson Philosophical Society, making, at the same time, a number of practical suggestions to assist with the conservation of endangered birds.¹⁰⁵

Steps had also been taken towards forest conservation. The eventual outcome of Potts' impassioned plea before Parliament in 1868 for something to be done about the conservation of our forests had resulted in Vogel's Forestry Act of 1874¹⁰⁶ and its successor, the State Forests Act, 1885 as well as provision for climatic reserves in the

energetic G. M. Thomson and supported by the Otago Acclimatization Society, resulted in the appointment of Richard Henry as caretaker later that year. (For a more detailed history see S. & J. Hill, *Richard Henry of Resolution Island*. Dunedin : John McIndoe, 1987)

101. Grove, 1992, p. 27. Grove does not cite a source. Strickland met an untimely death by railway accident in 1853. He began his work on the dodo in 1843. It seems most probable, therefore, that the suggestion was made some time between 1843 and 1853.

102. *T.N.Z.I.*, 28 : 1-27, 1895, p. 26.

103. W. M. Hamilton, *The Little Barrier Island. Hauturu*. D.S.I.R. Bulletin 54. Wellington : Government Printer, 1937.

104. *T.N.Z.I.*, 19 : 181-4, 1886. The Institute continued to lobby at regular intervals until it was eventually granted management of the reserve in 1897. Control was assumed by the Tourist Department in 1905. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 22 : 543, 1889; 26 : 670-2, 1894; 27 : 678-9, 1895)

105. *T.N.Z.I.*, 17 : 469, 1884; 18 : 112-17, 1885.

106. G. Wynn has described the legislation as "a striking initiative, as bold and far-sighted an expression of the need for forest conservation as any official action in the new world at that time...." ("Pioneers, politicians and the conservation of forests in New Zealand," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 5(2) : 171 -188, 1977)

1877 Land Act. Though both pieces of forestry legislation fell victim to financial restraints, they were not without effect. By 1890 a total of 1,367,533 acres had been set aside as timber reserves to conserve important stands of timber, protect the sources of springs, for climatic reasons and for plantation purposes.¹⁰⁷ Perhaps just as importantly, they helped convey the message that forest conservation was an important public issue, that the State had not only the right but indeed the duty to intervene in the long term interests of everyone. Through all the vicissitudes of these pioneering pieces of legislation, the philosophical societies provided a valuable outlet for continued advocacy by supporters of the cause with no less than eight major papers on the subject in the period up to 1890¹⁰⁸ and passing reference in a number more, while Potts kept the issue before the public through the more popular *New Zealand Country Journal*. By the end of the century there was a growing recognition by land administrators of the need to protect upland regions, aided by the fact that most such land was unsuited to settlement. Timber reserves on better land had a more precarious existence. Petitions for their revocation were regularly presented by those desiring more land for settlement. By 1890, the beginnings of a less utilitarian approach was also seen. A number of important scenic areas had been set aside as recreation reserves including the Mount Cook region, Waitomo Caves, islands in Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri and a number of the thermal regions.¹⁰⁹

107. *A.J.H.R.*, 1890, C-1. For a comprehensive history of early forestry legislation and policy in New Zealand see M. M. Roche (1987, 1990)

108. J. C. Firth, "On Forest Culture," *T.N.Z.I.*, 7 : 181-195, 1874; Charles Knight, "Presidential Address to the Wellington Philosophical Society, 18 July 1874," *T.N.Z.I.*, 7 : 472-4, 1874; T. Kirk, "Notes and Suggestions on the Utilization of Certain Neglected New Zealand Timbers," *T.N.Z.I.*, 11 : 458-463, 1878; I. Campbell Walker, "State Forestry, Its Aim and Object," *T.N.Z.I.*, 9 : 187-203, 1876; "The Climatic and Financial Aspect of Forest Conservancy as Applicable to New Zealand," *T.N.Z.I.*, 9 : App. xxvii-xlix, 1876; A. Lecoy, "The Forest Question in New Zealand," *T.N.Z.I.*, 12 : 3-23, 1879; F. S. Peppercome, "Influence of Forests on Climate and Rainfall," *T.N.Z.I.*, 12 : 24-32, 1879; W. T. L. Travers, "Notes upon the Great Floods of February 1868," *T.N.Z.I.*, 14 : 76-79, 1881; D. McArthur, "On the Importance of Forestry," *T.N.Z.I.*, 15 : 461-3, 1881. Although Potts was the first to raise the issue in Parliament, he contributed no major paper on the subject to the New Zealand Institute.

109. *A.J.H.R.*, 1890, C-1; 1907, C-6, Schedule B. In these early years the philosophical societies were not conspicuous in acting institutionally to advocate scenery preservation, although certain individuals promoted the idea of scenic reserves. J. C. Firth, for example, urged the creation of reserves for the health and recreation of the people in the geothermal region. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 8 : 424, 1875) Nine months earlier William Fox had suggested the same in a letter to Vogel and James Stewart took up the call again in 1884, arguing for the inclusion of not just the thermal features but certain lakes and forests to be preserved as specimens of native grandeur for all time. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 17 : 434, 1884) Bishop Suter, in a presidential address to the Nelson Philosophical Society in 1883, urged the Society to take an active role by acquiring reserves itself and protecting them from the intrusion of hunters, fire and cattle. It was not necessary to have nature's vagaries and eccentricities to justify a locality, he argued. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 16 : 574, 1883) At this point the Society did not take up the challenge. Later the Institute would play a prominent role in pushing for the protection of the subantarctic islands, Kapiti Island, Waipoua Forest, extensions to Tongariro National Park and the development of national park policy. For more detail see the Appendix and Fleming, 1987, Chapter Nineteen.

Modest though these achievements were, the significance of the period cannot be judged purely on results. A time lag between the adoption of new ways of thinking by a perceptive minority and their influence upon policy, legislation or the actions of the general populace is inevitable. Major shifts in ways of viewing the world such as the shift in human/nature attitudes involved in the widespread adoption of nature conservation ideas, do not come about overnight.¹¹⁰ Conservation ideas were taken up by enough influential people in the 1860s, 70s and 80s to have an impact upon the policy agenda and so open the way for social learning. By the 1890s interest in conservation, though still very much a minority position, was sufficiently widespread to support the emergence of the first conservation groups in New Zealand. That is, groups whose very *raison d' être* was a concern to protect or enhance the quality of the natural and man-made environment. The role and influence of these groups forms the subject of subsequent chapters.

110. Many a good idea has languished because circumstances were not propitious for its wider adoption. Frequently it takes a major event, perhaps a natural disaster or an important new scientific discovery, to force the adoption of new ideas. The impact of the rabbit in New Zealand and the experience of importing insectivorous birds to combat the insect plagues which beset the early settlers, only to have the birds in turn become a nuisance, are examples of natural disasters which helped to change attitudes on the wisdom of wholesale introduction of exotic species, but not before a number of similar mistakes had been perpetrated. Darwin's theory of natural selection is a prominent example of a new scientific theory forcing changes in the way human/nature relationships were viewed. Though, as we have seen, his ideas were initially taken in support of the current social preoccupations with progress, *laissez-faire* economics and individualism, in time they formed the foundation of an ecological model which played a vital role in the development of nature conservation.

CHAPTER THREE

Beginnings: The Dunedin And Suburban Reserves Conservation Society

The first identifiable conservation groups in New Zealand, which arose at the end of the nineteenth century, were strongly influenced by the open space preservation movement in Britain. They shared with their British counterparts a common conviction that protection of open space and the beauty of nature was an essential attribute of civilised society. In doing so, they challenged the prevailing presumption that unused land was waste land which the law of progress demanded must be developed. They subverted the conventional view of progress as applied to land use by arguing that a progressive society required open space and scenes of natural beauty as "oases of nature"¹ for the social, physical and moral well-being of the community. The movement was less concerned with protection of natural areas from the point of view of nature conservation *per se* than with bringing nature to the city in the form of parks and trees and providing access to nature near the city for the benefit of the cramped and crowded city dwellers, especially the urban poor.

The very momentum of economic progress, which created the need to provide lungs for the city and opportunities for recreation and contact with nature for beleaguered urban populations, at the same time threatened to engulf the "commons," open spaces to which the general public had long had customary access. Threats from development to some of the traditional commons in vicinity of London - Hampstead Heath, Putney Heath, Wimbledon Common and Epping Forest, led to the formation of the Commons Preservation Society in 1865, which was dedicated to the vigorous defence of the traditional public open spaces of Britain against enclosure and development.² This Society, the first of several formed to secure open space, did more than any other to raise public consciousness of the value of protecting open space, though it was not, strictly speaking, the first to campaign for public rights over land.³ By the final decade

1. The expression comes from G. J. Shaw-Lefevre, a leading English campaigner for protection of public open space. (*English Commons and Forests*. London : Cassell, 1894) Cited in P. D. Lowe, "Values and Institutions in the History of British Nature Conservation," pp. 329-352 in A. Warren & F. B. Goldsmith, eds., *Conservation in Perspective*. Chichester : John Wiley and Sons, 1983.

2. O. Hill, "The open spaces of the future," *The Nineteenth Century*, 47 : 26-35, 1899; J. Ranlett, "'Checking Nature's Desecration': Late Nineteenth Century Environmental Organisations," *Victorian Studies*, 26 : 197-222, 1983.

3. Ranlett (1983) records the existence of a Manchester Society for the Protection of Ancient Footpaths as early as 1826 and another in the Lake District in 1856. Other open space societies included the Cockburn Association (1875); the Kyrle Society (1876); the Selborne Society (1885),

of the century, the movement's initial interest in defending public rights of access to open space had developed into a broader concern not only to protect existing rights but to purchase and dedicate to the people in perpetuity sites of exceptional natural interest or natural beauty held in private ownership. It was recognition of this need which led to the formation of the National Trust in 1895, an idea first promoted in 1884 by Robert Hunter, solicitor to the Commons Preservation Society, who advocated the formation of a land holding company to buy and accept gifts of land to be held in perpetuity in trust for the public. A decade would pass before his vision reached full fruition with the incorporation of the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. The English body was closely modelled on a similar organisation in the United States, the Trustees of Public Reservations in Massachusetts, founded in 1891 by Charles Eliot, who was inspired by developments in open space preservation in Britain. This was the first independent organisation established there for the purpose of preserving land and was formed with the object of holding small, well distributed parcels of land for the use and enjoyment of the public. Eliot was convinced that opportunities for beholding the beauties of nature were of great importance to the health and happiness of crowded populations and saw that steps to protect land must be taken immediately while it was still a possible option.⁴

The movement gathered increasing support from social scientists as the century came to a close and the adverse impacts of industrialisation could no longer be ignored. I have already noted the views of the genetic psychologists who believed that ancestral experiences must be recapitulated in childhood play and that this required opportunities for contact with nature. Urban sociologists, too, came to regard the provision of parks and recreation areas not as luxuries but as necessities, breathing spaces which would help to combat the high mortality rates in urban areas caused by factors such as air pollution and overcrowded, stressful and insanitary living and working conditions. Even someone like Adna Ferrin Weber,⁵ the pioneer urban statistician, who disagreed with those who saw "cities as the site, and city life the cause, of the deterioration of the race,"⁶ believed in the necessity of providing parks. He cited with approval the following quotation from a Dr Cooley:

predominantly a bird protection society, but also concerned with protection of plants and places or objects of natural beauty; the Lake District Defense League (1883); and various local committees of the Commons Preservation Society

4. The Earl of Wemyss and March, "The National Trust for Scotland," pp. 19-30 in R. Prentice, ed., *The National Trust for Scotland Guide*. London : Jonathan Cape, 1978, pp. 19-20; Trustees of Reservations Information Pamphlet.

5. Weber's classic book on urban studies, *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century*, was published in 1899.

6. Among those who adhered to this view were Rousseau in *Émile* (1762) and the social reformer, Henry George. For example, in his work *Social Problems*, George stated: "This life of the

Humanity demands that men should have sunlight, fresh air, the sight of grass and trees. It demands these things for the man himself, and it demands them still more urgently for his wife and children. No child has a fair chance to grow up in the dirt and confinement, the dreariness, ugliness and vice of the poorer quarters of a great city. It is impossible to think with any patience of any future condition of things in which such a childhood shall fall to the lot of any large part of the human race. Whatever struggles manhood must endure, childhood should have room and opportunity for healthy moral and physical growth. Fair play and the welfare of the human race alike demand it.⁷

In his references to healthy moral and physical growth and the welfare of the human race, Dr Cooley touched on characteristic concerns of the movement. The moral state of the city, its high proportion of "degenerates" - criminals, drunkards - was believed to be closely dependent on its physical state and, as Charles Kingsley reminded the people of Bristol in 1857, "these physical influences of great cities, physically depressing and morally degrading, influence, though to a less extent, the classes above the lower stratum."⁸ Physical improvement of the city, including access to clear air, sunlight and space would pay dividends, he believed, not only in the extermination of numberless chronic diseases, which rendered thousands burdens on the public purse, and in the increased content, cheerfulness, physical strength, willingness to work and ability to learn which comes from health, but also in the gradual absorption of the "dangerous classes."⁹ Although the movement challenged the prevailing conception of what constituted progress, it was typically Victorian in its concern to prevent the spread of moral contagion. In this respect, the similarity with the concern of the anti-cruelty movement to elevate the moral standards of the lower classes is readily apparent.

Undoubtedly, the pragmatic desire to protect and maintain the social fabric from the threats of crime and disease induced by the the squalor of the living and working conditions of many city dwellers formed the dominant motivation of some supporters of the movement. Many others, like Dr Cooley, felt a genuine humanitarian concern for the conditions of the urban poor which was not solely dependent upon enlightened self-interest. But it would be a mistake to see these pragmatic justifications as the most important motivations behind the movement. The majority of supporters, imbued with

great cities is not the natural life of man. He must under such conditions deteriorate physically, mentally and morally." Cited in A. F. Weber, *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century: A Study in Statistics*. Ithaca, New York : Cornell University Press, 1965, p. 368. Max Nordau in *Degeneration*, also saw cities as a cause of degeneration, but this did not, as we have seen, lead him to favour the back to nature movement. (See Chapter Two, note 30)

7. Weber (1965) p. 474.

8. C. Kingsley, "Great Cities and Their Influence for Good and Evil," pp. 318-345 in *Miscellanies* Vol II. London : John W. Parker & Son, 1859, p. 331. Similarly, Max Nordau believed that even the richest inhabitants of the city were "continually exposed to the unfavourable influences which diminish [their] vital powers...." (*Degeneration*, 1895, p. 35)

9. Kingsley (1859) pp. 342-343.

Romantic ideals, felt a strong aesthetic revulsion at the form of the industrial city and a deep sense of affinity with and love of nature and a belief in its beneficial influence. They felt strongly that opportunity for contact with nature, to develop a sense of love and to experience its beneficent influence must and should be the birthright of everyone. Though the movement started out an essentially upper class concern, like the anti-cruelty/animal protection movement, it was fundamentally democratic in impulse, unlike that other movement, at least in its early stages. The point was expressed clearly by Edith Searle Grossman in an article entitled "The People's Parks and Playgrounds in New Zealand."

The idea of giving to the people of a country pleasure grounds and parks as their inheritance is one of the latest developments of democracy. The democratic principle implies that not only a picked few, but all born into the world, have a right to some share of the beauties and joys of life. We have only to... recall... the "New Forests" and hunting grounds, the castle pleasantries of the ancient world and mediæval Europe, to form which towns and villages and whole countrysides might be devastated, and the homes and the crops of the peasants burnt to ashes while the owners were left to ruin and starvation; then we can realise for a moment how completely the old feudal idea of enjoyment for the few, suffering for the many, has been replaced by the new spirit of equality. Our finest parks and reserves are now made for the multitude.¹⁰

For supporters of the movement, the protection of natural areas, especially those close to large centres of population, and the provision of green and open spaces within the city, were closely interrelated goals. Some groups within the movement, such as the Cockburn Association in Edinburgh, concentrated on bringing nature to the city through tree planting, landscaping and the provision of parks and playgrounds. These are best described as urban amenity groups or, as they were more usually known in America, civic improvement associations. Others were primarily concerned with the protection of open space outside the city such as the Commons Preservation Society in England or the Trustees of Public Reservations in Massachusetts. However, in New Zealand, the majority were composite organisations which aimed both to bring trees and parks to the city and to protect natural areas beyond the city. From the perspective of the history of nature conservation, it is the role of these groups in promoting the protection of natural areas that is of greatest significance and there were many in the movement who were convinced that however important it might be to bring nature into the city, it could never be an adequate substitute for contact with wild nature.

No formal park or public garden can give either to parents or children the joys of a picnic in the bush, its delightful sensation of freedom, of returning for a day to the natural life of bird and animal and tree.¹¹

10. E. S. Grossman, "The People's Parks and Playgrounds in New Zealand," *The New Zealand Illustrated Magazine*, II (4) : 285-29, 1901, p. 285.

11. *Ibid.*, II (5) : 385-293, 1901, p. 388.

The open space preservation movement was not the only influence at work upon the early New Zealand groups. Supporters were conscious of the wider nature protection movement - bird protection, the protection of rare and vulnerable species in the interests of science, the protection of vegetation, especially in upland regions, for climatic reasons, or water and soil conservation purposes. The groups also varied in the emphasis they gave to these matters.

The very range of objectives encompassed by these groups posed a difficulty in finding a name which adequately described their purpose. Members of the groups were conscious of the difficulty and the choice of name was often a matter of considerable debate. Mr Alexander Bathgate, who figures prominently in the story of the Dunedin Society, discussed the relative merits of the names chosen by various groups in New Zealand and in Britain in a long letter to *The Press* following the formation of a group in Christchurch. He was firmly in agreement with critics of the name chosen by the Christchurch group, the Beautifying Association, that this was unsuitable. He inclined to the view that scenery preservation society, the term chosen by the group which had formed in Taranaki, was the best choice.¹² Even so, he felt this did not satisfactorily describe the full range of the group's activities, and not without reason, for it tends to suggest an interest in nature protection from a purely aesthetic point of view, which was far from being the case. What Bathgate and other participants in the early movement saw much less clearly was that whatever name was chosen, it could not remove the potential for conflict between the different reasons for protecting natural areas. Nevertheless, for convenience I have followed the lead set by the majority of early groups and have chosen to refer them collectively as scenery preservation groups, recognising, as they did, that the label hides a complexity of objectives.

The earliest scenery preservation group for which firmly documented evidence exists is the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society, which was formed at a public meeting held on 15 October 1888.¹³ By the turn of the century, groups had formed in all four main centres as well as in Nelson and Taranaki and others would form in the first two decades of the twentieth century. A newspaper item held in the Wanganui Museum refers to the formation of a Whanganui Scenery Preservation and Beautifying Society in 1885, which would qualify as the earliest group if its existence could be substantiated.¹⁴ However, the reference comes from a modern rather than a

12. *The Press*, 25 October 1897

13. Hocken MS. 606/A-B.

14. Flora Spurdle Scrapbook.

contemporary newspaper report and it is not supported by any other contemporary evidence. It is possible that the date is a misprint, which should read as 1895 or 1893. There is firm evidence of interest in forming a society in Wanganui around the latter date. The records of the Dunedin Society contain a letter from a Mr A. Martin of Wanganui dated 10 September 1893, seeking advice on forming a scenery preservation society in his district. No mention was made in that letter of an earlier society, which tends to support the view that the reference to 1885 was either entirely mistaken or was a printing error. If a group did form in 1893/5 as a consequence of Mr Martin's inquiries, we may infer that it was shortlived, not very active and not at all widely known because suggestions for the formation of a scenery preservation group in Wanganui occur on at least two further occasions around the turn of the century, with no apparent success and without any reference to the existence of an earlier society.¹⁵ It is not until 1910 that we find clear documentary evidence for the formation of a group in Wanganui, when once again there was no mention of an earlier society.¹⁶

The impetus for the formation of the Dunedin Society came from a paper read before the Otago Institute by Mr Alexander Bathgate¹⁷ on 11 September 1888. Entitled "The Development and Conservation of the Amenities of Dunedin and its Neighbourhood," it advocated the formation of an association to improve and preserve the natural attractions of Dunedin and its neighbourhood, not so much with the aim of undertaking projects itself but "to keep an eye on things, make suggestions and induce public authorities to make improvements."¹⁸ The idea of forming a society was prompted in part by concern at the civic irresponsibility of the Council in its administration of the Town Belt and other reserves, a situation which was allowed to continue through the general indifference of the public. The formation of a society, it was hoped, would help to change the attitudes of both the local authorities and the general public. The Council's record of stewardship was, in fact, far from impressive. The Town Belt was full of weeds, it was often used for dumping of rubbish, vandalism was condoned through lack of any action to prevent it, parts were rented for grazing, and it was

15. *Yeoman*, 20 August 1898; 30 June 1904.

16. *Yeoman*, 16 April 1910, 28 April 1910.

17. Bathgate was born in Scotland in 1845 and emigrated to New Zealand in 1863. He started out in banking but in 1872 was admitted as a barrister and solicitor, practising until 1909. He was also a writer and a director of several companies, including the Otago Daily Times and Witness Newspapers Co. He was active in the community, being involved in a number of organisations in addition to the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society. (G. H. Scholefield, *A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. Vol. 1. Wellington : Department of Internal Affairs, 1940, pp. 47-48)

18. Hocken MS 606/A-B; *Otago Daily Times*, 12 September 1888.

subject to attack from the Council itself as a means of raising revenue.¹⁹ The state of other important public spaces was no better. Jas. McIndoe, writing in a book entitled *Picturesque Dunedin*, published in March 1890, described the condition of the city's reserves, as a "public disgrace.... Each and all of them, intended to beautify the town, are instead a blotch on its fair features."²⁰ Improvement of the existing public spaces would be the Society's first priority. It had already begun work to improve the Triangle at the end of 1889, its first major undertaking, to be followed in 1891 by landscaping of the Octagon, then Market Square in 1895.

In his paper, Bathgate acknowledged that he was indebted to Mr Thomas Brown²¹ for drawing his attention to the subject and for information concerning an Edinburgh society called the Cockburn Association, the objects and rules of which seemed to offer a suitable model for the proposed Dunedin society.²² The Cockburn Association was named after Lord Cockburn (pronounced Coburn), a Scottish Judge who espoused the need for adequate public parks, protection of old buildings and protection of natural assets. Cockburn died in 1854 but the publication of his diaries in 1874 inspired the formation of the Association, which was inaugurated on 15 June 1875 to preserve and improve the natural attractions of Edinburgh and its neighbourhood and encourage efforts for the promotion of the means of healthy and elevating recreation for its inhabitants.²³ Activities undertaken by the Association included tree planting, campaigning for reserves, appeals against unsightly advertising, campaigns against the smoke nuisance and provision of public seating.²⁴

19. For example, in 1874 a Council proposal to subdivide the Belt for sections was only narrowly defeated by seven votes to five. (*Otago Daily Times*, 10 September 1874, cited in G. F. Vine, *Doing a Good Work: The Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society 1888-1915*. M.A. Thesis (History) University of Otago, 1983, p. 10)

20. Jas. McIndoe, "Historical," pp. 14-75 in A. Bathgate, ed., *Picturesque Dunedin and Its Neighbourhood in 1890*. Dunedin : Mills Dick and Co., 1890, p. 68.

21. Brown was born in Northumberland, England in 1841. He emigrated to Otago in 1863 after serving an apprenticeship in the soft goods trade at Berwick-on-Tweed. He settled first in Invercargill before moving to Dunedin two years later. In 1893 he became the sole proprietor of the successful drapery business with which he had been associated since his move to Dunedin. He participated in the local government of Mornington, including a term as mayor. He was a founder of the Employers Association (*Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 4, p. 302)

22. The rules and constitution of the Dunedin group were in fact closely modelled on those of the Cockburn Association. A comparison of the two is set out in Vine, Appendix Four.

23. Vine, p. 23 & Appendix Four. It is interesting to note that although it was Brown who obtained the information on the Cockburn Association, Bathgate was distantly related to Cockburn by marriage. (Vine, p. 24) No doubt the idea of establishing a society inspired by his aims would have appealed to Bathgate's sense of family pride. †

24. *Otago Daily Times*, 12 September 1888.

Earlier in 1888, Thomas Brown had unsuccessfully tried to form a society to conserve the Town Belt, beautify the city and help conserve the native bush in the environs of Dunedin by way of a motion at the Annual General Meeting of the Victoria Park Fund Subscribers.²⁵ This was a group which had been formed at his instigation with the aim of creating a park to commemorate the jubilee of Queen Victoria. Victoria Park was duly opened in June 1887. Brown, encouraged by the success of that project, advocated that the group should continue the momentum begun with the creation of Victoria Park and form itself into a society to maintain and beautify other city reserves and conserve the bush. He was supported by Bathgate, who put a motion to that effect before the meeting of subscribers. However the motion was dropped when it ran into opposition from those who felt the time was not yet ripe for a society of the sort proposed by Brown.

Brown and Bathgate did not allow themselves to be defeated by this initial failure. They prepared their ground more carefully before putting the case for a society to the meeting of the Otago Institute, aided by the arrival of the information on the Cockburn Association. This time their efforts were rewarded with success. Bathgate's speech was followed by an enthusiastic discussion. When he moved, seconded by Brown, the appointment of a provisional committee to draw up a constitution and ask the Mayor to convene a public meeting to form a society, there was unanimous agreement. A month later, on 15 October 1888, the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society was inaugurated at a public meeting in the Town Hall attended by some 60 men (no women were present).²⁶ Mr G. G. Russell was elected president with Mr A. Wilson as vice-president.²⁷ Bathgate and Brown were both members of the committee. Bathgate was appointed secretary, a position he held until 1914, when he became president, taking over from Brown who followed Russell as president of the Society in 1905.²⁸

25. Vine, pp. 22-27.

26. *Otago Daily Times*, 16 October 1888.

27. George Russell Gray was born in Perthshire in 1828. He emigrated to Dunedin in 1864, where he established himself as a merchant before retiring in 1885. He was Governor of the Otago High School and a member of the Otago University Council from 1886 until 1905, when he returned to Britain. He made many major donations for public purposes, including the establishment of a scholarship for Otago Boys' High School. He was a member of the Otago Institute and the Horticulture Society and was the builder of "Glenfalloch." (Scholefield, 1940, Vol. 2, p. 264; Vine, p. 126) Alexander Wilson was born in Scotland in 1849 and arrived in Dunedin in 1874. He was Rector of Otago Girls' High from 1885 to 1895 and of Otago Boys' High from 1896 to 1906. In 1907 he became the editor of the *New Zealand Times*, but he returned to Scotland in 1908. He was the President of the Otago Institute at the time of the meeting to form the Society. (Scholefield, 1940, Vol. 2, p. 520)

28. Vine, Appendix Two.

The strategy to act through the Otago Institute had proven to be a sound one. It was an ideal forum for expounding ideas because it had amongst its members many of the most prominent people in the community, it had status as one of the foremost institutions in the Province and its meetings were usually fully reported in the press.²⁹ The decision to use Bathgate as the spokesperson for the idea undoubtedly helped as well. He already had an established reputation as a writer, which together with his training as a barrister and solicitor enabled him to bring a flair to the advocacy of the society which Brown had perhaps lacked.³⁰

Bathgate's speech was a skilful mixture of appeal to utilitarian interests, civic pride, parochialism, social conscience and the typically Victorian attraction to education and moral improvement. Civic improvement, he made it clear at the outset, was no mere matter of sentiment but would bring with it monetary rewards, a factor he was certain most of his listeners recognised in relation to the great natural beauty of the lakes, mountains and fiords of the region, but which had been ignored as far as the city itself and its immediate environs were concerned. Having thus alerted the thrifty Scots audience to the pecuniary possibilities of conservation and improvement, he referred to the achievements of Edinburgh, playing upon the natural desire to emulate or even excel their spiritual mecca. He went on to prod the sense of rivalry between this Scottish settlement and its Anglican neighbour to the north by contrasting unfavourably the lack of civic pride on the part of Dunedin's citizens compared with their counterparts in Christchurch, who took great pride in their parks, gardens and rivers, in spite of the lesser natural advantages of the site. He censured the parsimony of the leading citizens of Dunedin who had shown little public-spirited generosity compared with leading citizens of other major New Zealand cities, whom, he claimed, had contributed generously to various public improvements. He forestalled opposition from those taking the defeatist view that the efforts of the proposed society were likely to be rendered futile by the activities of larrikins with the argument that one of the very reasons for establishing a society was to counter such anti-social behaviour and attitudes. In support he cited the general aim of the Cockburn Association which was, in the rather ponderous and moralistic words of Lord Cockburn himself: "To encourage the formation of correct opinions and of a right spirit over the community, so as to secure the existence of a general and intelligent attachment to what is essential to the city."³¹

29. The 11 September meeting was no exception. The full text of Bathgate's speech and most of the discussion which followed was reported the following day in both the *Otago Daily Times* and the *Evening Star*.

30. Bathgate's publications up to the date the Society formed included *Colonial Experiences* (1874), an account of life in the early days of the Otago settlement and a novel, *Waitaruna*, published in 1881.

31. *Otago Daily Times*, 12 September 1888.

Judging from the discussion which followed his paper, Bathgate's reference to larrikinism struck a responsive chord amongst his listeners. It was the subject of protecting the existing natural features of the city from the actions of vandals rather than the issue of urban improvement which roused the most feeling. Particular comment was directed at the devastation caused to the Leith Valley by firewood hunters and at the destruction of tree ferns in the Town Belt, caused by the practice, which was especially prevalent among butchers, of adorning shops with tree ferns at Christmas time. The churches, which, it was said, ought to have been setting an example, came in for criticism on this score as well. Nor did the Council escape criticism. It was censured for having failed to take action on a suggestion that to encourage public vigilance against the practice of tree fern cutting, informants should be rewarded with payment of part of any resulting fine.³² Public education, it seemed, was as much a necessity in Dunedin as in Edinburgh and the need was by no means confined to the public at large but applied equally to the civic authority.

The success of the campaign to form a society owed much to Bathgate's thoroughness in preparing the ground and his astute sense of what would stir his audience to action but it also benefitted from the growing concern with the need to provide and protect public open space as "oases of nature" to act as "lungs for the city" and reservoirs for the renewal of the human soul. Although the ideas of the British open space movement clearly underlay the desire to form a society in Dunedin, perhaps surprisingly, Bathgate himself did not refer to the wider movement in Britain beyond the Cockburn Association, from which he and Brown had drawn direct inspiration. However, the wider movement became the focus of discussion at the subsequent public meeting. But the importance of the open space movement lay not just in the ideas it promoted but in the precedent it set for the value of organised voluntary movements, a point that advocates of a Dunedin association were not slow to stress. The success of the Commons Preservation Society in achieving protection of Epping Forest, near London, was cited as a good example of what might be achieved by organisation.³³ Through vigorous public agitation the Society had induced the London City Corporation to dedicate the 6000 acre forest as a public park in 1882.³⁴ The success of both the Scottish and English groups provided convincing examples of the power of pressure

32. The Council apparently justified its failure to take up this suggestion on the grounds that it already employed a ranger to look after the bush.

33. *Otago Daily Times*, 16 October 1888.

34. R. Meldola, "The Conservation of Epping Forest from the Naturalist's Standpoint," *Nature*, 27: 447-44, 1883. Other areas successfully defended by the society included Hampstead Heath, Berkhamstead, Plumstead, Tooting, Wimbledon Common and Ashdown Forest.

groups to change public opinion and produce action at an official level. Supporters of the proposed society in Dunedin had every reason to hope and expect that in time it, too, could effect desirable changes. That hope was amply justified. Indeed, the Society continues in existence today as the Dunedin Amenities Society, making it not only the earliest group formed specifically to address environmental issues but also the longest continuing environmental group in New Zealand.³⁵ It has to its credit an impressive list of achievements over the years, which have greatly enhanced the environment of the city and its surroundings.

Nevertheless, public support was slower in coming than hoped for. Vine has pointed out that the initial successes of the Society owed more to the hard work of a core group of members, who effectively exploited their links with the elite clubs and boardrooms of the city to canvass support and seek donations than to success in changing public attitudes. He analysed the background of the 245 foundation members and found that almost without exception they were members of the commercial and land-owning elite of the city. A high proportion were members of one of the two prestigious gentlemen's clubs in the city, the Dunedin Club and the Otago Club and half the members of the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce were members of the Society.³⁶ A decade after formation of the Society, its influence upon the public was still disappointing but not entirely discouraging. The president, George Gray Russell, bemoaned the lack of new members.³⁷ Despite this, supporters felt that they were having some influence upon public attitudes even if it did not translate into growth of membership. In a letter of support to the recently formed Christchurch Beautifying Association in October, 1897, Bathgate expressed the opinion that in Dunedin the public generally was now more highly appreciative of the value and pleasure to be derived from what he termed "open air aesthetics."³⁸ The enthusiastic support of the press was an important factor in the eventual success of the Society's endeavours to win over public opinion. Throughout

35. In 1915 the Society formed a town planning branch and changed its name to the Dunedin Amenities and Town Planning Society, usually abbreviated simply to the Amenities Society. Since that time the protection of the Town Belt, planting with natives and campaigns to reserve, protect and provide access to areas of bush, have continued to be an important aspect of the Society's work.

36. Vine, pp. 43-49 & Appendix One. The majority of members were involved in other organisations as well, including the Otago Institute and the Horticultural Society, the Acclimatization Society. The list of foundation members included ten who were or would become members of Parliament, including a former Premier, Sir Robert Stout, six in addition to Sir Robert who would be knighted, 24 current or future city councillors of Dunedin City or the surrounding Boroughs and 11 mayors.

37. Vine, pp. 93-94.

38. *The Press*, 25 October, 1897. There is no reason why Bathgate's opinion should not be taken at face value, though in the light of the apparent difficulty the Society had in attracting new members, the possibility cannot be discounted that he was actually painting a somewhat more optimistic picture than was justified by the facts in order to encourage the new group in Christchurch.

the early years of the organisation the press gave good coverage to its activities and editorial support for most of its major projects. Undoubtedly the favourable attitude of the press was helped by the active involvement of prominent newspapermen in the Society, including three directors of the *Otago Daily Times*, Bathgate and Dr Hocken, and E. E. C. Quick, journalist and manager of the same paper, George Fenwick (later Sir George), the manager of the *Evening Star*, J. W. Jago, and its chief journalist, Mark Cohen and the editor of the *Otago Witness*, William Fenwick.³⁹

The most tangible legacy of the early years of the Society lay in improvement of urban amenity through landscaping and tree planting. Apart from the landscaping of the Octagon and the Triangle, already mentioned, the other major project which occupied the Society in its earliest years was the reclamation and landscaping of the sandhills to prevent encroachment of the dunes and provide public recreation space "where youngsters could enjoy in security health-giving ozone." Tree planting throughout the city was also a constant concern, sometimes using natives, at other times exotics. It is fair to say that much of this planting took place in the better areas of town such as Royal Terrace, Belleknowes and Roslyn. An examination of the minutes and annual reports of the Society reveals that the greatest proportion of its time and energy was devoted to activities of this sort, which are best described as urban amenity projects, notwithstanding the fact that the issue of protecting existing reserves and acquiring new reserves had formed a dominant part of the discussions leading to the inauguration of the Society.

Despite this, its record in nature conservation was by no means negligible. The task of protecting existing reserves and advocating new reserves was not neglected. Areas of bush the Society campaigned for included Flagstaff Hill, Mt Cargill, Signal Hill, Nichols Creek, Leith and Waitati Valleys, Bethunes Gully and, further afield, the Taieri Gorge and areas of bush in the Catlins and Blue Mountains. The Society's efforts towards nature conservation also included a campaign against discharge of sewerage into the ocean (1901); a campaign to have Andersons Bay declared a water reserve (1913); a campaign to improve public access to scenic attractions in the area (1906); and advocacy of improved legislation for scenery preservation (1893 and 1900).

There are several reasons for the greater predominance of urban amenity projects over those which can be considered nature conservation projects, such as acquisition of new natural area reserves. First, at the time the Society formed, Dunedin was a city which was beginning to experience the social effects of industrialisation which had prompted

39. A total of eight newspapermen were listed among the founding members of the Society. (Vine, p. 49)

the strong move for urban improvement in Britain. The depression of the 1880s had brought poverty, unemployment, deteriorating living conditions and the attendant problems of larrikins and alcoholism.⁴⁰ By 1886, 40% of Otago's population lived in the city.⁴¹ In these circumstances, it is scarcely surprising that the need for urban improvement seemed more pressing than the need to protect natural areas beyond the confines of the city, especially as the city was fortunate in being endowed with a very generous sized Town Belt for what was still a comparatively small population. Second, and very importantly, concrete proposals such as the beautification of the Triangle or the Octagon provided an identifiable focus for fundraising and publicising the activities of the Society.⁴² They also provided a goal which was achievable in the short-term as an incentive for members to retain their interest in the Society and to encourage new members in a way that less tangible work, such as lobbying the Council to adopt better reserve policies, or activities with less assurance of success, such as campaigns for new reserves, could not. In part, too, it was a result of the group's narrow focus on Dunedin and its environs, rather than the province-wide approach taken, for example, by the society in Taranaki. The focus on the immediate environs of Dunedin derived, in the first instance, from the strong influence of the Cockburn Association on the form of the group, but it perhaps also reflected the fact that geographically speaking, Dunedin is relatively separated from its hinterland. On occasions the Society took an interest in bush preservation as far afield as the Catlins and the Blue Mountains but that was the exception rather than the rule. By and large it concentrated its activities in the immediate neighbourhood of Dunedin where opportunities for preservation of bush were necessarily limited in what was, by New Zealand standards, an already closely settled area.

Bathgate himself played a very important role in moulding the general shape and direction of the Society throughout its early years. Although a keen lover of nature, he appears to have been more at home in an urban setting than in the wilderness. He took a great interest in horticulture and gardening. He was the Chairman of the local Horticultural Society and contributed a regular gardening column to the newspaper, written under the pseudonym, Mararekareka.⁴³ Through his advocacy a national Arbor Day was inaugurated in 1892. Naturally enough, this interest led him to place

40. A. H. McLintock, *The History of Otago*. Christchurch : Capper Press, 1975, Chapter Thirteen.

41. Vine, p. 6.

42. It is easy to see the greater appeal of projects of this sort for members of the Society who also belonged to the Chamber of Commerce, with its interest in enhancing the business climate of the city, and who would have been among those best placed to make substantial contributions to fundraising.

43. Vine, p. 41.

great weight upon improvement of urban amenity through planting and landscaping. Of course, a strong interest in horticulture does not preclude an affinity with wild nature or an interest in protecting it, as the example of Leonard Cockayne illustrates beyond doubt. Nevertheless, in the case of Bathgate, one feels that his undoubted concern to protect the bush derived more from a keen sense of the picturesque than from an attraction to the wild *per se* or a strong scientific interest in preserving the rapidly diminishing flora and fauna. That is not to say that he was lacking in a scientific interest in the changes taking place in New Zealand flora and fauna or that he was unmindful of the desirability of preserving threatened species. His boyhood in Central Otago allowed him to record changes in the tussock vegetation induced by farming practices and the invasion of rabbits. These and other changes in the flora and fauna of Otago were presented in a paper published in 1922.⁴⁴ At a meeting of the Otago Institute on 10 June 1902 he moved a resolution regretting that sheep were allowed to run upon the reserve at Mt Cook, consequently threatening the extinction of the interesting native flora of that locality. He urged that the Government immediately adopt adequate measures to protect the area from the depredations of stock and from injury by fire and also sought further reserves in the area including the country between the Tasman and Hooker Glaciers.⁴⁵ It should be noted that this was a very different opinion from one he had expressed just five years earlier. In 1897 he had advocated the stocking of the high mountains of the Southern Alps with game animals such as chamois, ibex, or big-horns in a paper on acclimatization read before a meeting of the Otago Institute.⁴⁶ In common with the majority of people at that time, he saw no incompatibility in setting aside reserves in the mountains for scenery preservation and climatic reasons while at the same time advocating that they be stocked with introduced game animals. In fact, it is unclear whether his 1902 action represented a complete reversal of opinion on the subject of grazing. The resolution did not refer to game animals.⁴⁷ What is clear, is

44. A Bathgate, "Some Changes in the Fauna and Flora of Otago in the Last Sixty Years," *New Zealand Journal of Science and Technology*, 4(6) : 273-283, 1922. This was first presented as a paper to the Otago Institute.

45. *T.N.Z.I.*, 36 : 306, 1902.

46. Notes on Acclimatisation in New Zealand," *T.N.Z.I.*, 30 : 266-279, 1897. Such animals, he believed, would interfere "but little, if at all, with the seemingly more useful sheep" and if "some such sport-affording animal" were established in the mountains it would be "more profitable than the slightly increased number of sheep which the country might carry would be." (pp. 274-5). With the benefit of hindsight we can appreciate the irony of the fact that earlier in his paper, which was mildly critical of acclimatization societies, he regretted the mistakes which had been made by them, stating : "Due care and consideration would have prevented the introduction of several undesirable immigrants, which now, like the poor, are always with us." (p. 266)

47. Red deer were present in the Alps a little to the south of Mt Cook at that time and if they had not yet reached the area it was inevitable that they soon would and might therefore have been expected to be included in the resolution. Thar and Chamois were not liberated until 1904 and 1907 respectively. There is no record of any opposition to their liberation by Bathgate or the Otago Institute.

that Bathgate lacked the early awareness of the problems of grazing animals shown by some of the other leading figures in the scenery preservation movement whom I will discuss in later chapters.⁴⁸ This was characteristic of his generally less scientific orientation towards nature protection than that of many of the other leading pioneer conservationists.

Bathgate took a genuine interest in native flora, including an interest in the changes of vegetation induced by farming occupation, but on the whole his interest tended to display a horticultural and aesthetic bias. He and the Society actively promoted the use of natives for planting in public spaces but the species were chosen for their ornamental value rather than to reflect what grew naturally in the area. Species planted included those of obvious aesthetic appeal or horticultural interest such as pohutukawas, kauri and cabbage trees, though pragmatic concerns such as ease of propagation also influenced the choice. Neither he nor the Society showed any awareness of the need to protect distinctive associations of plants even after Cockayne had drawn attention to this issue. Their revegetation efforts in the Town Belt did not reflect the existing character of the bush and included exotic plantings in some areas.⁴⁹

Bathgate's strong interest in scenery preservation cannot be doubted. He kept abreast of developments in other parts of the world and passed information on to the government. For example, in 1893 he became aware of the activities of the recently established Trustees for Reservations of the State of Massachusetts from a manifesto published in the *Century Magazine* for April 1893. Though, as we have seen, this organisation was empowered to acquire and hold land itself, it also encouraged the acquisition of open space by the Government and other resource conservation agencies. Bathgate sent a copy of the Trustee's Manifesto to the Minister of Lands with a covering letter urging the Government to issue instructions to the Surveyor-General to reserve "bluffs, banks, hilltops, ravines, pieces of land on the banks of rivers and streams, small areas between diverging roads, etc... all over the colony, at least wherever they lie in proximity to any actual or proposed township or road."⁵⁰ He acknowledged that the Government had taken steps to make some large reservations such as Egmont, but in general, he argued, too little care had been bestowed on the

48. Even in 1913 Bathgate was still not personally conversant with the damage caused by deer. Giving evidence to the 1913 Forestry Commission, he was asked if he had any knowledge of the destruction to native bush and plantations said to be caused by deer, to which he replied in the negative. (*A J.H.R.*, 1913, C-12, p. 5)

49. As late as 1930 the Society was still planting pohutukawas in the Town Belt.

50. Hocken MS 606/A-B, Letter in Minute Book dated 5 August 1893. In 1900 he also obtained information on a New York Society for the Preservation of Scenic and Historic Places and Objects with a view to obtaining a New Zealand law for incorporating similar societies.

preservation of our natural beauties and much might have been done in a smaller way to reserve odd corners such as were referred to in the Manifesto. He cited as an example close to home, the many areas around Dunedin of little or no value for agriculture or grazing which had been destroyed for the sake of a few pence derived from the sale of firewood. It was just such areas as these which should be placed under the control of counties, domain boards, or better still, Trustees of Reservations.⁵¹

Despite Bathgate's early advocacy of an organisation along the lines of the Trustees of Reservation, New Zealand did not have an organisation that was in any way comparable until the establishment of the Queen Elizabeth Second National Trust in 1977. Nevertheless, his recommendations did bear some fruit. On 18 October 1893 the Society received a reply from the Minister of Lands stating that instructions would be given to the Commissioners of Crown Lands to ensure that as many as possible of the picturesque spots available on Crown Land should be reserved from sale. On 19 October 1894 the Surveyor General, S. Percy Smith issued a Circular No. 267 to all Commissioners of Crown Lands in the following terms:

It has been decided that in future attention must be given in dealing with Crown Lands to the reservation of all places of natural beauty of whatsoever nature, which are likely to become resorts for the people of the country hereafter, and moreover that odd pieces of land wherever they are of no use for settlement and are capable by planting of improving the appearance of the country, should also be reserved for plantation purposes. Reservation for the preservation of native flora and fauna should also be made where necessary.⁵²

The Circular went on to refer to the reservation of places of historical interest connected with Maori and Pakeha and requested that Commissioners carefully bear these matters in mind and forward the information necessary to enable reserves to be gazetted in the terms of section 235 of the Land Act, 1892. Although that provision had been inserted in the Land Act in 1892 to allow the reservation of land for scenic purposes, it is clear from the annual reports of the Department that the power was not effectively exercised prior to 1894. The Circular of 1894 indicated a determination to give effect to the provision which was confirmed by the Annual Report of the Department of Lands and Survey for that year. The Annual Report made special reference to reservation for scenery preservation purposes, recording that during the past year a great deal had been

51. Bathgate did not consider that only areas of existing bush should be reserved. Suitable areas with little or no natural beauty could be planted and made beautiful by inhabitants of the district concerned.

52. National Archives, Canterbury, Land and Survey Circular book 81/2. The date of the Circular is exactly one year and a day after the Minister's reply to Bathgate. This is surely a good example of the wheels of Government grinding very slowly, though the coincidence in the dates is such as to suggest the possibility that the year has been misprinted. The influence of Bathgate's letter seems clear enough, especially in the reference to improving the appearance of odd pieces of land unsuited for settlement. (See previous footnote) However the reference to preservation of flora and fauna undoubtedly reflects the 1891 Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science resolution on that issue. (See Chapter Two, note 100)

done to ensure public rights to places of natural beauty, but at the same time admitting that more might be done.⁵³ Bathgate's letter seems to have acted as a catalyst to prod the Government into action. It seems probable, therefore, that at least some of the many small roadside and riverside reserves set aside under the Land Act, 1892, owe their existence to his special pleading.

Notwithstanding his recognition of the value and desirability of an organisation similar to the Trustees of Reservations for New Zealand, Bathgate did not encourage the Reserves Conservation Society to modify its objectives so that it might acquire and hold land itself. On the contrary, he was reluctant for the Society to become involved with land holding or even fundraising to acquire land. For example, in 1908, when the issue of preserving a bush clad gully at Evansdale was brought before the Society by one of its members, he opposed a motion that the Society should raise a special fund to acquire the land. He felt "it was not really within its province to initiate the movement" though it would be acceptable to administer funds and give a donation.⁵⁴ His view prevailed. The reason for this attitude stemmed in part from his conception of the Society, based on the example of the Cockburn Association, as one which would primarily seek to raise public consciousness, voice the public viewpoint and ensure that civic authorities carried out their duties.⁵⁵ When explaining the aims of the Society he was quite clear that it should act as a link between civic authorities and public opinion, allowing more rapid communication of the public viewpoint but that it was not intended to usurp the functions of civic authorities by undertaking improvements on its own account, other than perhaps small inexpensive improvements or improvements funded by the civic authority. It seems clear that he did not wish to see the Society embroiled in continuous funding-raising campaigns to the detriment of its lobbying and watch-dog role. Hence, although the Society frequently lobbied for the protection or acquisition of reserves by government or by the local authorities, it never became actively involved with fund raising for their acquisition in the way that, for example, the Summit Road Association did in Canterbury.⁵⁶ It confined its fundraising activities to more modest tasks such as tree planting.

53. *A.J.H.R.*, 1894, C-1, p. IV.

54. Hocken MS 606/A-B, AGM, 28 February 1908.

55. Bathgate felt a very clear need for a lobbying organisation. The only available channel of protest was by means of letter to the paper, which he considered entirely ineffectual. But he was convinced that suggestions or protests coming from a group such as he proposed must carry more weight than those coming from isolated individuals. (*Otago Daily Times*, 12 September 1888)

56. The constant financial difficulties which beset the Summit Road Association provide some justification for Bathgate's reluctance to become involved with this type of activity, though in the case of the Summit Road Association the difficulties were certainly compounded by Ell's single minded determination to achieve his goals, no matter what the cost. For further discussion on the Summit Road Association see Chapter Seven.

Further explanation of Bathgate's reluctance for the Society to become involved with fundraising for reserves lay in what was perhaps a typical lawyer's conservatism on the question of interfering with rights of land ownership. He was keen that the Government should reserve scenic sites still in Crown title, but his letter to the Minister of Lands of 5 August 1893 reveals a somewhat over-zealous regard for the rights of private ownership. He clearly felt it to be a matter for regret that many small picturesque sites were being destroyed for the sake of modest returns, but short of relying on the goodwill of the owners to preserve them in the public interest, he appeared to feel that there was little which could be done to save them. "It is of course, impossible to interfere with the rights of those who have acquired such places and too soon to think of reacquiring them."⁵⁷ For this reason, when the Society investigated the possibility of reserving the various summits of the hills around Dunedin but found that they were all private property, it decided not to proceed with the proposal. No further action was taken until the Scenery Preservation Commission visited the city in 1904, at which point the Society made successful submissions in favour of acquiring these areas as reserves.⁵⁸

Despite the Society's conservative approach to the acquisition of reserves, it was constant in its vigilance to protect existing reserves from the depredations of the public and local authorities alike. Protection of the Town Belt, in particular, demanded much of its time and attention. It campaigned successfully to prevent the City Council encroaching on the Town Belt for a cemetery.⁵⁹ It campaigned tirelessly, but with less success against vandalism, fire, felling of trees and removal of plants from the Town Belt and other reserves. Having been unsuccessful in persuading the City Council to accept its responsibility for controlling vandalism in the Town Belt, in 1890 the Society itself offered a reward for information leading to the conviction of offenders.⁶⁰ However, no convictions eventuated, not because there were no offences committed, but because, as the president pointed out in his third annual report, "the public generally are not yet sufficiently alive to the importance of preserving the native bush. This is evidenced by the fact that whenever an offender is brought before the Court, he is generally dealt with too leniently by the Justices."⁶¹ The City Council was not the

57. Hocken MS 606/A-B, Letter in Minute Book, 5 August 1893.

58. Hocken MS 606/A-B, Annual Report, 25 April 1902; Annual Report, 6 March 1903; *Otago Daily Times*, 18 November 1904.

59. Hocken MS 606/A-B, Annual Report, 9 February 1892; *The Press*, 6 October 1897.

60. Hocken MS 606/A-B, Annual Report, 13 November 1890.

61. Hocken MS 606/A-B, Annual Report, 9 February 1892.

only local authority to be on the receiving end of the Society's criticism for poor management of reserves and other areas of bush within their jurisdiction. The Maori Hill Borough, for example, was criticised for its failure to protect bush on the sides of roads within the Borough and for failure to protect the bush remnant at Whare Flat from the destructive habits of day trippers, whose removal of large boughs of kowhai, in particular, was a cause for concern.⁶²

An article published in 1915 by G. M. Thomson, a founding member of the Society, served to illustrate both the magnitude of the task confronting the Society in its endeavour to educate the public and the limited degree of success it was able to achieve, at least in its early years.⁶³ He pointed out that by 1915, 60 of the 73 fern species known to have been present in the Town Belt had disappeared, having been raided to extinction for decorative purposes. The very high rate of loss for fern species reflected the particular fascination with ferns amongst collectors during the Victorian era.⁶⁴ But in spite of the Society's evident lack of success in protecting this vulnerable group of plants, its early efforts had not gone entirely unrewarded. A leading article in the *Otago Daily Times* of 17 December 1892, declared that the Society had succeeded in wakening the conscience of the civic body to the state of the reserves. The survival of a large area of bush in the Town Belt today stands as a testimony to the work of the Society. It can be asserted with confidence that the area would be very much diminished had it not been for the Society's efforts at public education and replanting.

Though the success of the Society in the preservation of natural areas may seem insignificant in the light of the efforts of modern environmental groups, or even in the light of the more single minded and aggressive approach of Ell and his Summit Road Association, it was successful in terms of the objectives it set itself and it had a national significance which belied its apparently modest achievements in practical nature conservation. From a national perspective, its greatest importance lay in its role as a catalyst for the formation of groups throughout the country. Bathgate was very conscious of the desirability of a network of scenery preservation societies and took every available opportunity to help promote new groups by supplying information and giving advice and encouragement. For example, in 1897 he took a letter in the *Christchurch Star* on the subject of beautification as an opening to send copies of the rules, objectives and reports of the Dunedin Society to the correspondent, Dr Irving, which led directly to the formation of a Christchurch society on 9 September of the

62. Hocken MS 606/A-B, Annual Report, 2 March 1906.

63. Hocken MS 436, "Nature Notes," Art. II.

64. See D. E. Allen, *The Victorian Fern Craze: A History of Pteridomania*. London: Hutchinson, 1969.

same year.⁶⁵ The Society provided a valuable role model for the subsequent societies, either directly or indirectly through the influence of the Taranaki Society, which acknowledged it as the pioneer society.⁶⁶ It established that a public interest group working to improve the environment could beneficially influence civic and government authorities and it established the value of consistent campaigning to change public attitudes towards the environment. It also provided an early precedent for participatory politics which has become one of the hallmarks of the environmental movement.

Although the Society's efforts in encouraging an appreciation of "open air aesthetics" concentrated on areas in close proximity to the city, this was an important first step towards the appreciation of larger more pristine natural areas, where jaded urban populations could once more re-establish contact with untouched nature, refreshing both their minds and bodies. As public appreciation of the value of smaller, accessible areas of natural beauty grew and they became more crowded so too did the demand for larger, remoter, untouched areas, thus helping to build a groundswell of opinion in favour of national parks.

Certainly, the Society's dual emphasis on amenity and conservation created some ambiguities in its response to the protection of nature, as illustrated by its proposal to plant foxgloves in the Taieri Gorge and various campaigns to plant parts of the Town Belt with oaks and other exotic species.⁶⁷ At this distance in time it is difficult to assess whether such planting involved sacrifice of potentially regenerating scrub or areas which had already been cleared. Failure to make a clear distinction between nature protection, scenery preservation and open space preservation also created difficulties. The potentially irreconcilable conflict between the goals of protecting open space to preserve nature or to provide opportunities to meet the growing demand for outdoor recreation was already being felt by the late nineteenth century. In 1912, a writer in *Science Progress* pointed out that the great upsurge of outdoor recreation in the late nineteenth century was a significant cause of loss of wild plants in Britain. Sports such as golf, cricket and horse racing, which required conversion of wild grassland to even swards were a particular problem.⁶⁸ In the absence of clearly

65. *The Press*, 31 July 1897. There is also evidence of correspondence on the subject of the operation of the Society with the Auckland Scenery Preservation Society (*New Zealand Herald*, 22 July 1899) and the Wanganui Scenery Preservation Society (*The Wanganui Chronicle*, 28 April 1910).

66. Letter, 7 June 1899, T. Skinner to J. Burt, *New Zealand Herald*, 28 July 1899.

67. It is not clear from the surviving records of the Society whether the proposal to plant foxgloves was ever pursued but given the ease with which they spread it is probably irrelevant in the end whether they did or not.

68. A. R. Horwood, "The State Protection of Wild Plants," *Science Progress*, 7 : 629-637, 1912. The conflicts have become more obvious with the growth in outdoor recreation of various kinds and pose serious problems for the managers of protected natural areas.. Even relatively low-impact resource

defined priorities and objectives for each goal, it was all too easy for protected open space to become little more than recreation grounds for people at the expense of nature preservation, even if that was not intended. The Dunedin Society lacked such a clear policy. The ambiguity of its position was apparent in its advocacy of clearing flat areas of the Town Belt for playing fields. The potential for conflict between the goals of scenery preservation and protection of fauna and flora was less obvious. The resulting tendency to conflate the two goals had the effect of distracting attention from the special requirements for effective protection of flora and fauna, and in this respect the ambiguity of the Society's position was once again evident. It never fully came to terms with the special needs for preservation of species and so, for example, took no firm stance on issues such as the exclusion of grazing animals from reserves.

It was by no means unique in its failure to grapple effectively with these potential conflicts. As early as 1883, naturalists had complained that the administrators of Epping Forest were simply catering for excursionists and rapidly turning the forest into a landscape garden. Improvements, they claimed, had not been of such a nature as to preserve the woodland in its natural beauty but had been limited to conversion of a portion of the forestland into a resort for pleasure seekers.⁶⁹ The alteration in management sought by the naturalists was cheap: "Let well alone." It was a matter of national importance, they argued, that surviving tracts of open country in the neighbourhood of all large towns should be rigidly observed. From the perspective of the late twentieth century we can heartily endorse that viewpoint. However the task faced by the administrators was not as straightforward as the naturalists perceived. If the forest had been set aside purely as a nature preserve, the criticisms would have been fully justified, but it had been decreed a people's park. If urban populations, who had little contact with or knowledge of nature, were to be attracted to it some concessions needed to be made to their expectations. It was only by attracting people to such areas that they would be persuaded of the need to protect the forest rather than, for example, using the land to provide new suburbs with the space and amenities that the better off classes (which would include most naturalists) expected as of right.⁷⁰ This dilemma, in its essential features, still epitomises the chief management problem confronting national park administrators a century later.

based recreations such as back-packing have been found to conflict with the dominant objective of nature preservation in national parks.

69. Meldola (1883)

70. This was an issue that the ardent conservationist John Muir was well aware of. He and his Sierra Club saw the need for roads in National Parks to attract visitors, even though he himself preferred to keep to untracked areas.

The Society's failure to identify conflicts between its goals or to articulate the particular reasons for protecting a given piece of land and to identify conservation priorities was the major weakness of its nature protection efforts. Its shortcomings in this respect should not be allowed to overshadow its positive achievements in the field of nature conservation. The important reserves, already noted, bear practical testimony to its achievements. It would be quite unrealistic to expect the refinement in understanding of the requirements and methods of nature conservation exhibited by modern groups with their access to advanced scientific knowledge and the experience accumulated over 100 years of organised endeavour to draw upon. At a time when the dominant trend of the age favoured exploitation rather than conservation of nature, the Society was faced, first and foremost, with the formidable task of building a constituency of nature lovers who understood the reasons for protecting nature and were prepared to fight for its protection. In igniting the spark which kindled the scenery preservation movement in New Zealand, the Dunedin Society was successful in this to an extent which surely went beyond any expectations held by Brown or Bathgate when they first mooted the idea of a society.



Left. C.W. Govett. Source: *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 6, p. 81.

Right. W. H. Skinner. Source: Skinner, *Reminiscences of a Taranaki Surveyor*.

CHAPTER FOUR

"The Premier Society Of Its Type" The Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society

The pattern established by the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society of combining the sometimes conflicting objectives of nature conservation, open space preservation, scenery preservation and improvement of urban amenities set a precedent for all the societies which formed part of the scenery preservation movement. By and large, however, the societies which followed took a much more vigorous approach to the issue of nature conservation and scenery protection. This is attributable in part to the influence of the second society to form, the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society, which was established on April 29th, 1891.¹ The objects of the new Society gave much greater prominence to scenery preservation. They were:

- (1) To endeavour to preserve beautiful scenery, historical sites, whether public or private property.
- (2) To prevent the unnecessary destruction of bush especially along the banks of rivers and steep places.
- (3) To encourage tree planting and general beautifying of public reserves.
- (4) To publish guide books, pamphlets, etc., and by means of photos and otherwise make known the beauties of the district.
- (5) To generally endeavour to make travelling in the district easier and pleasanter.²

The public meeting held to consider the advisability of forming a society was described in the press as "well attended."³ It was chaired by Mr Edward Dockrill⁴ and unlike Dunedin, two women were listed as present. Those appointed to the executive included William Henry Skinner, land transfer draughtsman and inspecting surveyor with the Department of Lands and Survey, Clement William Govett, a local lawyer and president of the Law Society, Sidney Weetman, the local Commissioner of Crown Lands and H. Weston, probably Henry Weston, the proprietor of the *Taranaki Herald*. Office holders were appointed at a subsequent meeting of the Society, held on 12 May 1891. Weetman

1. *Taranaki Herald*, 30 April 1891. My information on the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society comes from an entry in the *New Zealand Cyclopaedia* (Vol. 6); from the Diaries of W. H. Skinner, a foundation member of the Society; from contemporary newspaper reports; and from Skinner's *Reminiscences of a Taranaki Surveyor*. (New Plymouth :Thomas Avery & Sons, Ltd, 1946)

2. *Taranaki Herald*, 30 April 1891. By contrast, it will be recalled that the objectives of the Dunedin Society were "the conservation of the natural beauties and the development of the outdoor attractions of Dunedin and its neighbourhood, and the encouragement of the means of healthy and elevating recreation for its inhabitants."

3. *Ibid.*

4. Dockrill was a prominent businessman. He was actively involved in community affairs, including the Hospital Board, the High School Board and the School Committee. He was Mayor of New Plymouth from 1897 to 1903. (*Cyclopaedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 6, 1908, p. 51)

was elected president, a position he held until his transfer to Blenheim in 1893.⁵ Govett, who succeeded Weetman as president, and Weston, were appointed vice-presidents. A Mr Bauchope was appointed secretary/treasurer and Skinner was one of a committee of twelve.

It is not clear whether the promoters of the Taranaki Society were inspired by the example of the Dunedin Society when they decided to form a group in their region, even though they subsequently acknowledged that the southern group was the pioneer society. The evidence to suggest they were consciously following the lead of the Dunedin group comes from a letter by Bathgate to the *Christchurch Press*.⁶ He claimed that the Taranaki Society was founded by a former member of the Dunedin Society, clearly a reference to Judge Kettle, a foundation member of the Dunedin Society, who shifted to New Plymouth in March 1890 to take up the position as Registrar of the New Plymouth Supreme Court and District Court Judge for Taranaki and Manawatu.⁷ This statement cannot be substantiated. The surviving evidence suggests, to the contrary, that the Society was founded by C. W. Govett. An entry on Govett in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* refers to him as the promoter of the Society⁸ and the Diary of W.H.Skinner corroborates this. Skinner records that on 11 April 1891 he attended a meeting called by Govett to form a scenery preservation society, resulting in the formation of a provisional committee to draw up rules. To further confuse the issue, Skinner, in his later autobiography, referred to himself as co-founder of the Society.⁹ This was true in the sense that he was actively involved with the preliminary moves to form the Society, but if he intended to imply that he was the co-originator of the idea, the evidence of his own Diary would seem to belie such a claim.

Even if we must accept, on the basis of the evidence we have, that the first formal step towards the formation of a society was taken by Govett, this does not preclude the possibility that the idea originated with Kettle. It is inconceivable that the two men were not acquainted, both being prominent members of the legal profession in a small town. We know from a letter written by Skinner to the promoters of an Auckland society that the initial impetus for formation of a group in Taranaki came from threats to a popular bush-clad picnic ground, which was leased on terms that required the bush to be

5. Skinner Diaries, 12 May 1891.

6. *The Press*, 25 October 1897.

7. *Who's Who in New Zealand*, 1908, p. 90. Kettle was the first New Zealand-born judge.

8. *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 6, 1908, pp. 80-81.

9. Skinner (1946) p. 87.

cleared.¹⁰ One can well imagine that this situation might have prompted Kettle to suggest following the example of Dunedin in forming a group. As a Judge, he may perhaps have felt it inappropriate to be seen as the leading promoter of the Society, though certainly he did not view his position as any impediment to joining the group for, as we have already seen, he was a member of the original committee.¹¹ It is more probable that work commitments led him to rely on someone else to take the active role in initiating the group, given the geographical extent of his Court Circuit and his dual function as District Court Judge and Registrar of the Supreme Court. This, of course, is purely speculative, though it is based on the assumption that Bathgate's claim was justified. There is no evidence as to whether or not Kettle was present at the initial meeting called by Govett. Skinner's Diary is not helpful on this point. He notes only that a provisional committee, of which he was member, was formed to draw up rules. It is clear from a subsequent listing of members of this committee which appeared in the *Taranaki Herald*¹² that Kettle was not a member of the provisional committee, but that does not discount the possibility of his having attended the initial meeting.

A week later, on 18 April, Skinner recorded his attendance at a meeting of the provisional committee, noting that rules for the proposed society had been drafted by Govett. A perusal of the objectives does not suggest the influence of the southern group, except in the most general sense. The form of expression is quite different and the articulation of objectives more explicit, including a number of concerns which do not appear in the stated objectives of the earlier society. If the suggestion to form a society had come from Kettle, we would expect him to have passed on a copy of the rules and objectives of the Dunedin Society. But despite the apparent lack of evidence that the objectives of the Taranaki Society were formulated with recourse to those of the Dunedin Society, it is not impossible that they were considered before being rejected in favour of a format that was clearer and more specific. In the absence of better evidence, the actual source of the idea for a group in Taranaki must remain a matter for speculation. But we can surely be certain that even if the example of the Dunedin Society did not directly inspire the formation of the northern group, the promoters of the Taranaki Society must have become aware of and been encouraged by the activities of the Dunedin group almost from the outset, for it cannot reasonably be supposed that Kettle would have failed to mention the existence of the earlier group once he became a member of the committee.

10. *New Zealand Herald*, 28 June 1899.

11. *Taranaki Herald*, 13 May 1891.

12. *Taranaki Herald*, 30 April 1891.

However much the new Society might have been conscious of its predecessor in the south, it soon established that it would be no mere imitator of the Dunedin Society but would develop a distinctive character of its own, as indeed had been hinted at in its objectives. The special qualities of the Taranaki Society are well illustrated by one of the earliest causes it took up, the protection of Egmont Forest Reserve, which had been set aside as a climatic reserve prior to the Society's formation.¹³ It was not content simply to take a watch-dog role, standing by to ensure that the administering authority carried out its functions properly and wisely. It took active measures to bring about an improvement in the administrative structure. The Society was very much aware that despite the sound reasons for protecting the upper reaches of the mountain, there was need for constant vigilance against destruction of the bush by surrounding farmers, who found it convenient to allow their cattle to winter over in the reserve.¹⁴ There was also the threat of encroachment into the reserve from the ever present pressure for settlement. To help combat these threats it campaigned with success for the appointment of a Board of Conservators to manage the reserve, a practice which did not become common until after the passing of the Scenery Preservation Act in 1903.¹⁵ But it recognised that even the most dedicated board of management would have great difficulty in protecting the reserve without widespread public support. Public access to the reserve was vital, in its view, to gaining such public support. To this end it was successful in having a Local Bill passed which authorised use of the balance of an old forgotten Taranaki Refuge Fund for improving tracks on the mountain.¹⁶ Throughout its existence, the Society continued to take an interest in improving and extending tracks and in providing and upgrading accommodation on the mountain.¹⁷

13. The Provincial Government had protected all the land within a six mile radius of the summit in 1881 in order to protect the rich dairylands below the mountain. (*New Zealand Gazette*, No 61, 1881 p. 959) It was feared that if the bush was destroyed this would have an adverse impact on the equable climate of the region. It was also recognised that the bush helped to regulate run-off and stream flow, too much or too little of which could be damaging.

14. An article in the *Taranaki Herald* of 28 July 1896 indicates the value of bush grazing for men of little capital trying to establish themselves on the land. In the early stages of development of a farm from clearing to grass establishment, the pioneering farmer would get by with the minimum fencing possible, relying on the standing bush to provide "shelter and pickings galore." However, bush was seldom left for shelter let alone ornament on the cleared land, the one great object "of the man taking up virgin bush being to clear all to get as many cows as possible on the land." (*Taranaki Herald*, 1 September 1897)

15. *Taranaki Herald*, 26 July 1892 & 4 July 1893. Skinner Diaries, 2 March 1892. A Board was officially appointed in February 1892. *New Zealand Gazette*, No.18, 1892, p. 403.

16. *Taranaki Herald*, 4 July 1893. In 1872 the Provincial Government had voted a sum of £100 for a bridle track, which was built in 1873, the first official aid for trampers. The first track on the northern slopes was completed in 1886. (A. B. Scanlan, *Egmont : The Story of a Mountain*. Wellington : A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1961, p. 52; New Zealand National Parks Authority, *National Parks of New Zealand*. Wellington : Government Printer, 1965, p. 56)

17. For example, the Society organised the building of Egmont's first accommodation house, known today as Old House, which was opened on 28 January 1892. (Scanlan, 1961, p. 73)

Having accomplished this much, it might perhaps have rested content with its achievements, but it would not be satisfied until it had ensured a more secure status for the reserve. It appears from the 1896 Annual Report that sometime between 1891 and April 1893, the Society made representations to Premier Ballance concerning national park status for the reserve.¹⁸ Ballance, who had introduced the Tongariro National Park Bill in 1887, was sympathetic to the cause but negotiations were disrupted by his death in April 1893. A new and concerted effort to change the status of the reserve began again in 1896.¹⁹ There is no evidence that this renewed effort was prompted by any specific threats. Most likely, it was spurred on by the passing of the Tongariro National Park Act in October 1894. The delay in action until 1896 is accounted for by the fact that the Society appears not to have held an annual general meeting in 1895.

Having once again taken up the initiative, the Society did not relax its efforts until it had achieved its goal. Evidently not content simply to follow the precedent of the Tongariro National Park Act, the committee set about obtaining information from the United States and Australia, on the basis of which it drafted a Bill which it circulated to kindred societies and public bodies for comment before submitting it to the Government. Unfortunately all this enterprise was to no avail because, in the words of Govett who was president in 1897, "a measure of this kind does not run much chance of being piloted through the declining years of a Parliament and our well intentioned efforts never saw the light."²⁰ Equally unfortunately from the point of view of historical interest, no copies of the Bill seem to have survived. Undeterred by this setback, the Society, with the support of the Board of Conservators, continued to maintain pressure, lobbying at every available opportunity until national park status was finally attained in 1900.

The Society's interest in Egmont went beyond promoting more secure status, better administration and improved public access, significant though these achievements were. It also actively sought to extend the boundaries of the reserve whenever an opportunity arose. Its most significant success was the inclusion of the Patua Range, or as it is now more generally known, the Kaitake Range, within the reserve. This extinct volcanic cone to the west of Egmont was especially important because its lower elevation added to the diversity of the flora protected within the park and provided important winter feeding

18. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 September 1897. The person primarily responsible for preparing the Bill was reported to be Mr C. F. Richmond of the well-known Richmond-Atkinson family, which had a long association with climbing Egmont, dating back to 1855. The Society's efforts on the Bill were not entirely wasted as a copy was apparently sent to New South Wales, where, it was hoped, it might be used to assist with the formation of parks in Australia.

grounds for native birds. The Society became aware in 1892 that plans were afoot to survey the area for leasing. Determined that such an important forest should not be turned into yet another area "of indifferent sheep walks,"²¹ it resolved to try and have the land vested as part of the Egmont Forest Reserve.²² The land was Maori land, administered by the Public Trustee on behalf its owners. W. H. Skinner prepared a report on the history and scenery of the area, urging that the Government reacquire the land in exchange for an area of adjoining land of equal value which could be leased or sold for the benefit of its Maori owners.²³ The report was forwarded to the Premier but no action was taken.²⁴ Thereafter the Society organised a petition, lobbied the local Member of Parliament and gained his support, organised deputations to every Member of Parliament visiting the region, and sent telegrams and letters to Parliament until it had achieved its object.²⁵ Protection of 4200 acres was authorised in principle in 1895²⁶ but it would take further deputations from the Society before the land swap was finalised. The Government was still procrastinating on the exchange at the time of the Annual General Meeting in August 1898. Govett, in his Annual Report, commented with some exasperation:

unless a little more hurry is observed, those of us who are getting on in years may pass away without seeing accomplished what we have worked for for so long.²⁷

The matter was finally resolved sometime before the next Annual General Meeting.

The campaign to protect the Kaitake Range highlighted the contrasting approaches of the two societies. The Dunedin Society's hands off approach to private land found no favour with the Taranaki Society. It was not deterred by private ownership but instead sought solutions such as land swap or repurchase. Although the successful acquisition of the Kaitake Range is probably the most noteworthy example, it was but one of a number of areas of private land which the Society was instrumental in having reserved. For example, in 1893 the Society was able to persuade the Public Trustee to withdraw land from lease on the banks of the Manganui River and, in 1898, W. H. Skinner successfully persuaded the Public Trustee to exchange land for a reserve at the headwaters of the

21. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896.

22. *Taranaki Herald*, 22 July 1892; 4 July 1893; 7 May 1896. Skinner (1946) p. 90.

23. *Taranaki Herald*, 12 July 1894. Skinner had carried out the triangulation in the Patua Ranges in the late 1870s. (Skinner, 1946, p. 35)

24. *New Zealand Herald*, 28 June 1899.

25. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896.

26. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896 & 2 September 1897.

27. *Taranaki Herald*, 3 August 1898.

Onaero River, during the course of the continuing negotiations over the Kaitake Range.²⁸ It is true that the majority of the private land the Society was successful in protecting was Maori land. In the eyes of the majority of settlers this was probably viewed as the equivalent of public land. Members of the Society, too, may have felt less compunction about seeking to have such land returned to public ownership though it would be less than fair to suggest that they saw it as quasi-public land. They were well aware of its legal status and I think there can be no doubt that they would have taken the same action if the land in question had been owned by Pakeha. In point of fact most of the bushclad land in Taranaki by the end of the century was either Maori or Crown land.

There are clear parallels between the Society's special guardianship of Egmont and the similar relationship of the Sierra Club to Yosemite in California. The early years of that organisation, which formed almost exactly a year after the Taranaki Society, were likewise dominated by campaigns to have the area declared a national park and its boundaries extended, while at the same time encouraging people to enjoy and appreciate the mountains.²⁹ The parallels end there. Unlike the Taranaki society, it went on to become one of the foremost conservation organisations in the United States. If, in the end, the New Zealand group did not have the staying power of the Sierra Club, its longstanding campaigns in relation to Egmont National Park reveal an organisation that was assertive and persistent in pursuit of its goals, unfazed by apparent obstacles and committed to protecting scenery in a manner which amply justified Govett's claim for it to be considered the "premier society of its type" in New Zealand.³⁰ Scenery preservation never achieved the central importance for the Dunedin Society that it had for the Taranaki group. It was essentially an amenity group with a strong interest in scenery preservation whereas the Taranaki group was always first and foremost a scenery protection group, a difference of emphasis reflected in its name.

Having said this, there can nevertheless be no doubt as to the importance the Taranaki Society attached to beautification projects or the development of outdoor attractions which would promote healthy recreation. It regularly participated in Arbor Day planting projects and on one occasion the president went so far as to exhort the citizens of the town to paint their roofs.³¹ It also promoted the development of a number of

28. Skinner Diaries, 11 October 1893 & 14 May 1898; *Taranaki Herald*, 12 July 1894. The majority of pa sites, which I will be discussing below, were also in private ownership.

29. The Club formed on 4 June 1892. The history of the organisation is told in T. Turner, *Sierra Club, 100 Years of Protecting Nature*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991.

30. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896.

31. *Ibid.* Amongst the tree planting projects carried out were the planting of natives in Pukekura Park (one of the major attractions of the city) and revegetation of Paritutu.

recreational parks in New Plymouth, including the seaside resort, Kawaroa Park, because it was felt that with a large inland population in the region, the Society should do everything within its power to make excursions to the seaside common.³² Amenity goals were pursued not only out of a sense of conviction as to the importance of pleasant surroundings and recreational space for the public well-being, but were also consciously perceived as a means of attracting additional support for the Society from those who would not be attracted to the goal of scenery preservation alone. Practical projects of an amenity nature, it was hoped, would help encourage those who believed scenery preservation was futile because "the bush was irrevocably doomed" to see some benefit in becoming a subscriber to the Society.³³ This hope did not prove well founded. Following a major beautification project, the development of Marsland Hill, which as a result of the Society's efforts became a popular promenade and look out point, the President noted with regret that contrary to expectation, membership had not risen.³⁴ In this respect, their experience echoed that of the southern society.

However, if such projects do not seem to have brought concrete reward in terms of boosting the growth of the Society, they do appear to have had a beneficial impact upon public perception of the the value of its work. In 1898 Govett recorded that now at least the Society was a recognised institution, treated with some respect, "instead of being looked upon as fanatics not untouched with lunacy whose sole object is to save from the axe and fire a few acres of bush which progress, with a big 'P' thinks ought not to be allowed to prevent an extra cow or two from supplying milk to a factory worked upon the most modern methods." In time, he consoled himself, "we may become popular. Everything comes to him who knows how to wait."³⁵ These small signs of success in conveying their message to the public were something to be seized upon gladly, for discouragement in the face of public apathy was a real threat to the viability of small groups such as the Taranaki Society as their declining membership figures showed all too clearly. By 1894 members had fallen to 18 from 84 the previous year.³⁶ Thereafter numbers were not reported. In the face of such disappointing

32. Skinner (1946) p. 93; *Taranaki Herald*, 3 August 1898. Other parks to its credit were Western Park and Sanders Park.

33. *Taranaki Herald*, 2 September 1897.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Taranaki Herald*, 3 August 1898.

36. *Taranaki Herald*, 4 July 1893, 12 July 1894. The Society aspired to attain 150 members. It certainly never achieved this though it is clear from the list of executive members and honorary vice-presidents in the report of the 1900 Annual General Meeting that numbers must have risen again by then to at least 33. (*Taranaki Herald*, 24 August 1900)

figures, it was necessary for remaining members constantly to bear in mind the words of their president at the 1892 Annual General Meeting.

It has been the fate of all societies of this nature that they should have to struggle for existence for several years, and we cannot expect to be an exception.... We may hope that by steady perseverance, we may induce many of our settlers to see the advantages which may be secured to themselves and the public at large, by preserving from destruction pretty pieces of bush etc.³⁷

Educating public opinion was just as important a justification for the Society's existence as any of its actual achievements in scenery preservation.³⁸ Like their counterparts in Dunedin, members recognised clearly that so long as public indifference or even hostility towards their goals continued, then public education as to the necessity for scenery preservation must form a vitally important aspect of their role. They were only too well aware that unless they gained the moral support of the public then any successes achieved in protecting scenery might well prove shortlived.³⁹ Always there was the risk that reserves might fall prey to the on-going pressure for settlement, the wanton destruction of vandals or the no less destructive forces of ignorance but it was a risk which must lessen as the numbers of those who understood and appreciated the values of reserves grew.

Given that for the majority of their contemporaries, bush was viewed simply as a source of timber, free grazing, or as an obstacle in the path of settlement, it is not surprising that the Society frequently stressed utilitarian reasons for preservation. It emphasised the importance of retaining bush to protect the agricultural industry from adverse downstream effects such as soil erosion, flooding or drought which could follow from failure to protect steep country, upstream water catchments and river margins. It exhibited a much stronger awareness of the importance of retaining bush for these reasons than the Dunedin Society, which was scarcely surprising given the greater dependence of the region's economy on agriculture and the nature of its topography. Like the Dunedin Society, it also stressed the value of keeping bush to enhance the attractiveness of the region to tourists. But it would be a mistake to attribute the motivation for forming a society solely or even principally to utilitarian aims. The members were ardent lovers of the bush who felt strongly about "the senseless devastation" and "needless destruction going on along with necessary

37. *Taranaki Herald*, 26 July 1892.

38. *Taranaki Herald*, 14 August 1899.

39. *Ibid.*

settlement."⁴⁰ For them, the bush had inherent value quite aside from its practical usefulness or commercial value.⁴¹

The discussions concerning Egmont Mountain Reserve illustrate very clearly that the concerns of the Society went well beyond the mere utilitarian. Although it took care to underline the significance of the reserve for regulating water flow and as a major tourist attraction, no one should have been left in any doubt that in the opinion of its members, these were not the exclusive reasons for preservation. "Independently of this, let us keep one place where the native forest is on a large enough scale to be seen in all its beauty, and where native birds, too few alas in number, may be allowed to breed and remain undisturbed."⁴² Another of the Society's notable successes, the protection of a large area of coastal forest at Paraninihi (or Whitecliffs) provides a further demonstration that the Society was not motivated by purely utilitarian goals. This scenically attractive area adjoining the main road north consisted of a densely wooded range culminating in coastal cliffs. However the features which made its preservation particularly important in the view of the Society were the facts that it was a favoured breeding ground for native birds and that it had especially interesting flora, being the place where northern and southern species of the west coast meet.⁴³ When the Society became aware in 1893 that the area was under threat, it took up the cause and by July 1894, the President was able to report to the Annual General Meeting that 3000 acres had been set aside following a successful deputation to the Surveyor-General.⁴⁴ The Society's concern to protect mainland breeding grounds was unusual at a time when the major emphasis in bird protection in New Zealand was to provide off-shore islands sanctuaries, a policy which has proved its value over time, but one which also tended to divert attention away from the need for protection of habitat on the mainland. The identification of an ecological boundary as a justification for protecting a particular

40. These are the words of "Egmont" writing to the *Taranaki Herald* on 5 May 1891. From the context it would appear that he/she was undoubtedly a member of the Society.

41. In using the term "inherent value" I adopt the distinctions used by the philosopher of environmental ethics, Paul Taylor. He uses the term to refer to the value we place on a thing (work of art, natural wonder, living creatures, etc.) not because of its usefulness or commercial value (instrumental value) but simply because it has beauty, historical importance or cultural significance or is otherwise held in high esteem because of the kind of thing it is. An activity, experience or goal which is carried on or pursued for its own sake as enjoyable or worthwhile in and of itself, not as a means to some other end he designates as having "intrinsic value," a description which is often applied to the third concept he defines, "inherent worth." This concept applies to entities which have a good of their own regardless of any instrumental or inherent value they might have and without reference to the good of any other entity. (Paul W. Taylor, *Respect For Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 71-80)

42. *Taranaki Herald*, 4 July 1893.

43. *New Zealand Herald*, 28 June 1899.

44. *Taranaki Herald*, 4 July 1893, 12 July 1894.

forest was equally unusual. Arguments in favour of preservation were invariably expressed in utilitarian terms or general aesthetic terms, as indeed the Society itself did on most occasions.⁴⁵

Govett made his prejudices clear during the course of a discussion on the protection of Patua Range, in which two members of the society, Mr Hill and Mr A. J. Newman expressed the opinion that there would be opposition to the proposal if it debarred mineral prospecting. Govett's response was that "he believed in beautiful scenery in preference to wealth," the sort of idealistic reply that could so readily lead to a charge of elitism. Mr Newman took a more conservative and no doubt more realistic stance, stating that "this view was right enough for those who had money but would not suit the many who were in search of it."⁴⁶

For members of the Society the inherent value of the forest and its associated fauna may have been sufficient reason to protect the bush, but for the reasons Mr Newman so clearly perceived, if they were to be successful in persuading others preservation must be shown to have practical value, hence their emphasis on utilitarian reasons.⁴⁷ Equally, they were at pains to point out wherever possible that the land they wished to see preserved was of limited value for farming, that is second rate sheep country rather than the highly sought after first class dairy land. They were very conscious that they were living in an age in which "we are most of us too apt to lose sight of everything but the most practical ideas, and to look for the most direct returns from everything we undertake."⁴⁸ They were anxious to reassure others that they were not fanatics who wished for "lovely wilderness without inhabitants, but that the natural beauty may be preserved in the midst of us for the enjoyment of the ever-increasing number of people, who will learn more and more to guard the valuable treasures entrusted to them."⁴⁹ Supporters of the Society were no more desirous of being subjugated to the whims of nature than any of their contemporaries, but unlike the majority of their contemporaries, who were dominated by a vision of all out conquest of nature, theirs was a concept of living closely surrounded by nature and in harmony with it. They were convinced that

45. A typical example can be found in the 1893 Parliamentary debate on forests and native birds preservation, prompted by a motion of Mr T. Mackenzie. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 79, 1893, pp. 262-269) For more on Mackenzie's involvement with conservation see Chapter Ten.

46. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896. It seems that some members felt there was a possibility that oil might be found on the site. No final conclusion was reached on the issue of prospecting but at least one member, Mr Richmond, was of the view that it would be harmless enough.

47. *Taranaki Herald*, 26 July 1892.

48. *Taranaki Herald*, 1 September 1897.

49. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896.

in time more people would come around to their way of thinking and it was their certainty as to the merit of their cause, their confidence that future generations would value their efforts, and their desire to share with others their great love of nature which kept them going in spite of limited membership and the often discouraging public response. They took heart from any modest gains in public support and understanding, recognising that "the faculty of comprehending, reverencing and loving natural beauty grows up slowly and gradually, alike in communities and individual men."⁵⁰ If they could hasten the development of that faculty they would consider their existence well justified.

Members of the Society understood that people would not come to feel reverence for the bush unless they had the opportunity to experience it. It was not sufficient simply to set aside reserves, they must be made accessible. In order to be accessible people must in the first place know about them and second they must be able to reach them with relative ease. I think it is fair to assert that this reason lay behind the Society's objectives of advertising the beauties of the district and endeavouring to make travel within the region easier and pleasanter, and behind the campaigns to improve tracks and accommodation at Egmont, as much as the commercial motive of attracting increased tourist traffic to the region. That is not to say the commercial motive was unimportant to them. The revenue derived from increasing numbers of tourists to the region would help to establish the worth of scenery preservation in the eyes of the public. Not that the benefits of tourism were by any means self-evident to many settlers in the nineteenth century. There was a widespread perception that money spent on facilities for tourists was money that was diverted from the more deserving settlers.⁵¹

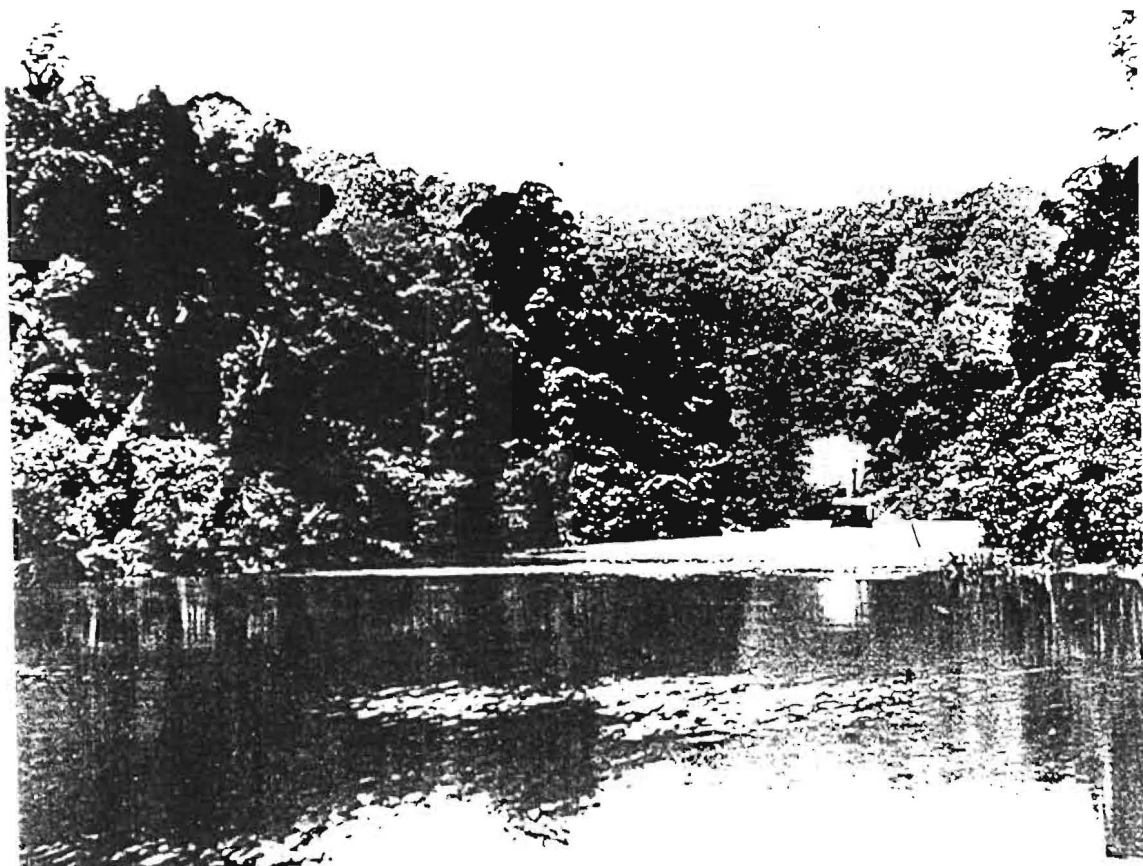
One of the Society's earliest undertakings was the preparation of an illustrated guidebook to the region. It was reported to the Annual General Meeting of 1893⁵² that the Government had been induced to publish the guidebook and it was evidently a very successful enterprise for by 1896 it had sold out and requests were still coming in for copies.⁵³ Despite this success, the objective of advertising the region became a matter

50. *Taranaki Herald*, 5 May 1891.

51. A debate in the House in 1891 concerning proposals to make the Milford-Te Anau region more accessible to tourists illustrated the sort of prejudices the scenery preservation movement needed to overcome to convince people of the advantages of tourism. Eleven members of the House felt the money would be better spent on roads for settlers. The response of Mr Tanner (Heathcote) was typical. He argued that before we spent money to make the colony a show place for tourists, we should see that it was filled up with contented cultivators. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 72, 1891, pp. 399-408)

52. *Taranaki Herald*, 4 July 1893.

53. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896. The guidebook not only provided useful information for potential tourists from outside the region but was also helpful in encouraging access by locals to the scenic attractions of the district. For example it included such information as the means of gaining



Top. Eighteen Miles up the Mokau. Photo by W.A. Collis. Source: *A.J.H.R.*, C-6, 1909.

Bottom. Meeting of the Waters Reserve. Photo by W.A. Collis. Source: *A.J.H.R.*, C-6, 1907.

of some contention. W. H. Skinner revealed in a letter explaining the workings of the Society to the promoters of a proposed group in Auckland, that many members felt the scarce funds of the Society were best spent on actually protecting sites so that following publication of the guidebook advertising activity essentially ceased.⁵⁴ Govett was a major advocate of advertising the district and regretted that the Society had not kept closely to its objectives in this respect, but he accepted the reality of limited funds while heaping scorn on local businessmen who did not have sense enough to see the value of the enterprise by supporting the Society. He acknowledged, however that the Government had taken up the role of advertising, pointing out with pride that it had followed the lead set by the Society, using methods it had suggested at a time when few recognised the value of tourist promotion.⁵⁵

Other activities to promote tourism and improve access to scenic areas proved less controversial. One noteworthy example was a campaign for protection of the scenery along the Mokau river, together with the associated improvement of the Auckland-New Plymouth highway via the Mokau. Members believed the Mokau rivalled the Wanganui in beauty and that this route could become a major tourist attraction. The campaign was waged over several years with characteristic tenacity, which finally paid off.⁵⁶ In 1903 a Mokau River Trust Bill was brought before Parliament, modelled on the earlier Wanganui River Trust Act, 1891, with the aim of promoting navigation and protecting scenery along the river.⁵⁷ The Society never lost an opportunity to push for better conditions of travel within the region.

access to Egmont Mountain Reserve from New Plymouth and the costs of travel to and accommodation at the reserve.

54. *New Zealand Herald*, 6 June 1899.

55. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896. The Dunedin Society was also aware of the value of scenery and attractive surroundings in promoting tourist growth, as we have seen. It did not go so far as to prepare a tourist guide itself, but in 1906 it prepared a report for the Government on the development of tourist attractions in Dunedin. (Vine, 1983, p. 139)

56. Skinner noted in a Diary entry dated 21 October 1902 that a deputation from the Society had been to see Sir Joseph Ward, the Colonial Secretary, over the need to preserve the scenery of the river. He indicated that repeated representations had been made on this issue and assurances given by Government that action would be taken, but at the time of the deputation destruction of the bush continued. The issue appears to have been first taken up between the 1900 AGM, when it was not mentioned and the 1901 AGM, where Skinner records that the question of the preservation of scenery on the Mokau was to be brought before the Ministry again. (Skinner Diaries, 27 August 1901) The initiative for this campaign almost certainly came from Skinner. He was very familiar with the Mokau region, having surveyed in the area between 1879 and 1880 and again between 1883 and 1884. He was also particularly interested in the tribal traditions of the Maori living in the Mokau region. (See Skinner, 1946)

57. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 127, 1903, pp. 257 & 637.

Concern to encourage ease of access to scenic attractions led the Society to strongly oppose what the Vice-President for 1893, Mr Weston, termed "a barbed wire policy" to reserves, a statement made in reference to a reserve from which the public had been excluded. He was in no doubt that such a policy was wrong. The true principle was to teach people to enjoy and respect what was reserved to prevent the policy from being abused.⁵⁸ The dilemma facing modern park managers of how to deal with growing numbers of visitors, who by their very volume threaten the values which the parks have been set aside to protect, was not a difficulty members of the Society could readily foresee. In 1898, Mt Egmont was visited by only a few hundred every year, not the thousands the Society hoped to be able to encourage to enjoy the pleasures it had to offer.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, the Society was well aware of the dangers posed by the unthinking activities of the public, not to mention the problems of deliberate vandalism and saw public education about threats facing reserves as one of its most important roles. Fire was an ever present danger, one which was all too often ~~was~~ used as an excuse for not protecting the bush. The Society found it necessary not only to alert adjoining landowners to the risk of fire spreading out of control but also to warn picnickers of the dangers caused by carelessly lit fires. It was also necessary to educate the public not to remove or damage plants, not to kill wildlife, and to understand the damage caused by grazing animals. The Taranaki public showed the same propensity as their contemporaries in Dunedin to remove vegetation, particularly ferns and tree ferns.⁶⁰ On the other hand destruction of native fauna appears to have been a more serious problem in the north to judge from the respective records of the two societies. Yet it is scarcely to be supposed that at a time when bird-nesting and shooting small birds was almost a national pastime, especially among young boys, that birds in such a readily accessible area as the Town Belt would have been immune. To this extent, the lack of concern by the Dunedin Society probably reflected a lack of awareness of the issue rather than the absence of a problem. But the Taranaki Society was faced with a problem on a larger scale than the depredations of small boys, the taking of large numbers of tui and pigeon by the local Maori for feast days. This was unlikely to have been a significant problem around Dunedin. The Society argued that setting aside reserves was of little value if poachers were to be allowed a free run.⁶¹ The Maori

58. *Taranaki Herald*, 4 July 1893.

59. *Taranaki Herald*, 3 August 1898.

60. Removal of tree ferns at Christmas time for decorative purposes was a particular problem. The Society had to lobby the Council to take effective measures to prevent their destruction along the margins of streams running through the city. (*Taranaki Herald*, 4 July 1893)

61. *Taranaki Herald*, 14 August 1899.

claimed the right to hunt in and out of season under the Treaty of Waitangi. This argument did not impress the Society, but the authorities were evidently reluctant to prosecute. W. H. Skinner, who was well versed in Maori lore, being a foundation member of the Polynesian Society,⁶² and generally speaking had a very good working relationship with the local Maori, considered that the Treaty conferred no special rights to kill tui. Eventually, he succeeded in persuading the authorities to prosecute more vigorously both Maori and Pakeha offenders.⁶³

One of the most serious problems threatening reserves in Taranaki was destruction caused by wandering stock. Those responsible for administering reserves were in as much need of education concerning the harm they caused as the general public. The first recorded action of the Society after its formation in April 1891 was a resolution passed at a meeting of 12 May asking the Borough authorities to enclose the picnicking ground so that cattle would not destroy young growth.⁶⁴ Another early cause taken up by the Society was the issue of fencing Paritutu, a prominent bush-clad volcanic dome adjacent to the harbour, which stood on land administered by the Harbour Board. Wandering stock were damaging the bush on this important landmark so in October 1892, Skinner approached the Board on behalf of the Committee, asking that the base of the peak be fenced to prevent the further incursion of stock.⁶⁵ The outcome of this meeting is not recorded but we may judge that it was not entirely successful by the fact that browsing stock was still mentioned as a problem in 1897 and the Harbour Board again taken to task over the issue.⁶⁶ It would be no easy job, it seems, to persuade those in authority to fence their land.

Perhaps it was the experience gained in connection with the fencing of Paritutu which, on occasions, led the Society to take an active role in fencing itself, rather than simply relying on persuading others. Its activities in this respect are best exemplified in its campaigns for the protection of the historic and scenic values of the many important Pa sites scattered throughout the region. Many of these were leased and the bush clothing

62. The Polynesian Society was founded by S. Percy Smith in 1892 with the aim of gathering together and publishing information on the indigenous races of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia. Later, Skinner became President of the Society and editor of its journal.

63. Skinner Diaries, 17 September 1902.

64. Skinner Diaries, 12 May 1891. It is not clear whether this was the same picnicking area whose threatened destruction had in part prompted the formation of the Society.

65. Skinner Diaries, 3 October 1892.

66. *Taranaki Herald*, 2 September 1897. Throughout the years of its existence, the Society took an interest in the fate of the dome, not only pressing for fencing, but also carrying out planting projects and urging the Board to dedicate the peak as a public reserve. In 1938, well after the society had ceased to exist, Paritutu along with Sugar Loaf Island was finally declared a Centennial Park, vindicating the Society's long years of effort towards this end.

them threatened with destruction by the improvement clauses of the leases or if not from this cause, by the depredations of wandering stock. The Society negotiated with the lessees and the Public Trustee for the protection of these sites and in return it was prepared to provide wire and money towards the cost of fencing.⁶⁷ The Maori owners were appreciative of these efforts and came to look upon the Society as protectors of their monuments, actively seeking their help and sometimes providing the labour for fencing.⁶⁸ In 1899, to help ease the financial burden of this aspect of their work, the Society successfully applied to the Government for a grant of fifty pounds for the purpose of fencing to assist them with the goal of preserving pa sites.⁶⁹ Among the sites protected through the efforts of the Society were Kairoa Pa, Pohokura Pa, Te Koru Pa, and Whakarewa Pa.⁷⁰ Others mentioned by Skinner in his *Reminiscences* were Awai-te-Taki Pa, Kawau Pa, Nga-weka Pa, Okoke Pa, Paritutu Pa and Peak, Pukemiro Pa, Pukerangiora Pa, and Tatara-i-maka Pa.⁷¹ Small though these sites were, their significance for conservation should not be underestimated. Aside from their obvious historical value, or indeed their scenic value, their preservation allowed the protection of important remnants of vegetation, many of these being scarce pockets of lowland coastal areas in a region whose lowland forests had quickly been cleared for dairying.

The Society was well in advance of its time in taking such active measures to fence reserves. The Dunedin Society displayed no comparable awareness of the need for fencing although it is clear from a 1908 report by E. Phillips Turner in his capacity as Inspector of Reserves, that both Signal Hill and Mt Cargill had suffered extensively from the ill effects of trespassing stock and other pests and would require fencing if they were to retain their value as bush reserves rather than become mere scenic look out points.⁷² The Taranaki Society was certainly not alone in its recognition of the problems caused by browsing animals. Some time prior to October 1883, Bishop Suter of Nelson, a pioneer conservation advocate, secured the lease of a beautiful promontory near Cable Bay "in order to prevent its destruction by fires and cattle."⁷³

67. Skinner Diaries, 14 May 1898; 1899 (undated note at beginning); 29 November 1899: *Taranaki Herald*, 24 August 1900.

68. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 May 1896 & 2 September 1897; Skinner Diaries, 29 November 1899.

69. *Taranaki Herald*, 14 August 1899 & 24 August 1900.

70. *Taranaki Herald*, 24 August 1900.

71. Skinner (1946) pp. 91-93. Skinner was undoubtedly the main influence behind the Society's interest in protecting pa sites. His interest in Maori history has already been noted but it is clear that he also saw their preservation as an opportunity to protect many lovely pieces of bush.

72. A.J.H.R., 1908, C-6, p. 5.

73. Bishop Suter, "Inaugural Address by the President to the Nelson Philosophical Society, 1 October 1883," *T.N.Z.I.*, 16 : 573-5, 1883.

However, the Society's 1891 resolution urging the local council to take action against browsing stock pre-dates the first major article on the subject published by Rev. Walsh in the *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* in 1892.⁷⁴ In this article, which interestingly Walsh states was prompted by a recent announcement that deer had been "enlarged" on the Taranaki reserve, he made it plain that in his view reserves needed "something more substantial than an announcement in the *Gazette*" for their protection, advocating the importance of fencing to secure them.⁷⁵ Unfortunately, his article brought forth no immediate official response. Chief Forester H. J. Matthews, in a 1903 report on forest conservation, admitted that nothing had been done to protect reserved areas from trespass by stock.⁷⁶ He recognised that trampling and browsing led to loss of some species and in time opened the forest up to the desiccating effects of sun and wind, greatly increasing the risk of fire and impairing the water regulating and soil holding capacity of the forest. He was in no doubt that effective forest protection required fencing to exclude stock of all kinds. The Surveyor-General, J. W. A. Marchant concurred with this opinion and advocated that the Crown should assist settlers adjacent to reserves to fence common boundaries.⁷⁷ Despite this belated official recognition of the necessity for fencing, recognition of the problem and allocation of sufficient funds to address it, were quite different matters. In 1905, a Circular to all Commissioners of Crown lands requested information on what could be done to prevent "the wanton and iniquitous destruction that is going on by allowing cattle to stray into reserves".⁷⁸ Phillips Turner was still regularly noting the need for fencing in his reports of the following decade.⁷⁹ Regrettably, the problem of browsing remains an important issue for managers of both parks and reserves, even to the present day.⁸⁰

74. "The Effect of Deer on the New Zealand Bush: A Plea for the Protection of our Forest Reserves," *T.N.Z.I.*, 25 : 435-438, 1892.

75. *Ibid.* The source of Walsh's information concerning deer on Egmont is unclear but if deer were released they did not thrive. At the time he wrote straying cattle was a major problem and goats and possums would become major problems but there are no deer on Egmont today. It seems likely that either Walsh or his source mistook a proposal to release deer for a *fait accompli*. Discussion about whether to release deer took place on more than one occasion, including the second meeting of the Egmont National Park Board in April 1901. (Scanlan, 1961 p. 137)

76. *A.J.H.R.*, 1903, C-13. He also admitted that nothing had been done to prevent trespass by man or to prevent the disastrous effects of fire.

77. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

78. The words are those of S. Percy Smith, who in his position as Chairman of the Scenery Preservation Commission had drawn the attention of Kensington to the necessity of complete supervision of reserves if the work of the Commission was not to be thrown away. (Circular No. 695 Lands and Survey File 290, 81/4, National Archives, Christchurch.)

79. His reports are found in *A.J.H.R.*, C-6.

80. See for example, F.B. Overmars, Conservation of Forest Remnants and Other Natural Features on Bell Hill Farm Settlement, North Westland, New Zealand. M. App. Sci. Thesis, Lincoln

The Taranaki Society's commitment to fencing was part of a wider concern to ensure the effective management of reserves. The Dunedin group was also concerned with the on-going management of reserves as their longstanding vigilance to ensure adequate protection of the Town Belt and other local reserves testifies. It will be recalled that recognition of the need to make certain that those responsible for administering public reserves performed their duties properly was a major motivation behind the formation of the Society. By and large, however, the southern group was content to take a relatively low key approach. It sometimes stepped in to remedy breaches of management, as when it undertook gorse clearance itself or posted placards warning the public not to damage native plants and offering a reward for information leading to the successful conviction of vandals, but on the whole it saw its role as that of ensuring that administering authorities committed no obvious breaches of duty. It was not unduly critical of existing management structures. In contrast, the Taranaki Society, with its characteristically more vigorous approach, actively advocated measures to improve these.

I have already noted the Society's success in obtaining the appointment of a Board of Conservators to manage the Egmont Mountain Reserve. This was a source of great satisfaction but members of the Society were deeply aware of the need for proper supervision of all reserves. At the 1894 Annual General Meeting, Mr Govett pointed out with regret that three reserves in the region had been destroyed by the activities of adjoining farmers, owing to lack of adequate supervision.⁸¹ It was a goal of the Society to have a Board of Conservators appointed for every reserve that was set aside but its representations to the Government on this issue brought forth no positive response.⁸² Undoubtedly the failure to achieve this goal simply reinforced its determination to urge the Land Board to exercise better control over reserves in the region.

The issues of straying livestock and the need for fencing, illegal hunting, threat of fire, wilful or negligent damage by visitors and adjoining landowners and the need to improve opportunities for access were not the only matters the Society had cause to draw to the attention of the Land Board. It perceived the damage caused by invading weeds, such as blackberry, as a major threat to the reserves of the region, which the Board was doing nothing effective to combat.⁸³ To help control this problem, it was

College, 1981.

81. *Taranaki Herald*, 12 July 1894.

82. *Ibid.*

83. *Taranaki Herald*, 3 August 1898.

keen to see a Noxious Weeds Bill passed. This was not achieved until 1901, though it is not clear what influence, if any, the Society's representations on this issue had on the final outcome.

The Society regretted its lack of official power to manage reserves, but once it had built up a sufficient following it compensated for this handicap as best it could by appointing a series of district representatives throughout the region, who could bring to the notice of the Society "matters that are now allowed to pass without protest, and also to make suggestions as to work requiring assistance in their own particular locality."⁸⁴ In 1900, the year this system was first adopted, 19 honorary vice-presidents were appointed, representing 15 districts as far afield as Hawera to the south and Mokau to the north.⁸⁵ The Society's limited achievements in bringing about improvement in the management of the reserves was not for lack of trying but reflected the cultural climate of the time, in which putting resources into management of reserves was a very low priority. Many still needed convincing that setting aside reserves was desirable or necessary at all. Inadequate management of reserves was a situation which would prevail for some time to come, demanding the attention of later conservation organisations. M. M. Roche makes the point that ineffective management was the weak point of New Zealand's early conservation effort.⁸⁶

Although the Society was never able to achieve all its desired objectives, nevertheless, by the turn of the century it could look back on almost a decade of activity with a sense of pride and achievement. It had to its credit a number of significant reserves.⁸⁷ It could point to the formation of groups in other centres, inspired by the example it had set, so that it was somewhat closer to its dream of a network of affiliated societies able to assert colony-wide influence.⁸⁸ Although membership of the society never reached the levels it aspired to attain, members were drawn from throughout the region as we have seen. Moreover, the public was taking a growing interest in its work. W. H. Skinner, reflecting on the Society's achievements at the 1899 Annual General Meeting,

84. *Taranaki Herald*, 24 August 1900.

85. *Ibid.*

86. See *The Origins and Evolution of Scenic Reserves in New Zealand*. M.A. Thesis (Geography) University of Canterbury, 1979.

87. The Society's list of achievements in conservation, in addition to those mentioned previously, include Everett Road Reserve (referred to in modern guides as containing some of the best bush in Taranaki), the Meeting of the Waters Reserve, Ratapihipihi Reserve (50 acres), 4-5000 acres at Mt Messenger, and the headwaters of the Urenui river.

88. *Taranaki Herald*, 12 July 1894. See the following chapter for discussion of the groups inspired by the Society.

felt it had been successful in its two primary reasons for existence, the actual preservation of scenery and the education of public opinion as to the need for this.⁸⁹ As evidence of the growth in public awareness, he cited the example of the leading citizens of the Urenui district who had taken the initiative to securely fence and preserve the bush around the great Pohokura Pa.⁹⁰

The Society was also enjoying a growing influence at an official level. From the outset it had developed a good working relationship with the local Land Board and members of the Lands and Survey Department, no doubt helped by the fact that several prominent members of the Department were also active members of the Society. I have already noted that W. H. Skinner was employed in the Survey Branch of the Department as Lands Transfer Draughtsman and Inspecting Surveyor and that S. Weetman, the first president of the Society, was the local Commissioner of Crown Lands (and hence Chairman of the Land Board). At the Annual General meeting following his departure, he was described as "a most indefatigable member and office bearer who had been of great service in furthering the objects of the society."⁹¹ Two subsequent Commissioners of Crown Lands, J. Strauchon and F. Simpson, were also on the executive of the Society.⁹² Clearly, there was a commitment to the cause at the highest level of the Taranaki Land Office. This involvement of high level public servants was a notable feature of the early conservation movement in New Zealand. It was by no means unique to Taranaki and, in fact, continued to be widespread until recently. But such involvement is inimical to the new image of the public servant fostered by the restructuring of the 1980s, with its emphasis on performance, competition and profit, and has been actively discouraged. Yet had the current attitude prevailed in the nineteenth century, it is doubtful whether the conservation movement could have achieved as much as it did. Certainly, in Taranaki, the active involvement of men who not only had knowledge of the land and its capabilities but also of the workings of the departments responsible for its administration, played an important part in the Society's success.

The Society always freely acknowledged the support it received from the Department of Lands and Survey and the Land Board and it is undoubtedly the case that without their

89. *Taranaki Herald*, 12 August 1899.

90. *Ibid.* The Society negotiated with the Public Trustee on behalf of the settlers in this matter.

91. *Taranaki Herald*, 1 July 1893. Weetman evidently continued his good work for the cause in Marlborough, for Skinner, who succeeded him there in 1911, noted that many important reserves had been set aside by the previous Commissioner of Crown Lands.

92. *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 6, 1908, p. 77; *Taranaki Herald*, 24 August 1900. Strauchon was Commissioner of Crown Lands in Taranaki from 1894 to 1902, when he was transferred to Wellington. In 1912 he became the Under Secretary of Crown Lands.

good will the Society would have been less successful in its efforts to set aside reserves. But the relationship was surely mutually beneficial. At each Annual General Meeting the Society publicly commended the work of the Board, presenting an account of the areas reserved by it during the preceding year and the figures were often impressive.⁹³ Although it is clear from the records of the Society and the evidence of Skinner's Diaries that a number of these areas resulted from the initiative of the Society, certainly not all of them can be attributed to the activities of the group. The Board itself had an established policy of setting aside forest reserves and areas of importance for protecting climatic conditions. Furthermore, the Society's 1892 Annual Report recorded that during the past three years (that is, for two years preceding the formation of the Society) the Board had made a practice of reserving stream margins.⁹⁴ Given the widespread unpopularity amongst potential settlers of measures to set aside forest, the Board no doubt welcomed the support the Society was able to provide for its endeavours through its public endorsement of the Board's achievements and through its efforts to raise public consciousness of the need for reserves.⁹⁵ Evidence of the goodwill between the two bodies and of the respect that the Board had for the work of the Society is shown by the fact that the Board from time to time sought the opinion of the Society on matters pertaining to existing reserves, such as quarrying applications. For example, in 1899 it referred to the Society for its view on an application to work clay deposits on the Patua Range.⁹⁶

The Society had also made its mark felt at the head office level of the Lands and Survey Department. Between July 1893 and July 1894, it had been in communication with the Surveyor-General, S. Percy Smith, concerning reservation of the bush at Paraninihi. In October 1894 the Surveyor-General issued Circular 267 on the subject of Scenery Preservation to all Commissioners of Crown Land, urging them to have regard to the need reserve areas of natural beauty when dealing with Crown lands. The relationship between this Circular and the work of the Dunedin Society has already been discussed and it is clear that Percy Smith was personally sympathetic to the cause. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that his awareness of the activities of both groups helped strengthen his view of the need for the Department to take more active measures to

93. The figures were as follows: 1892, 1,694 acres; 1893, not recorded; 1894, 10,160 acres; 1895, no AGM; 1896, 1,759 acres; 1897, 1,896 acres; 1898, 6,009 acres; 1899, 12,675 acres; 1900, 52,128 acres. The figures were not usually broken down into category of reserve although many were forest reserves.

94. *Taranaki Herald*, 26 July 1892.

95. By far the majority of petitions directed to the Land Committee of the House during the period in question came from settlers seeking to have reserves revoked and the land opened for settlement.

96. Skinner Diaries, 29 August 1899. After much discussion the Society decided to recommend that the Board grant the request but under stringent conditions as to the preservation of the bush.

promote scenery preservation than hitherto.⁹⁷ The influence of the Taranaki Society can be seen more specifically in relation to the requirement, also contained in Circular 267, for Commissioners of Crown Land to have regard for the protection of places of historical interest connected with both Maori and Europeans. However, this also reflected Percy Smith's own interests. He was an active member of the Polynesian Society which, among other things, advocated the preservation of Pa sites, although in this it followed the lead already set by the Taranaki group, a fact which must have been well known to Percy Smith through his acquaintance with Skinner as fellow members of the Polynesian Society.

Not the least cause of satisfaction to the Society was the Government's growing acknowledgement of its work. The Government could scarcely have remained ignorant of the Society's existence for long. Its formation was widely reported in the press and, as we have seen, it quickly launched into vigorous lobbying of Government over the various matters relating to administration of Egmont Reserve and extension of its boundaries to include the Patua Range. In later years the Society sometimes adopted the policy of having its annual report printed and a copy sent to the Premier.⁹⁸ Although the Society had not always been successful in obtaining all it had sought from the Government, it felt it had been treated fairly and well.⁹⁹

By 1899 there was evidence that the Government was paying increasing attention to the need for scenery preservation. It is tempting to see the formation of the Society in 1891, together with the earlier formation of the Dunedin Society, as lying behind the Government's decision to introduce provision in the Land Act 1892 for the setting aside of scenery preservation reserves. The surviving records do not reveal what prompted the inclusion of this provision. The representations of the philosophical societies on the issue of off-shore island sanctuaries around the same time and the appointment of Percy Smith as Surveyor General in 1889 are other possible influences. It is an impossibility to unravel the precise extent of the various influences operating upon a government at any given time, but it is inconceivable that the Government was not to some extent influenced by the Society in its growing recognition of the need for scenery preservation, whether through direct lobbying or through the pressure of changing public opinion, which the Society did so much to foster.

97. When Percy Smith retired in 1900, he returned to New Plymouth where he became a member of the Scenery Preservation Society.

98. *Taranaki Herald*, 24 August 1900.

99. *New Zealand Herald*, 28 June 1899.

Though the link between the Society and the 1892 Land Act must remain purely speculative, there is evidence that it had a more significant impact upon the Scenery Preservation Act of 1903, the culmination of that first tentative step taken in 1892, than has hitherto been recognised. In April 1899 a deputation from the Society appeared before Premier Seddon to discuss, among other things, the issue of granting financial aid to societies such as theirs, to enable them to acquire land. Seddon is reported to have indicated a willingness at that time to entertain the idea of granting the societies powers to acquire land under the Public Works Act.¹⁰⁰ Nothing had resulted from the deputation when the Society met for its Annual General Meeting in August, so the Committee forwarded a resolution to the Government asking it to incorporate societies such as theirs and to grant them the powers discussed by Seddon.¹⁰¹ It seems the Society had reservations about the likelihood of its success with the resolution because it sought the co-operation of kindred societies to lobby the Government to obtain subsidies for scenery preservation groups such as theirs.¹⁰² In the meantime, Seddon evidently thought better of granting power to acquire land directly to scenery preservation groups. The powers sought by the Society were not granted. The Government subsequently adopted the approach of establishing a Scenery Preservation Commission with the power to recommend to Government land that should be acquired, with a fixed vote per annum to fund the purchases. However, it seems fair to assume that the Society's efforts to gain Government assistance for scenery preservation societies helped to move Government thinking forward on the need to deal with the issue of scenery preservation in a more thoroughgoing manner. The Society's influence was acknowledged in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*. An entry on the Society states:

the operations of the Society have helped also to bring about the setting up of a commission, which may end in the establishment of a Government Scenery Department.¹⁰³

In any event, it is clear that by the time the well-known scenery preservation advocate, Harry Ell, brought the issue to the fore in Parliament the Government was already under considerable pressure to act in the matter of scenery preservation from the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society and other kindred societies.

100. *Taranaki Herald*, 14 August 1899.

101. *Ibid.* The following year the Dunedin Society also sought incorporation.

102. The monthly meeting of the Auckland Scenery Conservation Society held at the beginning of October 1899, records receiving such a letter from the Taranaki Society. (*New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1899) Although I have found no record of a letter to other societies it seems reasonable to assume, given the content of the letter, that a similar letter would have been sent to other groups.

103. *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 6, 1908, pp. 76-77. This may represent an element of self publication rather than a widely held opinion as the entries were submitted by the individuals concerned. Certainly it is clear that members of the Society perceived that it had influenced the outcome.

By the time the Scenery Preservation Act was passed in 1903, the Society had admirably fulfilled the faith of the founders of the earlier Dunedin Society and its own founders that strength lies in combination, that no single individual can hope to succeed like a representative body in directing public opinion. Nevertheless, behind the distinctive achievements of the Taranaki Society, it is not hard to discern the major influence of W. H. Skinner. The evidence of his Diaries and the Annual Reports of the Society suggest that he was responsible for recommending the majority of the sites the Society was successful in having reserved and that he carried out all necessary negotiations with the Public Trustee. We have already seen that he prepared the report outlining the reasons for protection of the Patua Range. In view of the key role he played in the Society, his career is worth examining in greater detail.

Skinner was born in Taranaki in 1857, and has the distinction of being the first major New Zealand born conservationist, if rather less well known than Harry Ell.¹⁰⁴ He began his career as a surveying cadet in 1872. During more than a decade in the field, he had the opportunity to explore the region extensively, gaining a breadth and depth of knowledge of the landscape equalled by few. In 1888, for reasons of health, he transferred to office work as Land Transfer Draughtsman and Inspecting Surveyor. This change, which allowed his participation in community affairs, was providential for the development of nature conservation in New Zealand, but it was during his long years in the field that he developed the deep and abiding love of the bush which can only come from the trials and exhilaration of intimate acquaintance with the wilderness in all types of conditions. His thorough familiarity with the landscape, gained at a time when it was undergoing rapid and massive changes, meant that he was ideally placed to recommend sites suitable for protection. His long working career within the Lands and Survey Department gave him a familiarity with land administration in the region which he was able to exploit effectively to further the objects of the Society. Not only was he able to make the right contacts, but his position as surveyor and the knowledge of suitability of land for various uses which that entailed, gave his arguments for preservation a stamp of authority which they would have lacked in coming simply from a lawyer, as Govett was. That same familiarity with the land also allowed him to suggest suitable sites for land swaps. Perhaps most important of all, it placed him in a position to find out what areas of land were threatened with development in sufficient time to initiate action for their protection. His influence on the issue of preserving pa sites has already been noted. The Society's concern to protect native birds, in particular its efforts to secure important breeding grounds, its sophisticated awareness of

104. Sir Walter Buller has seniority over Skinner by age, but I do not believe he can be considered such an important conservationist.

differing criteria for reservation and of the problems associated with inadequate supervision of reserves, all owed much to the special interests of Skinner.

Many of the differences between the Taranaki Society and its southern predecessor can, I believe, be attributed to the differences in background, interests and personality of Skinner and Bathgate. However, there were other social and geographical factors at work as well. I have already mentioned the dependence of Taranaki on agriculture and the influence of the topography of the region in helping the settlers to a comparatively early recognition of the importance of preservation. The devastating fires which struck the region between 1885 and 1886 must have helped to impress upon members of the Society the vulnerability of the bush, the need to protect the remnants and the vital importance of managing reserves.¹⁰⁵ The regional scope of the group was influenced by the much smaller scale of New Plymouth, which was very open to its hinterland. The proximity of the mountain to the town made it a natural target of preservation activity. More significantly, its topographical dominance helped to define a strong sense of regional identity which made it natural that the activities of the group should extend beyond the immediate vicinity of New Plymouth. The serious urban amenity problems which afflicted Dunedin as a result of its greater population and much higher level of industrialisation do not appear to have been a problem in New Plymouth, which no doubt helps to explain the greater emphasis on scenery preservation than urban improvement. The special interest of the Society in the preservation of Maori pa may owe something to an emerging sense of Pakeha guilt as a consequence of the Government treatment of the Maori in the region during the land wars of the 1860s and their aftermath.

In emphasising the importance of Skinner I do not wish to downplay the importance of other members of the Society. While he was clearly a dominant intellectual influence on the Society and a hard working member of the executive, the Society could not have been a success without the efforts of the core group of members. Two whose contributions deserve special mention are its founder and long serving president, Govett, whose social prominence as lawyer, secretary of the Law Society and a committee member of the Chamber of Commerce helped to boost the public profile of the Society, and the equally long serving secretary /treasurer, W.A.Collis, whose position as a city councillor gave the Society an effective voice in that arena. Like the Dunedin Society, members included some of the most prominent citizens of New Plymouth; leading businessmen, company directors and several members of the legal profession. I have already mentioned the Mayor from 1897-1903, E. Dockrill, and the

105. For an account of the disastrous fires in Taranaki during the mid-1880s, see Rollo Arnold, *New Zealand's Burning: The Settler's World in the Mid-1880s*. Wellington : Victoria University Press, 1994.

proprietor of the *Taranaki Herald*, H. Weston. The man who can probably be considered the founding father of New Plymouth, Frederic Carrington, was also a member. He first came to Taranaki as surveyor for the New Zealand Company in 1841 and was subsequently government engineer and surveyor for the region. He was provincial superintendent from 1869 until the abolition of the provinces.¹⁰⁶ When the Society formed he was already in his 80s so not surprisingly, he does not appear to have played a very active role, but his support alone must have helped to boost the Society's public profile. In contrast with the Dunedin Society, in its later years the group also included a number of farmers and small businessmen from the outlying districts of the region.

It is not clear when the Society ceased to exist, but to judge from the absence of newspaper reports on its activities after the turn of the century, it began to lose vigour from that time. An undated clipping in the archives of W. W. Smith, one of the Scenery Preservation Commissioners under the 1903 Act, records that the Secretary of the Society, Mr W. A. Collis represented the Society before the Commission when it visited New Plymouth.¹⁰⁷ That meeting probably took place in February 1906. The Report of the Commission for the year records a meeting in New Plymouth from 16 to 24 February.¹⁰⁸ Further reference is made to the Society in a report of the Scenery Preservation Board for the year 1908.¹⁰⁹ An entry on the Society in the Taranaki volume of the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, published in 1908, confirms that it was still functioning then.¹¹⁰ However, by 1913 the Society appears to have been defunct. When the Forestry Commission visited New Plymouth that year there is no record that anyone representing the Society gave evidence although the Chairman of a group named the New Plymouth Expansion and Tourist League spoke on the need to reserve the scenery of the Mokau River, an issue, which, as we have seen, had long been of interest to the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society.¹¹¹ It seems probable that by this date the Tourist League had taken over the role of the Society and continued some aspects of its work.

106. W. H. Oliver, ed., *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, Volume One, 1769-1869*. Wellington : Allen & Unwin and the Department of Internal Affairs, 1990, pp. 72-73. Hereafter cited as *DNZB*.

107. Taranaki Museum, MS 046/2, Box 3.

108. *A.J.H.R.*, 1906, C-6. I have found no account of the visit in the press.

109. *A.J.H.R.*, 1908, C-6, p. 10. The report refers to the offer by a Mr Street of 25 perches as a historic reserve, made through the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society.

110. *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 6, 1908, pp. 76-77.

111. *A.J.H.R.*, C-12, 1913. Both Govett and Collis gave evidence before the Commission, Govett on his own behalf and Collis representing the Egmont Park Board.

The reasons for the decline of the Society are not clear although they are perhaps not hard to seek. The transfer of Skinner to Blenheim in 1911 removed the most active member, but the decline, it seems, had already set in. With the passing of the Scenery Preservation Act we may speculate that the missionary zeal, which had for so long sustained the group, began to waiver now that there was a government agency to continue the work it had so ably begun. The formation of the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Board in 1915, one of several established throughout the country under the Scenery Preservation Act to administer specific reserves, thus providing an official organisation to carry out many of the functions the Society had long laboured to achieve, must surely have finally sealed the Society's fate, if it was not already defunct by then. In a sense, the Society can be seen as continuing through the Board because two of its four members had been members of the Scenery Preservation Society, W. A. Collis and S. Percy Smith.

No matter what the date of its final decline, the considerable achievements of this all but forgotten group in protecting our natural and historical heritage and inspiring others to do likewise at a time when scenery preservation was widely perceived as the pursuit of a "lunatic fringe" stands as testimony to the vision and foresight of this small but dedicated group of nature lovers. That enthusiasm for scenery preservation eventually came to pass is attributable in no small measure to the faith, hard work and perseverance of the few men and women who founded this and other kindred societies in spite of the incomprehension, even ridicule of the majority of their contemporaries. It should perhaps be left to a contemporary commentator to pay final tribute. A writer in the *New Zealand Times* in 1900, commenting on the Egmont National Park Bill, which the Society had done so much to bring about, said:

There is perhaps no organisation in the Colony more energetic in doing everything within its power to preserve portions of the native bush from wanton destruction than the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society. ¹¹²

CHAPTER FIVE

The Movement Expands

The Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society and the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society can, each in its own way, stake a claim to being the founder of the scenery preservation movement. To speak of a movement implies that the formation of these two societies was not an isolated phenomenon but the beginning of a trend. The purpose of this chapter is to establish the existence of a movement; to demonstrate that these two pioneering organisations were the forerunners of a number of groups, inspired in part by their example and linked by common goals.

Information concerning the groups which form the subject of this chapter come from a variety of sources; archival records of minutes of meetings and annual reports, personal papers of members of groups, newspaper reports of meetings, parliamentary records and correspondence with the Lands and Survey Department. Although the information which survives is fragmentary, sufficient remains to indicate a movement which was widespread throughout the country, a movement of sufficient scale that politicians could ill afford to ignore it and which provided a broad base of support from which men such as H. G. Ell and G. M. Thomson could argue for better protection of scenery in Parliament.

The formation of the Nelson Scenery Preservation Society on 21 August 1894, was the first fruit of the seed sown by the Dunedin Society and nourished by the Taranaki group.¹ This was followed by the Wellington Scenery Preservation Society in February 1895,² the Christchurch Beautifying Association in September 1897,³ the Auckland Scenery Conservation Society in July 1899,⁴ the Birkenhead Scenery Conservation Society in September 1899,⁵ the Summit Road Association in 1909⁶ and the Wanganui Scenery Preservation and Beautifying Society in April 1910.⁷

1. *The Colonist*, 22 August 1894.

2. *Evening Post*, 14 February 1895. The Society was sometimes known as the Wellington Tree-Planting and Scenery Preservation Society. At the inaugural meeting of the Society, Mr W. T. L. Travers said a similar society had been formed in his office two years earlier but it had been a "total failure" as the people of Wellington "could not be stirred up."

3. *The Press*, 9 September 1897.

4. *New Zealand Herald*, 22 July 1899.

5. *New Zealand Herald*, 8 September 1899.

6. H. G. Ell, *The Port Hills - Akaroa Summit Road and History of the Summit Road Trust; How and Why It Formed*. Christchurch : New Zealand Newspapers Ltd Printers, 1929.

This does not purport to be a comprehensive list of the groups which existed during the period under discussion, only those for which there is evidence of influence from either or both of the earlier societies and whose activities are sufficiently well documented to allow further discussion. Contemporary records point to the definite existence of a number of other groups and the possible existence of yet more. These are not sufficiently well documented to allow more than the bare recording of the evidence for their existence.⁸ It is not possible to say whether they formed in response to particular local environmental issues or whether they were simply inspired by the example of other groups, but even if they formed primarily in response to local issues, the influence of earlier societies can be inferred in the case of some, though it is less certain for others.

One such group is the Marton Scenery Preservation and Beautifying Association, which formed on 19 June 1909. Local newspapers reveal that by June 1913, it was known as the the Marton Beautifying Society. Some time after that it went into eclipse and a new group named the Rangitikei Scenery Preservation and Tree Planting Society was established.⁹ The records of the Dunedin society refer to correspondence with a group in Timaru, based on the Dunedin group, which evidently formed sometime prior to the Christchurch Beautifying Association because a newspaper report describing the inaugural meeting of the latter mentions groups already in existence in Dunedin, Nelson and Timaru.¹⁰ Contemporary documents also contain references to groups in Blenheim and on the West Coast but the evidence is of a more circumstantial nature. The Nelson Society refers to correspondence with a kindred society in Blenheim.¹¹ No other records seem to have survived. Allusion to a West Coast society comes during a debate in the Legislative Council on the Scenery Preservation Bill, in the course of which the Hon. Mr Holmes (Westland) referred to "a society for preserving beauty spots" in his district, which had petitioned the Government to preserve bush

7. *Wanganui Chronicle*, 16 April 1910.

8. In each of the cases I refer to below, I have been unable to locate any archival material and newspaper records have proven equally unhelpful, in the absence of any reasonably precise dates from which to work.

9. I am grateful to the Marton-based local historian, Mr Paul Melody, for this information. I was referred to him by the Marton Museum in the course of searching for information on the Rangitikei Society for the Preservation and Growth of New Zealand Flora. His research in local newspapers has disclosed no further information of any significance about the group except that in June 1913, Mr Edward Newman, M.P. was its patron and Mr W. C. Kensington, the recently retired Under-Secretary of Lands, was its president. (*Rangitikei Advocate*, 21 June 1913)

10. *The Press*, 9 September 1897.

11. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 February 1898.

around Lake Mahinapua.¹² Although this statement is highly suggestive, in the absence of corroborating evidence it may simply represent a loose reference to the Westland Acclimatisation Society which took some interest in scenery preservation. For example, a year later, in 1904, there is a record of correspondence between that Society and the Department of Lands and Survey concerning protection of the Lake Kaniere watershed.¹³

The records of the Lands and Survey Department disclose the existence of a further two groups and possibly a third one.¹⁴ A file relating to the work of the Scenery Preservation Commission contains correspondence from a Coromandel Scenic Society dated 8 February and 6 June 1904, concerning the acquisition of the site from which Captain Cook observed the Transit of Mercury.¹⁵ Another contains correspondence, dated 8 September 1904 and 4 August 1905, from members of a South Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society, indicating sites which they believed the Scenery Preservation Commission ought to set aside.¹⁶ The possible existence of a group in Hawke's Bay is suggested by correspondence between Napier Borough Council and the Commission. In a letter from the Council dated 16 February 1906, seeking protection of bush at Tongioio Falls north of Napier, it is indicated that "local enthusiasts" had already cleared tracks to the falls and put in a foot bridge.¹⁷ It seems, therefore, at the very least an *ad hoc* group had formed to protect that area but quite possibly there existed a group concerned with scenery preservation in general. Archival records of W. W. Smith, who was a member of the Scenery Preservation Commission, provide firm evidence for yet another group. In a scrapbook covering his activities as a member of the Commission, he refers to a Beautifying Association in Gisborne, which had prepared a list of some 30 places within the region from Gisborne to the East Cape for the the Commission to investigate while in the region.¹⁸

12. . . . *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 127 : 399, 1903.

13. National Archives, Wellington. Lands and Survey File 70/9.

14. Unfortunately the records of the Department are not as fruitful a source of information on early groups as one might hope. The head office records for the period survive only in fragmentary form at National Archives, Wellington. Further information might be gleaned from regional records. However, a search through the records held at the Canterbury Branch of National Archives did not prove sufficiently useful to justify research in other land districts at this stage.

15. National Archives, Wellington. Lands and Survey File 70/9.

16. National Archives, Wellington. Lands and Survey File 70/11.

17. National Archives, Wellington. Lands and Survey File 70/8.

18. Taranaki Museum, MS 046/1. The president of the Society was Mr G. Grant, the secretary, Mr Darton and the Rev H. Williams and A. H. Wallis are mentioned as members.

Unfortunately the item is undated but the meeting must have taken place before April 1906 when the Commission was disbanded.

Whether the formation of these groups was prompted by the example of other societies, by specific local environmental issues or by the passing of the Scenery Preservation Act is unclear. In the case of the South Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society, it seems reasonable to suppose that the group grew out of the system of district representatives established by the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society. Lack of information means these questions must remain unanswered for now, as indeed must the question of their duration. It is quite possible that the groups were relatively shortlived, formed to promote the interests of their regions under the new Act and folding after the Commission or the Scenery Preservation Board had dealt with their area. Little more can be said about them except to emphasise that their existence, particularly the existence of a group in an area as remote as the Coromandel, illustrates the breadth of the movement to protect scenery by the first decade of the twentieth century. It also indicates the undoubted importance of the press in helping to publicise the movement, given the limited and infrequent opportunities for face to face communication between New Zealanders from different regions at this time.¹⁹ Further investigation into these as well as the better documented societies would be a useful avenue for future research and might well uncover other groups which have not, as yet, come to light.

With the exception of the Summit Road Association, which I will deal with in a subsequent chapter, all the groups in the chronological list at the beginning of this chapter exhibit, to a greater or lesser extent, a blend of scenery preservation concern with amenity and beautifying concerns, deriving from their links with the two earliest groups. I have already indicated that the Christchurch Beautifying Association was closely modelled on the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society as a consequence of Alexander Bathgate forwarding copies of the rules and objects of the Society to Dr Irving, who had written a letter to *The Press* on the subject of beautification in July 1897.²⁰ Prompted by the arrival of this material, Dr Irving called a public meeting to form a similar society in Christchurch. Within two months of his original letter, the Association was officially inaugurated at a public meeting held on 8 September 1897.²¹

19. By the 1880s New Zealand had a well established telegraph network which allowed all newspapers, urban and rural, to select the main body of their New Zealand and overseas news from the press releases of the United Press Association. (Rollo Arnold, *New Zealand's Burning: The Settlers World in the Mid 1880s*. Wellington : Victoria University Press, 1994, p. 234)

20. See Chapter Three, p. 100.

21. *The Press*, 9 September 1897.

On the other hand, the first society to follow in the footsteps of the Dunedin and Taranaki, groups, the Nelson Scenery Preservation Society, acknowledged the influence of the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society. The group was jointly promoted by Colonel Branfill and Mr C. Y. Fell, the Crown Solicitor and a former mayor. At the inaugural meeting of the Society, Fell stated that his attention had been called to the issue of scenery preservation by Mr C. W. Govett, president of the Taranaki Society.²² Whether he knew Govett personally or only by way of correspondence, is not clear. They were possibly acquainted through their mutual background in law. Whatever the nature of their relationship, Fell, having been convinced by Govett as to the advantages of association, believed the citizens of Nelson would "be guilty of neglect if they did not follow such an excellent example."²³ Colonel Branfill, it appears, had independently come to the view that a society was needed so the two men joined forces to issue a circular promoting the formation of a group.²⁴ Even without Fell's specific acknowledgement of the influence of the Taranaki Society, it would be clearly evident from the objects, which are almost identical with those of the earlier organisation.²⁵

The close interrelationship between the various societies is also apparent in the case of the Wellington, Auckland and Wanganui groups. The promoters of the Wellington Scenery Preservation Society, Mr L. G. Reid and Mr E. Treagar,²⁶ were familiar with the activities of both the Taranaki and Dunedin Societies. In preparing the objects and rules for their organisation, they had recourse to copies of the objects and rules of both these groups as well as those of the Nelson group.²⁷ However, they chose to follow

22. *The Colonist*, 1 August 1894.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*

25. The objects of the Nelson Society were as follows: (1) To endeavour to preserve beautiful scenery and historical sites, whether public or private property. (2) To prevent unnecessary destruction of bush, especially on banks and in steep places. (3) To encourage tree planting and the general beautification of public places. (4) To publish guide books. (5) To endeavour to make travelling easier and more pleasant. For comparison with the objectives of the Taranaki Society, see Chapter Four, p. 104.

26. Mr Edward Treagar was the Secretary of the Polynesian Society for 11 years and would probably have known of the work of the Taranaki Society through fellow member, W. H. Skinner. Interestingly, for a time after his arrival in New Zealand in 1863, he was employed as a surveyor, eventually rising through the Civil Service to become head of the Department of Labour in 1891. He was a free thinker and socialist, a friend of both Reeves and Ballance. His co-promoter, Leonard Greenwill Reid, was Assistant Crown Law Officer. As such, he was probably acquainted with Fell, the Nelson Crown Solicitor, and may well have been acquainted with Govett and Bathgate. For a number of years he was also chairman of the Horticultural Society, another possible source of contact with Bathgate, and a hardworking member of the Wellington Acclimatisation Society. (*Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, 1897)

27. *Evening Post*, 14 February & 5 April 1895.

most closely the objects of the Taranaki Society, the first three being almost identical with the first three objects of their northern predecessor.²⁸ They differed from the earlier group in omitting the objectives relating to publication of guidebooks and improvement of travel, substituting in their place a new provision relating to co-operation with kindred societies, something which both earlier societies had carried out in practice, though without specific inclusion of such an objective.

The Auckland Scenery Conservation Society was promoted at the instigation of the Mayor, Mr D. Goldie,²⁹ who having become aware of the existence of societies in various parts of the country soon after taking office, sought further information on them.³⁰ With a parochialism which, then as now, was characteristic of the citizens of "the Queen City," he felt that "this the most beautiful part of New Zealand" would benefit from the good work of such a society.³¹ To that end he requested an existing Queen's Statue Committee to act as a provisional committee.³² A letter from W. H. Skinner concerning the activities of the Taranaki group was published in the *Herald* on 28 June 1899, at the request of Mr A. J. Allom,³³ secretary of the provisional committee, in what proved to be a successful attempt to arouse public interest in the formation of a group. In an accompanying letter, Mr Allom indicated that a great deal of information had also been received from Dunedin. A perusal of rules and objects of the Society, which are undoubtedly the most detailed of all the groups I have surveyed, reveals an obvious debt to both of the societies.³⁴

28. The objects of the Society were: (1) To endeavour to preserve beautiful scenery or historical sites, whether public or private property, within the Provincial District of Wellington. (2) To prevent the unnecessary destruction of native flora, especially along the banks of rivers and steep places. (3) To encourage tree-planting and the improvement of public reserves. (4) To co-operate with any kindred society. (*Evening Post*, 5 April 1895)

29. Mr Goldie was born in Tasmania in 1842. He came to Auckland in 1863 and established a business as a timber merchant. He served on the Auckland Provincial Council and had three terms in the House of Representatives. He was a city councillor for 15 years before serving as mayor for a term of two-and-a-half years. (*Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 2, 1902)

30. *New Zealand Herald*, 22 July 1899.

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*

33. Mr Allom was a notable early colonist. Born in London in 1825, he came to New Zealand as a surveying cadet with the New Zealand Company in 1841, working in Manawatu and Otago. In 1861 he moved to Auckland as the general manager of the Great Barrier Land, Harbour and Mining Co. When that company went into liquidation in 1867 he entered the civil service, working in the Department of Mines and Justice until his retirement in 1886. (*Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 2, 1902)

34. *New Zealand Herald*, 21 July 1899. The objects of the Society were: (1) The conservation of the natural beauties of the provincial district of Auckland, and especially the city and its suburbs. (2) The preservation of beautiful scenery or historic sites, whether public or private property. (3) To prevent the unnecessary destruction of native trees and shrubs, especially along the banks of rivers (particularly on the shores of the Waitemata and the Islands of the Gulf), on steep places, and elsewhere. (4) To encourage tree-planting of the most suitable kinds, and the general beautifying of

The Wanganui society, by reason of its proximity to Taranaki, was clearly familiar with the work of its nearest neighbour. In fact, the example of the Taranaki group had prompted the editor of the *Yeoman*, on at least two occasions, to urge the citizens of Wanganui to emulate those of New Plymouth in forming a society.³⁵ It must also have been familiar with the nearby Marton Society. When a society was finally formed in 1910, it was also with the benefit of information on the Dunedin society, obtained by Mr Cecil Wray, one of the promoters of the new group³⁶.

Insufficient information survives on the Birkenhead Scenery Conservation Society to make an authoritative statement concerning the source of inspiration for this group, but in view of its formation less than two months after the Auckland group, it seems reasonable to assume it was primarily influenced by its kindred society across the Waitemata Harbour.

Like the earlier societies in Dunedin and Taranaki, the supporters of these new groups comprised some of the most prominent and highly regarded members of their respective communities. Amongst the most notable of these was John Logan Campbell, "the Father of Auckland," who was several times president of the Auckland Society.³⁷ Other noteworthy members of the Auckland Society, apart from those I have previously mentioned, included W. S. Wilson, J. L. Wilson and A. G. Horton, proprietors of the

public reserves and other public places. (5) To assist in the development of out-door attractions of the city and its neighbourhood, and the encouragement of the means of healthy and elevating recreation for its inhabitants. (6) Generally to endeavour to make travelling easier and pleasanter to all places of interest. (7) The Society will form a channel for the conveyance of public opinion to the Government, to the city and suburban councils, and to other local authorities throughout the provincial district of Auckland, in all matters which may be deemed within the scope of its functions. Its method of working will chiefly be by suggesting improvements to the various public bodies, which may be carried on by those bodies themselves or (with their sanction and pecuniary assistance) by the Society, or in some cases to a smaller extent by the Society alone. (8) As the income of the Society will be limited, it can only assist public bodies in affecting the more extensive improvements, but some of these of a less expensive nature may be carried out by the Society itself or by special subscription raised, either in the community as a whole or in the neighbourhood to be more particularly benefited. The influence of the Dunedin Society is evident in numbers (5), (7) & (8.) The rest derive from the Taranaki Society. The name chosen by the Society also owes something to both of the earlier groups. The name was decided after a competition to find a name which was more suitable and comprehensive than "Beautifying Association" or "Scenery Preservation Society." (*New Zealand Herald*, 21 July 1899) In the event none of the 21 ideas put forward was felt to be completely satisfactory and the name Auckland Scenery Conservation Society was finally adopted.

35. *Yeoman*, 20 August 1898 & 30 June 1904. I have been unable to find a record of the specific objects of the Society.

36. *Wanganui Chronicle*, 28 April 1910.

37. John Logan Campbell, born in Edinburgh in 1817, was, like Allom, one of the pioneers of Auckland, arriving the year before him, in 1840. He served as provincial superintendent from 1855 to 1856, then as a member of the House of Representatives from October 1855 to November 1856. He was active in community affairs and a major public benefactor for the city and citizens of Auckland, best known for his gift of Cornwall Park. (*DNZB*, Vol I, pp. 67-68)

New Zealand Herald, its editor, W. Berry, H. Brett, proprietor of the *Auckland Star*, the *New Zealand Graphic* and the *New Zealand Farmer*, as well as ex-mayor of the city, L. D. Nathan of the well-known mercantile house of the same name, Thomas Cheeseman, noted botanist and curator of the Auckland Museum,³⁸ A. Myers, a future mayor and member of the House of Representatives and two current members of the House, W. J. Napier and G. Fowlds.³⁹

The first president of the Wellington Society was Dr A. K. Newman, M. H. R., who had actively promoted Tongariro National Park in the House. He had, for a time, been a city councillor and at least two other former councillors, J. M. Richardson and E. W. Mills, were active members. The treasurer of the Society, B. M. Molineaux was manager of the Bank of New South Wales. W. T. L. Travers, lawyer, former member of the House, active member of the New Zealand Institute and early conservation advocate, was a supporter. Sir Walter Buller and the Hon. Mr R. Pharazyn, M.L.C., sent letters promising support to the inaugural meeting, which they were unable to attend.⁴⁰

Leading figures in the Nelson Society, apart from Fell and Colonel Branfill, included the Mayor, Mr Trask, the photographer, W. Tyree, the explorer, Dr J. Hudson, H. Cock, shipping company manager and patron of the arts and his friend, F. G. Gibbs, headmaster of the Nelson Boys' Central School and amateur botanist of some renown, who had collected for Thomas Kirk and would later collect for Cockayne, Cheeseman and Petrie.⁴¹

38. Thomas Cheeseman (1846-1923) was born in Yorkshire but came to Auckland with his parents in 1852 at the age of six. He developed a strong interest in New Zealand flora, however, though known primarily as a botanist, he also made important contributions in zoology and ethnology. His best known work is the *Manual of New Zealand Flora*, published in 1906. In 1874 he was appointed secretary of the Auckland Institute and curator of its museum, which he developed into an institution of importance. He was president of the New Zealand Institute in 1911. (*An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, pp. 336-7)

39. *New Zealand Herald*, 22 July 1899. The biographical information comes from the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 2, 1902.

40. *Evening Post*, 14 February 1895 & 5 April 1895. The biographical information comes from the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, 1897.

41. *The Colonist*, 21 August 1894; *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 February, 1898; *DNZB*, Vol II, pp. 92, 232-233, 555-556; S. Mann, *F. G. Gibbs: His Influence on the Social History Of Nelson 1890-1950*. Nelson Historical Society, 1977. Dr Hudson extensively explored the mountains of Nelson and Marlborough. He was active in the Nelson Philosophical Society and was a city councillor from 1901 to 1905. Cock and Gibbs were both very active in the Nelson Harmonic Society, the Nelson School of Music and on the Bishop Suter Art Gallery Committee. Gibbs played a prominent role in the Nelson Philosophical Society until the time of his death and both men were involved in the establishment of the Cawthron Institute in 1921.

The President of the Wanganui Society was the town's best known and most colourful citizen, Mr Alexander Hatrick, merchant and tourism entrepreneur, whose fleet of tourist boats had made the Wanganui a major tourist destination.⁴² Members of the Canterbury Beautifying Association included the Mayor, Mr C. Louisson; the Commissioner of Crown Lands and former president of the Taranaki Society, S. Weetman; the architect who would be closely associated with Ell on the Summit Road scheme, S. Hurst-Seagar; the Professor of Biology at Canterbury University College, A. Dendy; and the scientist, Captain F. W. Hutton.⁴³ The Association also had five lady patronesses.⁴⁴

Tried and proven formulas for encouraging support for the cause, used with success by the first two societies, were also adopted by the later societies. The appeal to similar movements overseas and the desire to emulate or excel other centres in New Zealand provided as effective a spur to form groups as it had when Bathgate first used this tactic in 1888. We find the same utilitarian inducements to support the movement based on the benefits derivable from increased tourist trade and from the prevention of floods and droughts. These general points were bolstered with arguments specific to the circumstances of the region. In Wanganui, for example, the issue of flood prevention was especially forcefully stressed. The town was particularly vulnerable to the impact of deforestation of the Upper Wanganui catchment and supporters believed insufficient was being done to prevent it, despite the experience of serious flooding in 1904. The desire to reduce the risks of further flooding and the protection of what supporters saw as a unique scenic asset were the major motivations behind the formation of a society.⁴⁵ On the other hand, in Wellington, emphasis was given to the desirability of revegetating the badly denuded Town Belt and remedying the dearth of accessible, well-shaded public reserves.⁴⁶

42. C. Orange (1993) pp. 201-202. Hatrick served on the Harbour Board and was mayor of Wanganui from 1897 to 1904. He was instrumental in the development of the town's gas works, water supply and tramway.

43. Frederick Hutton (1836-1905) was born in England where he studied geology. He emigrated to New Zealand after service in the merchant navy and army in the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny. He served in the New Zealand Geological Survey before being appointed to the chair of Natural Science at Otago University in 1877. In 1890 shifted to Canterbury to take up the chair of Biology, Paleontology and Geology at Canterbury College. In 1893 he became curator of Canterbury Museum. He was one of the most important contributors to geology and biology in nineteenth-century New Zealand. (*An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 2, pp. 127-8)

44. C. Chilton, "History of the Christchurch Beautifying Association-1," *The City Beautiful*, 1(2) : 11-12, 1924, p. 12.

45. *Wanganui Chronicle*, 28 April, 1910.

46. *Evening Post*, 14 February 1895. Correspondence in the press around the time the Society formed suggests that many law-abiding citizens were deterred by trespass notices from enjoying many of the patches of bush which survived close to the city, though some nature lovers admitted to ignoring the notices. (*Evening Post*, 2 January 1895 & 8 January 1895)

The ideals behind the formation of these groups were similar to those already encountered in Dunedin and Taranaki. We find the same conviction that if like-minded people united together they might all the more effectively advocate the need for acquisition and preservation of reserves, call the attention of the civic authorities to opportunities for beautifying and improving amenities, educate the public against vandalism and other dangers to reserves, and help spread abroad a love for the beauty of scenery and recognition of the necessity for spacious and beautiful breathing spaces, both natural and man-made, "haunts of peace wherein tired men and women may find the rest of changed and happy thought."⁴⁷ The role of voluntary groups in impressing upon local authorities their responsibilities in the matter of scenery preservation and improvement of amenities was particularly stressed in Auckland, where the local authorities were roundly criticised for their failure in this regard:

our local bodies, who should naturally do all they possibly can to improve the amenities of our situation, have been culpably negligent. They have been careless of anything like beauty, and, moreover, they have been composed for the most part of men who scarcely know the meaning of the word.⁴⁸

The support of the Mayors of Auckland, Birkenhead, Christchurch, Marton, Nelson, and Wanganui in promoting the societies in their areas and the involvement of a number of councillors, provided grounds for optimism that the past indifference of local authorities might be remedied in future.⁴⁹

Perhaps not surprisingly, concern with the problem of vandalism and the need to combat it through public education emerged as a major theme. This issue was emphasised in Nelson, Wellington, Christchurch, and Wanganui. Supporters of the group in Nelson were particularly vehement in their condemnation of those they described as "goths and vandals."⁵⁰ The extent of the problem in the region may be gauged by the fact that eleven fires were reported to have been started at one beauty spot in the course of just one week. In another incident, a large portion of an island containing tree ferns rare in the district, was rendered bare by deliberate fires.⁵¹ But

47. The words are those of Mr A. J. Neame speaking before the public meeting called to establish a society in Wanganui. (*Wanganui Chronicle*, 28 April 1910)

48. *New Zealand Herald*, 28 June 1899.

49. The public meeting to form these groups was either convened and/or chaired by the Mayor in each of these cases. It will also be recalled that the Mayor of New Plymouth chaired the inaugural meeting of the Taranaki Society. The list of foundation members of Dunedin Society included 11 former, current, or future mayors of Dunedin or its surrounding boroughs and many councillors. See Vine (1983) Appendix One.

50. *The Colonist*, 21 August 1894.

51. *Ibid.*

there is no reason to believe that the problem of vandalism was more severe in Nelson than elsewhere. The evidence already presented in relation to Dunedin and New Plymouth makes it plain that it was a familiar story, which was no doubt repeated from one end of the country to the other. In Wellington, for example, the youth of the city were said to delight in starting fires, the Botanical Gardens being a popular target for this activity, and day-trippers were censured for thoughtlessly destroying the very beauty spots they came to enjoy by breaking down branches and removing plants.⁵² The predilection for using tree ferns for decorating butcher's shops, which I have already noted in relation to Dunedin and New Plymouth, apparently occurred in Wellington too, with the difference that the Nikau Palms, so characteristic of the Waikanae Coastline, were also threatened through this practice.⁵³

The supporters of these new groups, stressed, as their counterparts in Taranaki had done before them, that they were not seeking to retain wilderness at the expense of people but rather to preserve scenery in the midst of people. Mr Fell was guilty of some exaggeration when he claimed that "nothing was intended to be done to curtail the development of the country, or the working of the land,"⁵⁴ for of course, the reservation of any land was an opportunity lost to development in the eyes of the extreme utilitarian. But the implication was clear enough. The Society would not be immoderate in its demands. Fell cherished the hope that as more people came to appreciate scenery, landowners themselves would in time come to consider the great charm they were destroying and alter their practices to preserve the bush wherever possible. The editor of the *Evening Post* summed up the aspirations of the movement admirably in a leading article supporting the formation of the proposed Wellington group. He envisaged the role of such a voluntary organisation would be:

to see that there is exerted a continuity of affectionate care which will preserve from the Vandalism of the wanton fire-raiser, and the fern and tree-destroying cheap-tripper, the scenes and places so dedicated to the people, till perhaps by a successive culture we will have raised up a generation with a veneration for beauty and for historic association equal to that of the Japanese, who regard it as a sacrilege to destroy a thing of beauty, and who watch with jealous eye every public heritage..... A Scenery Preservation and Restoration Society in Wellington could work much good to establish a new tapu over all that is for the public good, or which it may restore for that good, till the habit of restraint has evolved a spirit of protective veneration.⁵⁵

52. *Evening Post*, 14 February 1895.

53. *Ibid.* The practice of using tree ferns for decoration is not altogether a thing of the past. For example, a Television New Zealand "Heartland" programme, screened in 1993, showed a hall in Haast decorated with tree ferns for the Whitebaiters' Ball.

54. *The Colonist*, 21 August 1894.

55. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1895.

The use of the word "tapu" in this context, is indicative, I think, of an important aspect of the scenery preservation movement, its growing sense of a distinctive New Zealand identity which took pride, not only in scenery which emulated the best of Europe, typified by areas such Fiordland, the Southern Alps and the Southern Lakes, but also in the uniqueness of our flora and fauna and other aspects of the scenery which reinforced a growing sense of cultural identity. This was surely an important factor behind the protection of Maori pa sites. It may also have been a factor behind the protection of favourite picnic spots, which reflected a distinctive feature of the colonial lifestyle. The growing sense of pride in what was unique to New Zealand was evident in one of the arguments put forward by the Wanganui Scenery Preservation and Beautifying Society for the protection of the Wanganui River.

We do not realise it is the one feature of the Natural Scenery of New Zealand which is unique. All the other magnificent features of New Zealand scenery have parallels in other parts of the world. The Southern Alps in Switzerland, the Sounds in Norway, the Plains and Forests in North and South America; our beautiful volcanoes, it must be conceded are outrivalled by Fusiyama [*sic*] in Japan; the hot springs in America; but nowhere can we find a fellow for the Wanganui River.⁵⁶

Though in stressing the uniqueness of the river, proponents of its protection denigrated the uniqueness of other aspects of New Zealand scenery, the important point was their perception that it constituted a distinctive feature of New Zealand scenery with no counterpart elsewhere in the world, and that this was a major reason for protecting it. This was a quite different justification for its protection from the usual one, based upon its claim to be the Rhine of New Zealand.

This aspect of the scenery preservation movement was influenced by an international trend towards the rise of nationalist feeling in the late nineteenth century which promoted a search for national identity.⁵⁷ One manifestation of rising nationalist feeling was the formation during the 1890s of a number of New Zealand Natives Association's throughout the country. These were social organisations for persons born in New Zealand,⁵⁸ which were concerned with issues such as establishing national symbols, the recording of New Zealand history and encouraging New Zealand literature.⁵⁹ Their importance in the context of nature conservation lies in the fact that

56. *Wanganui Chronicle*, 28 April, 1910.

57. For further discussion of this issue in the New Zealand context see K. Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart. New Zealand's Search for National Identity*. Wellington : Allen & Unwin in association with Port Nicholson Press, 1986. Sinclair notes that the idea of nationalism only became almost universal after World War II.

58. The 1886 census revealed for the first time that the New Zealand-born population outnumbered immigrants. (Sinclair, 1986. p. 31)

59. Sinclair (1986) pp. 31-45. It is no coincidence that this period saw the publication of the first European history of New Zealand, William Pember Reeves' *Long White Cloud* (1898). Also published

members of the associations advocated scenery protection, forest conservation and bird protection as patriotic causes.⁶⁰ It is worth noting that W. Reece, the president of the Canterbury branch of the New Zealand Natives Association which formed in 1897,⁶¹ was, for a time, president of the Christchurch Beautifying Association and was also active in the Summit Road Association. Thus the growth of interest in scenery preservation was in part a product of the trend towards nationalism. At the same time the scenery preservation movement played an important role in helping to shape a sense of national identity by encouraging pride in the unique features of the New Zealand landscape, flora and fauna.

New Zealanders were not alone in seeking to build a stronger sense of national identity through natural monuments or unique species. The Scots, for example, were exhorted to protect the eagle, "your national bird, the eagle of your ancestors."⁶² By the turn of the century nature protection was widely perceived as a key to invoking a patriotic spirit.⁶³ However, this aspect of conservation was perhaps of greatest importance in new countries such as New Zealand where outstanding natural monuments and unique species met a specific cultural need to find an equivalent to the man-made cultural

in this period was T. M. Hocken's *Bibliography of the Literature relating to New Zealand* (1909). (P. J. Gibbons, "The Climate of Opinion," pp. 302-330 in W. H. Oliver & B. R. Williams, eds., *The Oxford History of New Zealand*. Wellington : Oxford University Press, 1981, p.309) In 1899 a New Literary and Historical Association was founded and *Zealandia*, A Monthly Magazine for New Zealand Literature by New Zealand authors, was established. (Sinclair, 1986, pp. 46-60) This was one of a number of short-lived literary magazines established around the turn of the century with the aim of encouraging New Zealand literature. The foundation of the Polynesian Society in 1892 was another manifestation of the growing interest in the identity of New Zealand. The same trend was evident in the visual arts. For example, in 1900 Samuel Hurst Seagar, a member of the Canterbury Beautifying Association, lamented the lack of a distinctive New Zealand architectural style and in his small timber cottages on the Port Hills and the rest-houses he designed for the Summit Road Association, he set about creating one. (I. J. Lochhead, "The Architectural Art of Samuel Hurst Seagar," *Art New Zealand*, 44 : 92-99, 1987) Lochhead points out that the desire to create a national architecture was an international movement in the years around 1900, exemplified in the work of C.F.A. Voysey, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Frank Lloyd Wright.

60. Sinclair (1986) p. 42.

61. Ibid., p. 42. Reece was one of a growing number of New Zealand-born members of the nature conservation movement. However, immigrants continued to dominate the adult population throughout the 1890s so it is scarcely surprising that the majority of leading figures in the early movement were born and educated outside New Zealand. The most prominent exceptions were Skinner and Ell. Other exceptions included Robert Laing, Percy Adams. Thomas Cheeseman and Charles Chilton, though not native-born, came to New Zealand as very young children and were educated here.

62. Cited in P. D. Lowe, "Values and Institutions in the History of British Nature Conservation," pp. 329-352 in A. Warren & F. B. Goldsmith, *Conservation in Perspective*. Chichester : John Wiley & Sons, 1983, p. 338.

63. H. Conwentz, the Prussian State Commissioner for the Care of Natural Monuments, promoted the idea that nature conservation was a patriotic duty in his 1909 book *The Care of Natural Monuments with Special Reference to Great Britain and Germany*. The book was based on a lecture given to the British Association. His ideas would have been known here through the *British Association Reports* and the book was also available in the General Assembly Library. We have already seen that Charles Chilton later based a number of articles in the *City Beautiful* on Conwentz's writing.

treasures of Europe.⁶⁴ Yet despite a growing feeling of national identity many New Zealanders still could not feel entirely at home here. For all those who could agree with Edith Searle Grossman that "The bush is no longer an empty and lifeless waste; it is haunted by the memories of our childhood,"⁶⁵ there were many more who still felt greater empathy with those elements of the landscape which reminded them of "home" than with those features peculiar to these islands. Their attitudes were encapsulated in a poem by Johannes C. Anderson,⁶⁶ called "Home Echoes" (*circa* 1903).

We came, our hearts impress'd
With ancient hills, great castles, ruins gray,
With quietnesses where moss-covered rest
The hearts of happy ages pass'd away

....

Full of old scenes and memories we came,
And figured the old and new might yet become
the same.

But all was new,
In sound, in shape, and hue

...

And we have yet to learn
Those true, peculiar charms our longings hide:
The new and old we now see side by side,
And whilst we can discern
The new is beautiful, cannot withhold
Our sad interpretation thro' the old.
How long, before our voices will outgive
In song, those beauties in whose midst we live?
The quaint, sweet-throated birds; the men
Whose songs and legends wail from hill and glen.
How long before our hearts will see and hear
The charms themselves, not those that youth makes dear?
How long? Alas! We wean ourselves with pain
From that which, while desired, we know comes not again.⁶⁷

It should now be clear that the scenery preservation societies which emerged around the turn of the century considered themselves part of a coherent movement which shared

64. For a discussion of these ideas in the context of the United States see John E. Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century*. New York : Oxford University Press, 1989.

65. "The Growth of Colonial Sentiment" (1905) in *Empire Review*, cited by Sinclair (1986) pp. 6-7. Edith Searle Grossman was a keen supporter of the conservation movement.

66. Johannes Carl Andersen (1873-1962) was born in Denmark but came to Christchurch at the age of two. He joined Lands and Survey as a cadet in 1877 but in 1915 became a librarian. He was librarian at Alexander Turnbull Library from its foundation in 1918 until his retirement in 1937. As well as writing poetry, much of which celebrated New Zealand birdlife, he took a great interest in bird song and Maori lore. For nine years he edited the *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* and for 22 years he edited the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*. He was an active supporter of the Native Bird Protection Society. (*An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, p.38)

67. Johannes C. Anderson, *Songs Unsung*. Christchurch : Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd, [1903]

common beliefs and goals. Unfortunately, the relative wealth of detail concerning their inauguration, for the most part, is not matched by a corresponding degree of detail relating to their subsequent activities. The evidence which does survive reinforces what has been established in relation to the societies in Dunedin and Taranaki concerning the importance of the movement in shaping public and government opinion as to the need for preservation of scenery.

The best documented of the later groups is the Christchurch Beautifying Association for which minutes and annual reports from 1904 until the present are held in the Canterbury Museum. There is also a history of the Association up until 1924, written by one of its members, Charles Chilton.⁶⁸ Unfortunately the records relating to the early period of the Association's existence have been lost but Chilton's account fills in some blanks and the newspaper index kept by the Canterbury Public Library has made it possible to trace further aspects of its activity in the years prior to 1904.

The Association is of especial interest because of the membership in the society of two giants in the annals of New Zealand nature conservation history, the eminent botanist, Leonard Cockayne,⁶⁹ and Harry Ell.⁷⁰ The membership of Charles Chilton, who over many years was very closely associated with Ell's work on the Summit Road, should not be overlooked either. Of these, only Cockayne was a foundation member, holding the position of honorary secretary until he left Christchurch for Wellington. When the

68. This was published in the *City Beautiful*, in twenty-four parts beginning on 1 November 1924 and ending on 10 August 1927. Charles Chilton (1860-1929) was born in Leominster, England and emigrated to Canterbury as a small child in 1861. After a period of teaching and tutoring at Dunedin Training College while studying for his M.A. and B.Sc and a further period studying medicine, he was appointed to the chair of biology and palaeontology at Canterbury College in 1902. He continued in the chair of biology from 1901 to 1908. He was active in the Canterbury Philosophical Institute and was also on the Board of Governors of the New Zealand Institute in 1913-14 and president in 1917. Chilton collaborated with his friend G. M. Thomson in research on *Crustacea*. He was an inspired teacher who did not confine himself to university teaching but also contributed a great deal to the Workers' Education Association. (*An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, pp. 339-40)

69. Leonard Cockayne (1855-1934) was born at Norton Lees, a few miles from Sheffield in Yorkshire. He left England in 1876 and taught in Australia before moving to Otago in 1881, where he taught for three years. He then moved to Christchurch where he developed an interest in horticulture, establishing a private experimental garden. Cockayne did not take up the study of New Zealand botany for which he is famous until relatively late in life. His first major paper was published at the age of 43. In 1903 the University of Munich conferred on him an honorary Ph.D. for his researches centred on the new science of ecology. This was the first of many awards and distinctions he would receive throughout the remainder of his life. His *magnum opus* was *The Vegetation of New Zealand*, published in Leipzig in 1921. (A. D. Thomson, 1983) For more on Cockayne's conservation beliefs and activities see Chapter Eight.

70. Harry Ell (1862-1934) grew up on his father's farm at Halswell near Christchurch. Before taking up politics in 1896 (this first attempt to enter Parliament being unsuccessful) he worked at a number of jobs including work on a Canterbury sheep run, surveying, three and a half years from 1879 as a volunteer to help crush a rebellion of Maoris in Taranaki and a period with *The Press* in the printing and stereotyping trade. (Oakley, 1960) For more on Ell's conservation ideas and activities see Chapters Seven and Eight.

records begin in 1904 both Ell and Chilton are listed as members. During their years of involvement with the Association, it campaigned successfully for the protection of the Onawe Peninsula,⁷¹ an important Maori pa in Akaroa Harbour, also of interest from a geological point of view, and for the protection of the Otira Gorge and Upper Waimakariri, which subsequently formed the nucleus of Arthur's Pass National Park.

Cockayne, with his knowledge and love of the alpine flora of the region, was the prime mover in the latter campaign. As a consequence of his scientific investigations into the effects of burning on the subalpine flora, he was convinced that this portion of our flora "the most beautiful portion, in fact...is not in great danger of eradication by fire."⁷² He found that the vegetation was usually re-established after burning, though in a different form, certain species being favoured by burning. He did not accept, in accordance with the conventional wisdom of the day, that this feature of our flora "bids fair to become a thing of the past."⁷³ On the contrary, he believed that "if areas were set aside as national parks in the alpine and subalpine regions, and cattle and sheep kept religiously away, although an accidental fire might sweep over the whole locality, the loss to the colony and science in the destruction of our unique subalpine flora need not be feared."⁷⁴ W. H. Montgomery, who subsequently gifted Montgomery Park on Banks Peninsula to the nation, took up the cause in Parliament on behalf of the Association and in 1901 it was set aside as a reserve.⁷⁵

The great advantage Cockayne saw in protecting the comparatively little known headwaters of the Waimakariri, apart from the intrinsic merit of the flora, lay in its ready accessibility from Christchurch, putting it "within the power of many to see, who could not afford the time or expense of a trip to Mt Cook."⁷⁶ Here we see, once again, the concern with accessibility which was such a characteristic feature of the movement and belied the charge of elitism sometimes levelled against it. However, Cockayne

71. Correspondence dated 9 September 1904 & 14 April 1905 between the Association and the Scenery Preservation Commission concerning protection of the Peninsula appears in the records of the Department of Lands and Survey, National Archives, Wellington, LS 70/11.

72. L. Cockayne, "On the Burning and Reproduction of Subalpine Scrub and its Associated Plants; with special reference to Arthur's Pass District," *T.N.Z.I.*, 31 : 398-419, 1898.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 401. For a more detailed discussion of the conventional belief that the native flora was doomed and Cockayne's reasons for refuting this belief see Chapter Eight, pp. 206- 208.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 418.

75. *The Press*, 29 November 1897. The initiative in campaigning for the Otira/Bealy Reserve, as it was then known, to be formed into Arthur's Pass National Park, was taken up by the Canterbury Progress League in 1928, though with the support of the Beautifying Association. (Canterbury Beautifying Association, Minute Books, Canterbury Museum, Minutes of Meeting, 6 March 1928)

76. *The Press*, 30 November 1897. The reason for this accessibility was, of course, the construction of the Midland line from Christchurch to the West Coast.

might have had some misgivings if he had anticipated the numbers who would in time visit the region and their impact upon the flora. In a 1927 letter to the German botanist, Goebels, he writes in disgust:

It is no longer the quiet spot you saw, but excursion trains take 1000 or more people at a time - nature wreckers! - and *Ranunculus lyallii* and *Ourisia macrocarpa* and the great *Celmisias* are torn from the ground only to die. Happily the mountains are not easy to climb, nor the rivers to cross, and many fastnesses will remain not degraded.⁷⁷

This was the first major campaign in which the need to protect New Zealand's unique alpine and subalpine flora formed a major part of the argument. It was also the first explicit articulation during the course of a conservation campaign of the view that the flora was not doomed to inevitable extinction, though such a belief was surely implicit in earlier campaigns of the Taranaki Society.

Two somewhat less successful crusades were an attempt to protect Parkinson's Bush in 1902 and an attempt to have Riccarton Bush purchased as a public reserve, initiated by Ell and Cockayne in 1906.⁷⁸ In 1902 an area described as Parkinson's Bush at Kaituna was threatened with imminent destruction by the trustees of the Parkinson estate to minimise the tax assessment due on the land. Tax was to be assessed not only on the value of the land but also on the value of any standing timber. The Association, along with a number of influential citizens, took a deputation to the Premier to ask the Government to purchase the bush.⁷⁹ As one of the few extensive areas of bush left within the region it was argued that its protection was vital both as an example of the flora of Banks Peninsula and as an important food source for birds. The area offered was approximately 360 acres.⁸⁰ Although the attempt to protect the bush was unsuccessful on this occasion, at least part of the area was later included in the Sign of the Packhorse Reserve, which was first designated in 1914 and has been added to since that time. This is shown clearly in a map of the Port Hills-Akaroa Summit Road, *circa* 1918, which names the reserve on the south face of Mt Herbert (now called Mt

77. Letter dated 23 May 1927 cited in A. D. Thomson, "Annotated summaries of letters to colleagues by the New Zealand botanist Leonard Cockayne," *New Zealand Journal of Botany*, 17 : 389-416, 1979.

78. This move was in accordance with the wishes of John Deans, the original owner of the land who, when he died in 1854, had expressed the desire that every effort be made to protect the bush.

79. *The Press*, 11 November 1902.

80. This figure comes from a report made by Ell in 1916 to the Summit Road Reserves Board (Chilton Papers, Box 2, File 11, Canterbury Museum) in which he referred to an offer which had been made by Mr Parkinson around 1901 or 1902, to sell to the Government an area of around 360 acres which he was anxious to preserve but could not afford to keep. The land was offered at seven pounds an acre which was rejected as an extortionate amount. The area was described on this occasion as part of the Port Track Block. The Port Track ran up from the Kaituna Valley to the Kaituna Pass on the projected Port Hills-Akaroa Summit Road. There can be no doubt that Ell was referring to the area of bush which had been described as Parkinson's Bush in the 1902 newspaper accounts.

Bradley) as Parkinson's Bush. It is identical in location to the reserve we know today as the Sign of the Packhorse, named after the last of the Ell's rest-houses. Today the reserve comprises an area of 104 ha (approximately 257 acres), of which only 40% is forested. The bush is described as having been logged and heavily browsed. Little undergrowth remains and it is not considered to have a significant bird population.⁸¹ It is evident that between 1902 and 1914 much of the original 360 acres must have been milled.

The question of Riccarton Bush was raised at the Annual General Meeting of the Association in February 1906. Ell moved a motion, seconded by Cockayne, that steps be taken to acquire Riccarton Bush as the only remnant of primeval forest on the Plains.⁸² He explained that the family had been approached and had agreed to sell the land provided that two family members were included on a Board of Control to be set up to administer the reserve. Cockayne, in seconding the motion, reiterated a point he had made strongly the previous year in a long article advocating reservation of the bush published in *The Press*,⁸³ namely that the public should be kept out of the bush until such time as it was properly restored. He recognised that restoration would be the work of many years. He believed that even once it was achieved, access should be restricted to well defined paths.⁸⁴ The issue of public access was not resolved at the Annual General Meeting. Given the general importance attached to public accessibility by members of the movement, including Cockayne himself, his opposition to public access in this instance is indicative of the great importance he attached to this piece of bush as "a last remnant on earth of a particular plant society."⁸⁵ Furthermore, he was insistent that although every effort should be made to preserve and restore the character of the bush, nothing should be done to change its character, that is, no plants should be planted within it except such as belonged to this ancient forest. Cockayne was feeling his way towards a concern with protecting gene pools, but the idea would not be clearly articulated in the New Zealand context until J. G. Myers raised the issue in relation to the transfer of birds to off-shore islands in the mid-1920s. In fact, a year after his article on Dean's Bush, Cockayne wrote another on Kennedy's Bush reserve, where he

81. Department of Lands and Survey, *Sign of the Packhorse Scenic Reserve Management Plan*. Christchurch : Department of Lands and Survey, 1980.

82. Canterbury Beautifying Association, Minute Books, Canterbury Museum, Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 26 February 1906.

83. "Riccarrton Bush, Its History and Its Future," *The Press*, 13 May 1905.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.

envisaged growing many northern plants which are not normally hardy in Canterbury, as well as a large collection of alpine plants and shrubs.⁸⁶

A further meeting took place on 12 March at which it was resolved to direct the attention of the Scenery Preservation Commission to the proposal to acquire the bush, asking it to visit the site. Unfortunately, despite firm backing from the press, the Association was not successful in raising sufficient public support. The bush was not finally reserved until 1914, when the Deans family gifted the land to the public.⁸⁷ Cockayne's views on the need for public exclusion in the short term probably did not help the cause. Although the public increasingly accepted the need for protection of scenery and public open spaces, it may have been less willing to fund the purchase of an area from which it might be excluded. The sort of thinking expressed by the editor of *The Press* may also have helped to undermine the Association's campaign. Though favouring preservation, he suggested that the Government might reasonably fund the whole of the purchase given the limited spending of the Scenery Preservation Commission in Canterbury.⁸⁸

The importance of this campaign should not be underestimated, despite its failure. In his 1905 article in *The Press*, Cockayne began to set forth a rationale for scenery preservation based on plant associations and the idea that the character of the scenery in a country largely depends on its characteristic plant associations. He would develop these themes more fully elsewhere but for now he was planting the seed of ideas which would come to be more widely adopted. He emphasised the inadequacy of museums for preserving the natural history of a country, reminding his readers that they were no substitute for living plants and animals, and pointing out that forests were by no means all alike, certain dominant species giving character to the whole. Riccarton bush was one type, a last remnant of a particular plant association.⁸⁹

In November 1924, the Association began an official publication under the editorship of Chilton, entitled the *City Beautiful*. He continued as editor until 1927. After that the publication was taken over by the Christchurch Horticultural Society. Under the editorship of Chilton, a number of articles appeared on such topics as the impact of

86. L. Cockayne, "Preservation of Native Forest in New Zealand: Some Views of Kennedy's Bush," *The Weekly Press*, 4 April 1906, pp. 40-41. He seems to have had in mind an outdoor museum of the type he later developed at Otari.

87. J. Deans, "How the Bush was Reserved," pp. 8-9. in *Riccarton Bush*. C. Chilton, ed. Christchurch : Canterbury Publishing Co., 1924.

88. *The Press*, 27 February 1906.

89. For discussion of the development of these themes see Chapter Eight.

browsing animals on forest reserves, the need to protect the indigenous character of national parks, the importance of protecting natural monuments, including accounts of the efforts which were being made in this direction overseas and a reminder of the need to protect the Port Hills.⁹⁰ Other articles warned against the dangers of river pollution, air pollution and the need to control the use of fires. Town and country planning also featured as an important concern. The Association's dissemination of conservation ideas complemented similar efforts at this time by the Native Bird Protection Society, but by now the extent of its involvement with nature conservation seems to have been largely confined to this role. The minutes for these and the following years disclose more and more emphasis on beautification projects, with the occasional exception, such as the campaign for the creation of Arthur's Pass National Park in 1928.

The relatively modest achievements of the Association in scenery preservation seems surprising, given the great enthusiasm of both Ell and Cockayne for the cause. Ell, from the time he entered Parliament in 1899, campaigned tirelessly for better recognition of New Zealand's scenic assets and was acknowledged by his fellow Parliamentarians as largely responsible for promoting the Scenery Preservation Act 1903 through the House. Cockayne, too, had publicly expressed his opinion on the importance of the issue on more than one occasion. For example, at the 1901 Conference of New Zealand Fruitgrowers and Horticulturalists, an event which ostensibly had very little bearing on the issue of scenery preservation, he declared, in support of a paper read by G. M. Thomson urging the preservation of native flora, that "the most valuable asset in our colony was the scenery, and if we destroyed our forests, the scenery would no longer be an asset.... it was of as much importance to look after native plants as the fruit industry."⁹¹ Protection of the bush remnants and open spaces of the Port Hills, above Christchurch, and Banks Peninsula would seem to have provided an obvious focus for the activities of the Association, yet apart from the effort to secure Parkinson's Bush and the Onawe Peninsula, which I have already mentioned, the only other activity it seems to have undertaken with respect to this area was the clearance of gorse and planting of native trees in the County Council Reserve on Cashmere and support of efforts by Ell in 1899 to prevent the closure of certain public roads giving access to the Port Hills.⁹²

90. The series of articles on protecting natural monuments ran from May through to September 1927. A number of these were based on *The Care of Natural Monuments*, by the German, H. Conwentz, to whom I have referred in Chapter Two.

91. *Conference of New Zealand Fruitgrowers and Horticulturalists*. June 1901, Dunedin. Wellington : Government Printer, 1901, p. 112.

92. Oakley (1960) p. 35, refers to a resolution passed by the society "unanimously urging that no more roads be closed on the Port Hills." See also Chapter Seven, note 6.

One possible explanation for the Association's lack of involvement may perhaps be found in the commitment elsewhere of the two members most likely to push for protection of the Hills. Ell spent much of his time out of Christchurch in pursuit of his Parliamentary duty. Likewise, Cockayne was frequently away on field trips between 1900 and 1914, when he moved to Wellington.⁹³ In the course of that time he visited the Chatham Islands (1901), the subantarctic islands (1903), with a return visit to the Auckland Islands in 1907. He also produced botanical surveys for the Department of Lands and Survey on Kapiti (1907), Waipoua (1908), Tongariro (1908) Stewart Island (1909) and reports on the potential for reclamation of sand dunes (1909, 1911). In 1910 he published his classic study, *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*.

Despite their involvement elsewhere, there is evidence that Ell, at least, tried to enlist the aid of the Beautifying Association in the protection of the Port Hills. In May 1900, he wrote a letter to the chairman of the Association, Mr Reece, expressing the opinion that it would be a good thing if an area native bush close to Christchurch might be preserved for the benefit of native bird life. Kennedy's Bush, about 4.4 km from the city, he believed, was an ideal spot if it could be procured as a public reserve. There is no evidence that the Association acted on his suggestion, although he clearly hoped it would take up the matter, having concluded his letter with the words "Trusting that something may be done."⁹⁴ Because of the loss of records for this time, it is impossible to know whether the matter was in fact put before the Committee or whether Cockayne supported the idea. Given his subsequent support for the scheme it would be surprising if he had not, assuming that he was present when or if the matter was discussed. In December, Ell again approached Mr Reece, this time in his capacity as Mayor. Reece agreed to visit the site with Ell and the owner of the property. There was no immediate outcome from this visit. It was not until 1906 that Ell was finally able to persuade the Government to acquire the property on the basis of a two pound subsidy for every pound the supporters contributed towards its purchase.⁹⁵ Once again I have found no evidence to suggest that the Association was involved in the fundraising, though Reece became an active supporter of the cause, contributing both time and money.

93. A.D. Thomson, *The Life and Correspondence of Leonard Cockayne*. Paper presented at the History of Science Conference, Wellington, 12-14 February 1983. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1983, p.41. He moved to Wellington sometime in 1904 to be with his son, but returned to Christchurch in 1905.

94. Canterbury Public Library, Ell MS Papers, Box 8/11, Letter dated 8 May 1900 to Mr Reece, chairman of the Christchurch Beautifying Association. In Ell's subsequent accounts of the events leading to acquisition of the Bush, he makes no reference to this letter.

95. Canterbury Museum, Chilton Papers, Box 2, File 2.

Given Ell's apparent lack of success in persuading the Association to become involved in the protection of Kennedy's Bush, it is scarcely surprising that once he conceived the idea of the Summit Road and its associated reserves, he found it more convenient to form a group specifically directed to that goal. Besides, the Association's reluctance to become involved with Kennedy's Bush was not the only incident to give him cause to feel unhappy about the running of the group, and that discontent no doubt helped crystallise the idea of forming a separate group. Both he and Chilton expressed dissatisfaction over the infrequency of meetings at a General Committee Meeting of 3 March 1908 (which the surviving records suggest must have taken place only once a year at this stage). Ell advocated quarterly meetings and felt the need to raise the public profile of the organisation. At the Annual General Meeting, which took place on the same date, further dissatisfaction was expressed about the Association's lack of activity and its policy of building up funds rather than spending them.⁹⁶ No-one could ever accuse Ell of having such a Treasurer's mentality, indeed many were the occasions when his friends had cause to regret that fiscal responsibility was not one of the traits of his character. His propensity to spend funds which were not available would become the source of considerable friction between himself and the association he formed in 1909. Given his ideas about spending money, it is even less surprising that he should have chosen to set up his own society. Apart from such differences of opinion about the functioning of the Beautifying Association, there were sound enough reasons for forming a new group rather than trying to work through an existing one. With such an ambitious undertaking in mind there were obvious advantages from a fundraising and organisational point of view in having a society which focussed on one particular project. But above all, the formation of an organisation whose character he could mould was much more in keeping with his forceful, dominating personality and compulsive drive to achieve the goals he set himself whatever the odds against them. Although he continued as a member of the Beautifying Association after forming his own organisation, it is clear that from the time he conceived his Summit Road scheme much of his energy was now devoted to that project, when not pursuing his parliamentary duties. Both Chilton and Cockayne worked closely with him on the scheme. The story of the Summit Road Association will be told in Chapter Seven. The main point to be made here is that once it had formed, it left the Beautifying Association in a position to concentrate on urban improvement.

The Auckland Conservation Society, during its few years of existence,⁹⁷ was active in a wide range of scenery preservation issues as well as the usual amenity concerns (tree

96. Canterbury Beautifying Association, Minute Books, Canterbury Museum.

97. The Society appears to have folded in 1907 according to information recorded in the entry on one of its founders, A. J. Allom, in *Who's Who in New Zealand*, 1908. The reason for the demise of such an active group is not clear but it seems to have been gradual rather than sudden. The 1903 AGM

planting; provision of statues for city parks, protest against proposed encroachment onto the Domain for a hospital and protest against advertising hoardings disfiguring scenes of beauty).⁹⁸ The Society was involved with endeavours to protect bush fragments within the vicinity of the city, including the Waitakeres,⁹⁹ Kauri Point, Birkenhead,¹⁰⁰ a proposed Kauri reserve at Swanson,¹⁰¹ and at Papakura.¹⁰² It campaigned vigorously against the destruction of ferns in Cemetery Gully¹⁰³ and against unsuitable plantings of pine and poplar in the Domain which threatened areas of bush.¹⁰⁴ Like its counterpart in Taranaki, it was concerned with the protection of Pa sites, one such project being the restoration of the pa on One Tree Hill.¹⁰⁵ Further afield, the Society took up the issue of protection of prominent mountains such as Pirongia¹⁰⁶ to the south and Pukearinga and Maungaturoto to the north.¹⁰⁷ It also drew the attention of the Premier, Seddon, to the destruction of bush on the islands of the Hauraki Gulf, who passed the matter on to the Minister of Lands with a request that

reported a lack of membership. I have found no record of its activities beyond 1905, suggesting that it had already become less active. It is probable that the Government's greater assumption of responsibility for scenery preservation under the 1903 Act played a part in its decline. There may also have been a gradual attrition of active members through death or retirement. Allom died in 1909 at the age of 84. It is possible that ill health could have forced him to withdraw from active involvement in the Society a few years earlier, though he was still vice-president in 1903. Several life members were reported to have died during 1903. (*New Zealand Herald*, 31 July 1903)

98. *New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1899, 24 July 1901, 31 July 1903 & 4 August 1904. The campaign to prevent land being taken from the Domain for hospital purposes was unsuccessful as anyone acquainted with the location of the Auckland Public Hospital would guess. However the presence of the society helped stave off proposals for leasing the Domain to bring in revenue for the Council.

99. *New Zealand Herald*, 5 August 1899, 16 August 1899 & 1 August 1903. The Society successfully sought additions to the People's Park in the Waitakeres and protection of the bush at the city's Water Supply Reserve.

100. *New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1899 & 1 August 1903. The Society participated in working bees in co-operation with the Birkenhead Society to protect the kauris from danger of fire.

101. *New Zealand Herald*, 6 July 1905.

102. National Archives, Wellington. Lands and Survey File 70/9.

103. *New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1899. The Society established a special sub-committee to deal with this issue and to communicate with the Trustees of the Cemetery and the police in order to combat the problem.

104. *New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1899 & 24 July 1901. The Society responded to the threat by establishing a special sub-committee to deal with the issue and by providing funds for the removal of the offending trees and their replacement with suitable natives. The botanist, Thomas Cheeseman, was a leading force behind the campaign for suitable planting.

105. *New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1899. Once again the Society established a sub-committee to deal with this matter.

106. *New Zealand Herald*, 5 August 1899.

107. National Archives, Wellington. Lands and Survey File 70/13; *New Zealand Herald*, 31 July 1903.

he refer it to the Scenery Preservation Commission.¹⁰⁸ Other notable achievements included its success in dissuading the Railway Department from a proposed use of pohutukawas as railway sleepers and in persuading the Chief Surveyor of Lands to issue instructions that cliffs and steep slopes on Crown land along the coast, where pohutukawas and other natives were growing, should be reserved from sale or lease.¹⁰⁹ Efforts to persuade the Government to remove the control of forest lands from the department of Lands and Survey did not meet the same success. In 1904 it issued a circular letter to kindred societies asking them to join with it in lobbying the Government to create a forestry department to be staffed by experienced personnel with conservators in every district.¹¹⁰ A separate department would not be created until 1919, then largely as a result of the efforts of a later group, the New Zealand Forestry League.¹¹¹ The same year it also lobbied the Government to consider suggestions for better control and preservation of forests, scenic and climatic reserves throughout the Colony.¹¹² This campaign might have had some influence on the decision to include a separate report on scenery preservation in the reports of the Department of Lands and Survey from 1906, to appoint an Inspector of Scenic Reserves in October 1907, and to have a separate Minister in Charge of Scenery Preservation from 1909.¹¹³

Much less is known about the Wellington Scenery Preservation Society.

Unfortunately, there is no trace of its activities beyond 1900, by which stage it had a number of sub-committees to deal with different reserves in the city. An item in the *New Zealand Herald* of 14 August 1900 indicates that the Society was still flourishing at that time with a membership approaching two hundred. It seems unlikely that an apparently flourishing group should have suddenly collapsed, and future research may be able to cast more light on this, at present, rather shadowy group. The sketchy summaries of annual meetings which appeared in the press up to 1900 disclose a concern with tree planting, lobbying against the dumping of rubbish in the Botanic

108. *New Zealand Herald*, 6 July 1905.

109. *New Zealand Herald*, 4 August 1904.

110. *New Zealand Herald*, 28 July 1904. The 16th Annual Report of the Dunedin Society (April 1905) refers to receipt of the circular and communication with the Government of its support for the views contained in it.

111. For more on this group see Chapter Nine.

112. Reference to this campaign on the part of the Society is found in the 7th Annual Report of the Christchurch Beautifying Association, which supported its endeavour. (February 1904)

113. The reports on scenery preservation are found in the *Appendices to the Journal of House of Representatives* under C-6. E. Phillips Turner was appointed Inspector of Scenic Reserves on the 1st of October, 1907. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1908, C-6) Thomas Mackenzie is recorded as the Minister in Charge of Scenery Preservation for the first time in the Annual Report on Scenery Preservation for 1909. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1909, C-6) Previously the Reports were made to the Minister of Lands.

Gardens and efforts to protect the Town Belt against encroachment.¹¹⁴ The surviving evidence is so limited that it is not possible to say whether the Society's avowed objective of preserving the scenery of the Wellington Province was ever fulfilled beyond the protection of the Town Belt.

The surviving evidence of the Wanganui Scenery Preservation and Beautification Society is equally brief. The records of annual general meetings from the time of its formation in 1910 until 1914 suggest that this late flowering of the movement was cast in the same mould as the societies in Dunedin, Christchurch and Wellington, devoting the greater part of its energies to beautification work. This included planting natives in a city reserve, Lairds Park, as an educational resource.¹¹⁵ It was evidently an active group for by 1912 it was reported to have formed six branches.¹¹⁶ The Society took an interest in town planning and was represented by Mr A. J. Neame at the 1919 Town Planning Conference, which led to the establishment of town planning legislation.¹¹⁷ Although projects of a beautifying nature appear to have dominated the bulk of its time, the issue of protecting the scenery of the Wanganui River, which had prompted its formation, continued to be an important concern. Early in 1913 the Society sent a circular to all Members of Parliament asking for legislation to conserve all the remaining bush on the Wanganui.¹¹⁸ This action was followed up with a deputation to the Royal Commission on Forestry in May 1913 to make representations concerning conservation of the headwaters of the Wanganui. The Commission recommended that the Government acquire for preservation all steep banks of the river not already reserved, from the waters edge to the skyline, where the land was not suitable for settlement.¹¹⁹ This recommendation cannot have been followed up to the complete satisfaction of the Society because reports from 1923 indicate that at this time it was still occupied with efforts to preserve scenery in the upper Wanganui and was arranging a conference on the issue.¹²⁰ The group was listed as a participant at the Dominion Conference on Bush Preservation and Tree Planting which took place on the 2nd of April 1937.¹²¹ At that time, the president, Mr Hope Gibbons, described the aim of

114. *Evening Post*, 11 August 1897, 1 September 1898, 29 August 1899, 17 July 1900 & 10 August 1900.

115. *Wanganui Chronicle*, 30 April 1912, 11 April 1913 & 12 May 1914.

116. *Wanganui Chronicle*, 30 April 1912.

117. *Proceedings of the 1st New Zealand Town Planning Conference*, Wellington, 20-23 May, 1919. Wellington : Government Printer, 1919.

118. *Wanganui Chronicle*, 11 April, 1913.

119. *A.J.H.R.*, 1913, C-12.

120. *New Zealand Life*, 9 : 1 August 1923.

121. National Archives, Wellington, IA 165/1.

the Society as preservation of the bush, particularly along the Wanganui River. It lapsed some time after that date although an attempt was made to revive it in 1971.¹²²

Little is known about the activities of the Nelson Scenery Preservation Society from the time it was founded in 1894 until 1898 when it became embroiled in a major battle to have the Ronga and Opouri Valleys in the Rai district of Marlborough constituted a national park. Although the Society failed to achieve its object, this campaign was widely publicised. It did much to focus attention on the issue of conservation, helping to create a climate of opinion in which the Scenery Preservation Act could be passed. The campaign anticipated many of the arguments which would be put forward in the protracted battles to save Waipoua Forest during the early part of the twentieth century, which has been widely but wrongly regarded as the first major conservation battle in New Zealand.¹²³ It reveals much about the strengths and weaknesses of the movement and the obstacles it faced and deserves to be much better known. Accordingly, it will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. However, before turning to that campaign the sketchy information which survives concerning the activities of the Society up to that time needs to be examined.¹²⁴

All the available evidence suggests a group which, from the very outset, meant business. At the inaugural meeting it was agreed to have the rules of the Society printed and circulated to all public bodies and to all teachers and school committees in the region.¹²⁵ When the Society met for the first meeting following its inauguration, two subcommittees were established, one to recommend reserves and another to deal with the issue of tracks on Dun Mountain, the prominent hill behind the city.¹²⁶ An entry in the diary of F. G. Gibbs, a founding member who took an active role in the Society, reveals that a further subcommittee was set up in 1897 to campaign for bridges across the Maitai River in order to improve access to the Maitai Valley. The Valley was a popular picnicking area and the starting point for some excellent tramping routes.¹²⁷

122. Flora Spurdle Scrapbook, Wanganui Museum.

123. In so far as it is meaningful to speak of the first battle, the Waipoua campaign was clearly not the first as the evidence of this thesis should have made clear. Apart from the Ronga and Opouri battle other early campaigns included the struggle to protect Bowen Falls and the campaign to have off shore islands set aside as bird sanctuaries as well as the long term struggle initiated by the Taranaki Society and taken up over the years by many others for better management of reserves.

124. I have been unable to trace any reports of the annual general meetings of the Society prior to 1898 despite a thorough search of all available Nelson newspapers covering that period.

125. *The Colonist*, 22 August 1894.

126. *The Colonist*, 12 September 1894.

127. Cited in Mann, 1977, p. 53.

In 1898, at the same time as the Society was campaigning for the protection of the Ronga and Opouri Valleys, it also took up the issue of better protection for Maungatapu water reserve in the Bryant Range, which had been seriously encroached upon by recent fires.¹²⁸ So far as the records are concerned, the Society fades into oblivion after the Rai campaign. Whether it surmounted this failure and continued as a group is not known. If it did, it seems certain that it had folded by 1906. There is no mention of the group in the volume of the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* for that year, which covers Nelson. In 1911 a Nelson Beautifying Society was formed, with F. G. Gibbs as a foundation member. This may have been an attempt to revive the earlier society, but it seems to have been purely concerned with beautifying matters. Gibbs himself continued to make a vital contribution to nature conservation over the following years. He led a campaign for the reservation of the Maitai Valley as a public reserve when it came up for subdivision in 1908. In 1915 he urged the Nelson Chamber of Commerce to take an interest in the completion of tracks at Wangapeka and Little Wanganui in North-west Nelson. He also took a strong interest in the preservation of areas further afield from the city. He was instrumental in the purchase of land around Lake Rotoiti and the development of facilities for camping and picnicking there, also in the building of huts and tracks on Mt Arthur.¹²⁹

One more group should be mentioned before I turn to an examination of the battle for the Rai, the Rangitikei Society for the Preservation and Growth of New Zealand Flora, which was founded in Marton in July 1913.¹³⁰ It seems quite probable that this is identical with the Rangitikei Scenery Preservation and Tree Planting Society, which was said to have replaced the Marton Beautifying Society and about which I have uncovered no further information. There appears to be no direct link between the Rangitikei Society for the Preservation and Growth of New Zealand Flora and the earliest of the scenery preservation groups, although an indirect link exists through interconnection with the Marton and the Wanganui Beautifying Societies. At least three members of the executive of the new organisation were also members of the Wanganui Society, Mr J. A. Neame, a Wanganui schoolmaster, who has already been mentioned, Mr C. H. E. Rhodes, a retired farmer and keen horticulturalist who took an active part in beautifying the reserves around Wanganui,¹³¹ and Mr A. Allison, an enthusiast and

128. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 February 1898.

129. See Mann (1977). In later years he was a founding member and patron of the Nelson Tramping Club. His biographer, S. C. Mann, describes him as an able organiser who loved a fight, a man of energy and enthusiasm, a forceful personality.

130. Forest and Bird Collection, MS Papers 444, Folder 76, Alexander Turnbull Library.

131. I am indebted for this information to Mr Paul Melody of Marton.

expert in the cultivation of native shrubs.¹³² Another member of the executive, Mr E. J. Wilde, was also an officer of the Marton Beautifying Society.¹³³

Very little is known about the Society, who promoted it or what its activities were. It flourished only briefly until thrown out of existence by the war. Between 1914 and 1915 it had 35 members, 17 men and 18 women. They were drawn from throughout the surrounding area, coming from as far afield as Hawera, Hunterville and Pahiatua.¹³⁴ A record of the Society's objectives has survived and these are interesting because they do not conform to the pattern of those of the earlier groups. For this reason they are worth setting out in full:

- (1) To preserve and cultivate the trees and plants indigenous to the Dominion of New Zealand.
- (2) To inculcate among the public, especially children, an intelligent and scientific interest in the native flora.
- (3) To organise among members plant-hunting and botanising excursions, and by meetings, reading of papers and resultant discussions, to promote the successful propagation, cultivation and scientific description of all indigenous plants.
- (4) To interest the public in planting New Zealand timber trees and secure the reservation of all forest trees on roads and other public lands not being for settlement, and to secure the proper protection of the same from fire, stock or vandalism.
- (5) To secure, as public reserves, typical, rare or any other desirable private forest lands which are in danger of being destroyed.
- (6) To publish or assist in the publication of any papers or works which the Council may consider of sufficient interest to be circulated among members, and to create a Library of Works for the use of members.
- (7) To encourage exhibits of native collections in flower shows and schools and to offer prizes for collections of native ferns, plants, trees, mosses, timbers at horticultural or other exhibitions.

The objects suggest an organisation which was a cross between a scenery preservation society, a naturalist's field club and a horticultural society. Although the objects show the legacy of earlier groups, especially numbers (4) and (5), they make a clear break from the mould of combining beautification and scenery preservation goals. In that respect the Society resembles the Summit Road Association, formed a few years earlier by Ell. The interest of the Society is very clearly confined to the indigenous. The influence of Ell's parliamentary calls for protection of areas of "typical" plant life is evident in the sixth object. On the other hand, it is also the first time a specific mention of rarity appears in the objects of a group. The objects reveal a scientific awareness which was not present in those of the earlier societies. In this they no doubt show the benefit of the public education efforts of those earlier groups as well as of men like Ell and Cockayne. The form of the objects look forward to developments which emerged in the activities of new groups that arose in the second decade of the twentieth century.

132. *Wanganui Chronicle*, 28 April, 1910.

133. *The Rangitikei Advocate*, 21 June 1913.

134. Forest and Bird Collection, MS Papers 444, Folder 76, Alexander Turnbull Library.

These groups will be discussed in later chapters. Despite the dearth of information about the activities of the Rangitikei group, its objects provide an index of the development in the scenery preservation movement, both in terms of an awareness of the issues at stake in conservation and in the growing sense of national identity in the early decades of the twentieth century.

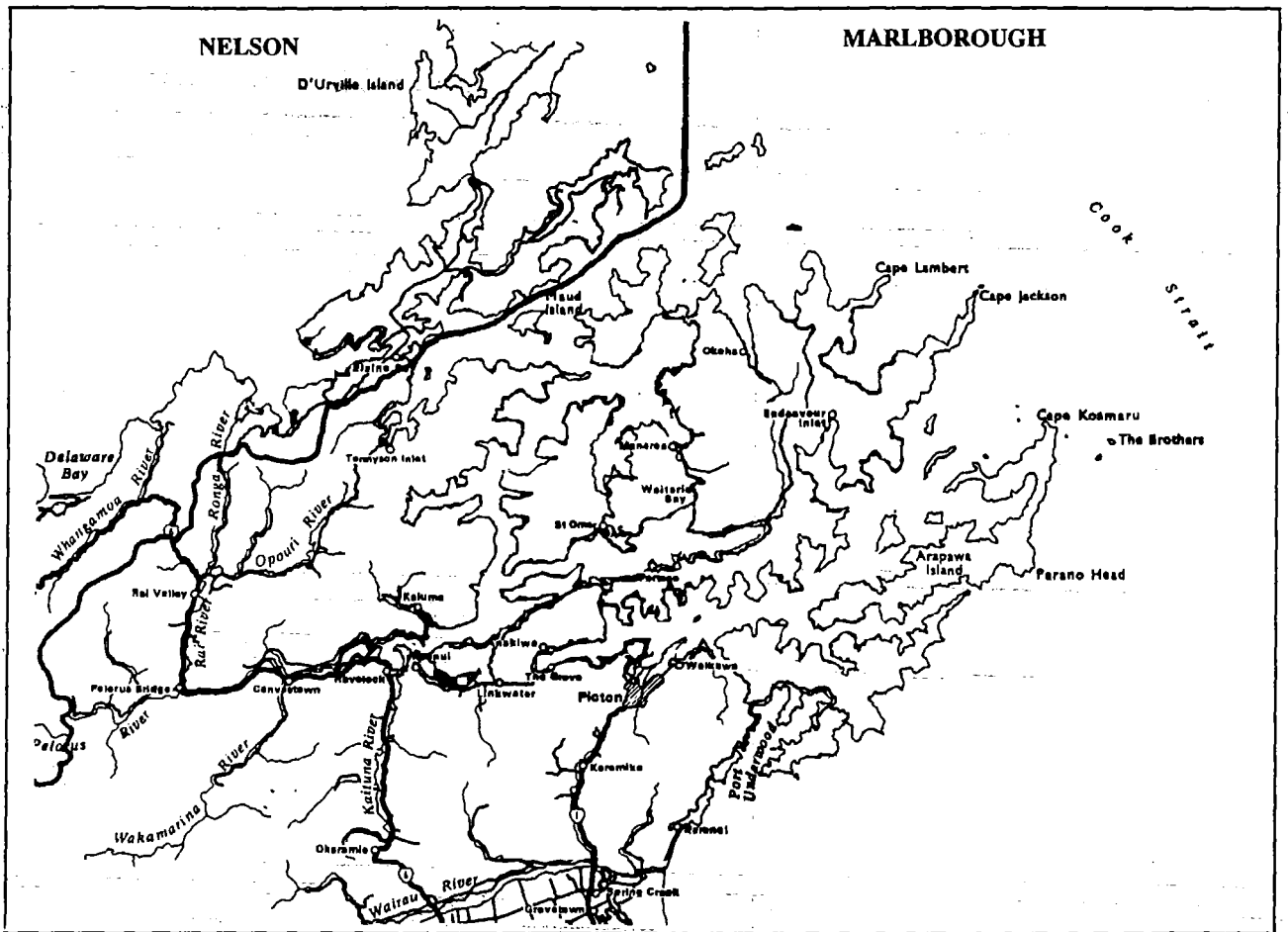
Several factors account for the sudden growth in groups concerned with the conservation of nature in the two decades from 1890: the success of the earliest groups in publicising themselves and their cause; the world-wide growth of interest in nature conservation during these decade;¹³⁵ a trend for the rapidly growing urban population to form groups and to take action through their group institutions;¹³⁶ and the international trend to explore national identity.¹³⁷ Finally there were the rapid changes in the New Zealand landscape itself in the two decades from 1890 to 1910. This was the period which, as Olsen points out, saw the triumph of the family farm, but it was a triumph carved out of the remaining bushlands of the North Island, especially former Maori lands.¹³⁸

135. The world-wide extent of the interest in conservation at this time was clearly illustrated by Conwentz(1909).

136. E. Olsen, "Towards a New Society," pp. 250-278 in W. H. Oliver & B. R. Williams, eds., *The Oxford History of New Zealand*. Wellington : Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 257. Olsen points out that from around 1890, voluntary organisations proliferated, a fact borne out by the great number of organisations to which many of the participants in the movement belonged.

137. See pp. 142-144 above

138. Although the break up of the large estates in the 1890s is well recognised, it is much less widely known that McKenzie also introduced legislation which greatly eased and speeded up the alienation of Maori lands. Between 1892 and 1900 the Government bought 2,729,000 acres of Maori land. (*NZDB*, Vol. 2, p. 296) In effect, this meant purchase of the bush lands of the North Island, the whole of the South Island except certain reserves having been acquired prior to 1862. Between 1870 and 31 March 1910 a total of 8,004,851 acres were acquired from the Maori in the North Island, a figure greatly exceeding the area acquired up to 1870. (*New Zealand Official Yearbook*, 1912, p. 550) The pace of alienation was maintained under the Native Land Act 1909. The 1919 *Yearbook* records that since the passing of the Act a further 2,258,738 acres were acquired. (p. 497)



Ronga and Opouri Valleys, Marlborough. Location Map.
Source: McCaskill, *Scenic Reserves of Marlborough*.



Ronga and Opouri Valleys, Marlborough, Topographical Map.
 Source: Lands and Survey NZMS 260 sheet 027

CHAPTER SIX

The Nelson Scenery Preservation Society And The Battle For The Rai

The Ronga and Opouri Valleys lie in the Marlborough land district to the north-east of State Highway 6 between Nelson and Blenheim at Rai Valley. The Ronga River arises between Mt Ronga and the Ronga Saddle to the south of Croisilles Harbour and drains due south to the Rai River. The Opouri River arises to the east of the Ronga in the Opouri Saddle above Tennyson Inlet. It drains south then west into the Ronga River, just to the north of its confluence with the Rai River near the Rai Valley settlement. The two valleys are separated by the Bull Range, which rises at its highest point to 1032 metres and the Tunakina Valley, a tributary of the Opouri. The valley floors are now cleared and farmed, with the exception of one very small riverside reserve. Bush remains on the higher elevations of the surrounding ranges, which now form the northern extension of Mt Richmond Forest Park. The area is traversed by roads leading to Croisilles Harbour and French Pass and to Tennyson Inlet. In 1898, there were no roads through the area and the land was still fully clothed in bush, having been set aside as a Forest Reserve in 1886.

The event which spurred the Nelson Scenery Preservation Society into action over the Ronga and Opouri Valleys was the presentation of a petition to Parliament in 1897 by W. T. Erskine and others asking the Government to purchase a bush tramway belonging to Messers Brownlee and Co., sawmillers and urging that the two valleys be opened up to sawmilling and settlement.¹ This petition was not the first which sought to have the designation as Forest Reserve set aside. In 1893 the Pelorus Road Board and others in Marlborough had already sought to have the land opened up and had successfully persuaded the Waste Lands Committee to recommend that the Government make further inquiries so as to ascertain in what manner the forests could be worked in the interests of sawmilling and settlement to the best advantage of the district and the colony.² This was followed by a further petition in 1894, this time in the name of W. T. Erskine and others. Once again the Committee had recommended that the Government take "immediate steps to open up the valuable forest lands."³ Whether through inertia or active resistance on the part of officials charged with administration of Forest Reserves, by the time of Erskine's 1897 petition, no action had been taken on the Committee's recommendation beyond

1. *A.J.H.R.*, 1898, 1-5B

2. *A.J.H.R.*, 1894, 1-5B, p. 7.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

obtaining a report from a Public Works Department Engineer.⁴ The Erskine petition was presented too late in the parliamentary session of 1897 to be heard that year so it was held over to the following year, finally being set down for hearing on 19 July 1898. This delay gave the Nelson Scenery Preservation Society time to organise a counter-petition which was heard together with the original petition.

On 22 February 1898 the Society convened a special meeting to discuss the protection of the two valleys.⁵ It was concerned at the rapid diminution of bush in the region with the steady advance of settlement and as a result of fires, some deliberate, others accidental. Much of the bush which formerly abounded in the Rai Valley had been reduced to a blackened ruin by recent fires which had swept through it, though some side valleys had escaped unscathed. The area the Society sought to have protected was amongst those valleys which had remained untouched by virtue of their location. It was situated in a river basin which could only be approached by the opening through which the Rai River found an outlet, providing a natural immunity from fire which was further enhanced by the frequency with which the area was subjected to flooding and by the density of its forest cover. However, if sawmillers were let into any part of this compact block, the immunity from fire which was at present provided by its location, would be quickly lost.

The Society accepted that "clearing of the bush was necessary to profitable settlement," but "at the same time, " it believed that "it was only proper that some portions of the forests should be preserved in their native state, so that the fauna and natural scenery of the country should not be entirely sacrificed."⁶ It acknowledged that it would be unreasonable to ask the Government to reserve all the valleys in the district which still remained intact, but if a portion of these were reserved much of the primeval beauty of the bush could be retained "without unduly interfering with the claims of settlement."⁷ In the Society's opinion, the whole of the watersheds of the Ronga and Opouri Rivers, an area of approximately 10-12 thousand acres, were ideally suited as a national reserve for future generations. The area sought constituted only a small part of the Rai Valley itself and the neighbouring Pelorus and Wakamarina Valleys still remained available for settlement. The Mayor of Nelson, Mr Trask, speaking in support of the reservation, claimed it would not be unreasonable to seek protection of the whole of the forest between Wakapuaka on the Nelson side of the Bryant Range and Havelock, at the mouth of the Pelorus. But, he

4. *A.J.H.R.*, 1898, I-5B, pp. 1 & 32-35.

5. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 February 1898.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

stressed, they did not wish to "be covetous and ask for land that was suitable for settlement."⁸

There were a number of reasons to favour preservation of these particular valleys, not least of them being the relative freedom they enjoyed from risk of fire. The fact that the area had already been set aside as a Forest Reserve was another important consideration, and the reasons which had justified its reservation in 1886 had not changed since. The Society did not rest its case there. In its view there were three other major arguments favouring the perpetuation of the reserve. First, it was an important breeding and feeding site for native fauna. Species which were now rare in the vicinity of Nelson - tui, pigeons, kaka - abounded in the area, which if preserved on the scale proposed by the Society, would provide a safe and permanent home for the remaining fauna of the district. The Government had shown its interest in protecting native fauna by removing species to island reserves such as Kapiti, but in the present case, the Society argued, "they could be preserved in their natural home where they would fare better."⁹ Second, the area possessed the advantage of ready accessibility to bush as magnificent as any in the country.¹⁰ It was situated just off the main road between Nelson and Blenheim, approximately equidistant from the two centres of population, a route that "a large number of travellers now patronised."¹¹ When the railway went through in the future it would pass close by.¹² The area was also readily accessible from sea at nearby Croisilles Harbour. Third, little would be gained and much lost if it were opened for settlement, for of the 10-12 thousand acres, only 600-1000 acres was flat land. This would support few families and because of the density of the bush to be cleared and stumped, it would take many years to make a home there. In other parts of the country settlers were "bemoaning their want of forethought in allowing the whole of their bush country to be destroyed." In this region, where it was still possible to protect the bush, it would be "a calamity and disgrace to the Nelson and Marlborough people if they allowed this remaining piece of bush to be slaughtered" for the sake of land which was "practically useless for settlement purposes" or for the sake of sawmillers who had forest available elsewhere in the district.¹³

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Mr Percy Adams, one of the leading promoters of the reserve, who was well acquainted with the forest, felt no hesitation in proclaiming that "there was no more magnificent piece of bush land in the colony." (Ibid.) The Rev. F. W. Chatterton also asserted there was not a finer piece of bush in New Zealand.

11. Ibid.

12. The Blenheim-Nelson rail link passes through the region eight miles to the south of Rai Valley at Pelorus Bridge.

13. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 February 1898.

Mr Fell must surely have been conscious of irony when he claimed that if the valleys were "subjected to the usual ravages of milling and fire, nothing but a howling wilderness would be the result."¹⁴ This was a reversal of the traditional depiction of primeval forests as "howling wilderness," but it summarised well the general feeling of the meeting. The meeting concluded with the passing of a motion that Parliament be asked to have the area "permanently reserved for the growth and preservation of timber, the preservation of native fauna, and for the general enjoyment of the people of New Zealand."¹⁵ It was agreed that those present at the meeting would form a committee to collect signatures on a petition to be drawn up by a subcommittee appointed for that purpose and that the committee should seek the support of the kindred society in Blenheim, or failing that, invite the co-operation of the Mayor and Councillors of Blenheim.¹⁶

A leading article in the issue of the *Nelson Evening Mail* which reported the meeting, described it as well attended by residents who were not members of the Society. The leader writer supported the Society's stance, stating that revocation of the reserve would be a "spendthrift act, robbery of our children and theirs."¹⁷ He saw no evidence of any special desire to select for settlements in the valley and concluded that the agitation for revocation was entirely on behalf of the millers. He had no doubt the sacrifice asked by those seeking revocation was too great. As the home to many birds and one of the few localities left in the district where characteristic forest scenery was still preserved, it had been rendered even more rare by the loss of so much bush in the recent fires. Its value as timber would quadruple with time and its continued protection would have no impact upon the livelihood of millers other than to force them a little further afield. The Society, he argued, was not asking for extreme conservation at the expense of industry and settlement but for the reservation of what was a typical example of New Zealand forest in an accessible but at the same time risk-free location. In his view, its preservation was a matter not just of local interest but of national concern.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. The sub-committee comprised the chairman and founder of the Society, Mr Fell, Mr Graham, the local Member of Parliament, Mr J. H. Cock, Mr F. G. Gibbs and Mr Percy Adams, who described himself to the Waste Lands Committee as a New Zealand born colonist who takes a great interest in forest conservation and preserving the beauty of our natural scenery.

17. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 February 1898.

Leading articles in other newspapers supported the campaign as well. Both Marlborough papers, the *Express* and the *Times* were reported to favour upholding the reserve.¹⁸ In Wellington, the *Evening Post* reported the meeting in detail. Its leader writer made it plain that he did not sympathise with utilitarians who argue that wholesale destruction of the bush is inevitable. He aligned himself firmly on the side of those "who do not hold that the utter effacement of all accessible native bush is necessary to true progress." Posterity, he was convinced, "will alike deride and despise us as foolish Vandals who lightly, for the sake of a little green grass, cast from us a great gift that can never be replaced."¹⁹ On behalf of the citizens of Wellington, for whom the preservation of the bush was as much a matter of interest as for those of Nelson and Marlborough, he voiced his plea that the Minister of Lands declare the area inviolate.

The only newspaper to oppose the reserve was the *Pelorus Guardian* which asked, with the well worn rhetoric of settlement versus protection, "what is to become of the young men of the district waiting to get a few acres of land to make new homes for themselves and their children?" The answer which followed was predictable. Protection would be bought at the cost of "curbing... a number of hardworking and thrifty men and their families out of employment simply for the gratification of a few people with ample means who wish to spend a few days roving through the bush in an aimless way, shooting a few birds..."²⁰ Put in these terms, what right thinking citizen could fail to come down on the side of the hardy yeoman, the salt of the earth, whose interests were to be sacrificed for those parasites upon all hardworking settlers, the feckless, idle men of wealth and leisure. The leader writer for the *Nelson Evening Mail* was quick to see the danger. Although, he claimed, he would normally ignore a paper of such limited influence, the mouthpiece of its owner, C. H. Mills, member of the House of Representatives for Wairau and member of the Marlborough Land Board, he could not ignore deliberate misstatements intended "to stir up class feeling by pretending the Nelson Scenery Preservation Society and its supporters were actuated by the desire to preserve forests as shooting grounds for the wealthy."²¹ The *Guardian*, he charged, must have known that the aim was a sanctuary where no shooting would be allowed and it had also exaggerated the extent of the flat land proposed to be reserved and its impact upon local millers. It was important to correct such misinformation which might influence people who were unfamiliar with the circumstance. This fear proved to be well-founded. Unfortunately, supporters of the proposed national

18. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 25 February 1898.

19. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 2 March 1898 quoting from the *Evening Post*, 28 February 1898.

20. *Pelorus Guardian*, 1 March 1898 reported in *Nelson Evening Mail*, 3 March 1898

21. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 3 March 1898.

park were never able to fully erase the damage caused by this false slur on their motives, to the ultimate detriment of their campaign.

The sub-committee appointed to draw up the petition acted quickly. The *Nelson Evening Mail* of 1 March 1898 reported that a public meeting had been called to adopt the petition, which after some discussion and slight alteration was unanimously adopted by those present. In essence, the petition asked that a reasonable portion of the lands lying midway between Nelson and Blenheim "be permanently set apart and *for ever* reserved as a *national park* for the preservation of the Native Bush and Fauna and for the recreation and enjoyment of the People of New Zealand and visitors from other countries."²² The petition dropped any reference to reservation *for the growth and preservation of timber*, such as occurred in the motion passed at the original meeting. The use of the word "timber" was unfortunate, implying the possibility of future utilization, although that was clearly not the intention. Any doubts raised by the form of the motion were removed in the petition. The intention that the reservation should be a permanent one was very clearly expressed here, with the words "for ever" emphasised in italics. The reasons set forth in the petition for protection of the valleys were those enunciated at the initial meeting. The only new point introduced was the argument that "of the whole vast area of forestland once existing between Nelson and Blenheim no reserve had ever been made for the purposes of public recreation and enjoyment, and for the benefit of posterity."

The petition was remarkable in containing no reference at all to utilitarian grounds for preservation. The land was described as subject to flooding, notwithstanding its natural forest cover, but this point was made in order to demonstrate that it was not as well suited for settlement as some other areas. No issue was made of the potential downstream impact of flooding once the forest cover was removed. At least one person present at the meeting, a Mr Kingsley, apparently felt uncomfortable that no concession had been made to utilitarian concerns. He argued that "two important points, quite apart from mere sentiment, had been overlooked." There were, he said, "cogent climatic reasons" for preservation and experience had shown that on some of the flats subject to flooding, once timber was removed the overflowing silt spread hard clay which rendered cultivation impossible. Mr Fell's response was that "it did not matter whether the land was good or bad. His contention was that they wanted the forests reserved on behalf of future generations."²³ Undoubtedly this was a noble sentiment but given the eventual outcome of the campaign, Mr Fell might, in retrospect, have had occasion to reflect upon the

22. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 1 March 1898.

23. *Ibid.*

wisdom of neglecting to pay greater attention to the utilitarian arguments in favour of preservation. However, the weight of opinion at the meeting adhered to his point of view and not that presented by Mr Kingsley.

The meeting adopted a very methodical approach to collecting signatures for the petition. Nelson was apportioned into areas with pairs of volunteers assigned to canvass for signatures on a door to door basis. The petition sub-committee undertook the responsibility of organising the collection of signatures in country districts and of communicating with supporters in Marlborough. On the advice of Mr Graham, M.H.R., it was decided not to seek signatures beyond the two provincial districts immediately concerned. The strategy adopted was successful, for when the petition was presented a few months later it had been signed by 3,984 people.²⁴

The petition for revocation of the forest reserve and the Society's counter-petition to have the Ronga and Opouri Valleys declared a national park were set down for hearing by the Waste Lands Committee in early August 1898. On 22 July the Society called a meeting to appoint a deputation to appear before that committee.²⁵ In contrast with its usual practice, the Society excluded the press from the meeting, perhaps because there was talk of compromise. For this reason, we can only speculate as to the nature of the suggested compromise and as to what might have prompted such talk at the eleventh hour. The most probable cause was the Marlborough Land Board's expressed opposition to the proposal on the ground that it was not in the interests of the timber industry carried on in the Rai Valley.²⁶

Whatever the reasoning behind the talk of compromise, the leader writer for the *Nelson Evening Mail*, in a powerful and forthright article, strongly denounced any move in this direction, supporting Percy Adams, who was known to be firmly opposed to making concessions.²⁷ In the writer's view, the committee was now obliged to act on behalf of all those who had signed the petition. There had been no talk of compromise at that time and if it now agreed to do so without first consulting the public, it would be acting beyond its powers. He was in no doubt that it was necessary to show "firmness and backbone" for the sawmillers were waiting "ready to pounce" and would "eagerly seize on any

24. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 July 1898.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 1 March 1898.

27. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 July 1898.

compromise." The petitioners were in a strong position as they were demanding a continuation of existing conditions so why weaken their stand? Any concession would be a gain to the millers who had "no vestige of a right to a single tree in either forest." In an obvious reference to C. H. Mills, he saw Ministerial string pulling as a powerful obstacle to the cause, but with around four thousand signatures gathered, "if there is still some force and meaning in the the expression of public opinion, the Committee should adhere to the terms of the petition... and bring the agitation to the result which will be based on the rights of posterity, and not mere expediency."²⁸ In the event, the opponents of compromise evidently carried the day for there were no changes to what was sought when the deputation came before the Waste Lands Committee.

The hearing before the Waste Lands Committee took place in Wellington between 19 July and 16 August 1898.²⁹ They opened with evidence from Mr C. H. Mills,³⁰ in his capacity as member of the Marlborough Land Board, on behalf of those who desired to have the forest reserve revoked and the land made available for milling and settlement. The position taken by opponents of the reserve was that the Land Board and the people of the district had no objection to the creation of a national park in Marlborough but there were other portions of Crown land within the region which were more scenic and equally suitable for the preservation of flora and fauna and would not have the disadvantage of adversely affecting the timber industry. In fact, Mr Mills maintained, the area in question had suffered from the ravages of roaming cattle over the course of twenty-five years, destroying nearly all the undergrowth and was therefore no good for flora and fauna.³¹ However, this point was not verified by other witnesses and appeared to go against the weight of the evidence presented. He pointed out that the Land Board had already set aside twenty-five reserves, eight of these in the Pelorus district, and that it was prepared to meet national park petitioners by allowing them to choose other land where the flora and fauna were intact. Two areas in particular were mentioned as potentially suitable, the Upper Pelorus and the Brown River. In short, claimed the opponents of continued reservation, if a park were allowed on the site in question it would mean "complete stagnation to the progress of the whole district."³²

28. Ibid.

29. *A.J.H.R.*, 1898, I-5B.

30. Although Mills was opposed to the national park, it should be pointed out that in 1896 he asked the Minister of Lands whether the Government would supplement the funds of scenery preservation societies because their work was of a national character. He thought the machinery of these societies would be of very great assistance to the Government and he hoped it would recognise this by agreeing to a pound for pound subsidy on voluntary subscriptions raised by the groups. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 94, 1896, p. 220.)

31. Ibid., p. 2.

32. Ibid., p. 6.

In the face of claims that there were other areas better or at least as well suited for a national park and that a number of reserves already existed in the region (a point on which the Society's petition had been somewhat misleading) representatives of the Society adhered to their contention that the Ronga and Opouri Valleys were best suited for the purpose they had in view by reason of the quality of their timber, the abundance of fauna, their security from fire and their accessibility. The presence of other reserves in both Nelson and Marlborough was admitted, but it is clear that the Society felt justified in its assertion that no reserves had been made for public recreation or for posterity because these existing reserves failed, in its opinion, to meet the necessary criteria of quality, accessibility and adequate size. Percy Adams was forthright in his views:

Oh yes, you have lots of reserves of a few hundred acres here and there. But they are absolutely useless for birds. We must have a large block with plenty of food for the sustenance of our birds. The reason this bush is teeming with pigeons is because there is no other bush to go to.... It is no good reserving patches of bush; we must have a good reserve.... Any smaller block will be insufficient to provide food and shelter for our birds and insufficient for a national park.³³

In contrast to the blocks of 50, 100, and in one case 2,000 acres which the Land Board had reserved, the Society sought the permanent reservation of 18,600 acres.³⁴

While Adams addressed the issues of size and quality, Fell emphasised the inaccessibility of the existing reserves. He maintained that to meet the needs of a national park the reserve must be near a major road. Reserves in the Sounds, he conceded, were accessible in the sense that they could be reached by boat but they were very out of the way. When asked about the suitability of the Brown River area which the Land Board proposed as an alternative location for a national park, his response was scathing. "That Brown River is a picturesque gully absolutely inaccessible to any human being who has not the feet of a cat."³⁵ The inevitable question concerning the suitability of land in the Nelson land district to meet the Society's objective was fielded by Mr Baigent, who was himself involved in the timber industry. His response was that he knew of no large portion of bush which could compare in the slightest degree with the valleys in question.³⁶

33. *Ibid.*, p. 27. The other speakers for the Society were Mr Fell, Mr Trask (the Mayor of Nelson), Mr Graham, Mr Baigent, and Mr Cock. Mr Baigent also gave evidence that other reserves in the Waimea had no food for birdlife. (p. 25)

34. C. H. Mills gave evidence as to the size of existing reserves. (p. 3) The Society had obviously increased its estimate of the size of the area concerned from the 10-12,000 acres it spoke of originally.

35. *A.J.H.R.*, 1898, I-5B, p. 24.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

The fundamental thrust of the Society's case lay in the quality of the forest. Though accessibility and security from fire were key points in favour of the proposed location they were subsidiary in the sense that these advantages had no significance unless occurring in conjunction with a forest that was worthy of preservation. Mr Graham, M.H.R., appearing first for the park supporters, made the point most clearly. Their object was to preserve "for all time, an example of the best description of New Zealand forest that exists in the colony."³⁷ He was satisfied that the area met this criterion admirably. The bush was dense and diversified "containing matai, rimu, miro, rata, birch and all other kinds of fine timber."³⁸ He claimed never to have seen superior forest in his extensive travels up and down the country. He felt it was only fair to point out that although the land they sought to have declared a national park was but a small portion of the existing forest reserve (18, 600 acres out of 40,000), it did contain five-sixths of the merchantable timber.³⁹ When asked by a member of the Waste Lands Committee whether it would be sufficient to reserve the hills where the soil and timber were inferior, he had no hesitation whatever in declaring that any such curtailment of the proposed area would fail to meet the object of preserving an outstanding example of New Zealand forest.

The decision to stake the claim for preservation on the desire to preserve "a perfect specimen of the forestry of New Zealand as far a quality goes, and as a resting place for the flora and fauna of the colony" rather than on scenic value was unusual but proved a strength rather than a weakness. It was a point the opposition never fully grasped. They proceeded to argue that there was nothing extraordinary about the scenery of the area under debate, that many parts of New Zealand were more picturesque and that within Marlborough itself there were many scenic areas of little value for anything else which might be set aside, a valid enough point which supporters of the park did not seek to deny. Ironically, in pressing home the assertion that the area did not conform to the conventional ideal of the picturesque, opponents of the park found themselves admitting precisely the argument the Society wished to make, that the area's claim to distinction was the quality and grandeur of its forest. For example, C. W. Adams, of the Land Board, having dismissed the scenic value of the area, conceded upon questioning that though other areas might be as good for scenery they were not as valuable for timber, in fact, there was just "one unique peculiarity about it, you can see grand forest scenery."⁴⁰ This was a factor which clearly did not justify its preservation in his view. Indeed, he went so far as to admit

37. Ibid., p. 13.

38. Ibid., p. 26.

39. Ibid., p. 13.

40. Ibid., p. 16.

that he had "never seen better forest or better timber or more of it any where in New Zealand",⁴¹ thus corroborating the opinions expressed by Mr Graham, Percy Adams and the Rev. Chatterton. But unlike the Society, which believed "the more valuable the reserve the greater the reason why we should wish it retained for our children's children,"⁴² Adams was convinced that no government would or should consent to lock up such a valuable asset. "Of course we are all very glad to preserve scenery, but I should think it would be paying too high a price to withhold that from use."⁴³ Like the majority of his contemporaries, he was not opposed to scenery preservation so long as it involved no sacrifice of merchantable timber or of land suited to settlement. He felt there was no shortage of scenery in New Zealand, on the contrary, he opined, "we have too much good scenery, if we had more arable land it would be better."⁴⁴ Though acknowledging that the value of the timber would increase with time, he remained adamant that it was too valuable to lock away.

Time and again the opponents of the national park found themselves in the unenviable position of being forced to corroborate the Society's claims in order to vindicate their own position, that the forest should be opened to the timber industry and subsequently to settlement. The superiority of the forest in the two valleys was likewise confirmed by Mr Mills. In announcing that it was the Land Board's intention to set aside an alternative area of forest in the Pelorus to show the people the class of timber that grew in the region, he was constrained to acknowledge that "this is equally well grown as that in the two valleys in question, only of course, it is not so thick," having previously admitted that the bush of the Pelorus "would not be anything like the extent or anything like the quality of that in the Ronga."⁴⁵ Unless the milling lobby could mount a convincing argument that there was a shortage of timber in the area requiring immediate exploitation of the block in question, then at the very least, all the evidence they could bring to bear on the question of the quality of the timber provided as strong an argument in favour of maintaining the *status quo* of a timber reserve, if not the declaration of a national park. Retention of the timber reserve might not have been the ideal outcome from the point of view of the Society, but it was certainly the next best thing. So long as the *status quo* was maintained their cause remained

41. Ibid., p. 14.

42. Ibid., p. 27.

43. Ibid., p. 14.

44. Ibid., p. 15.

45. Ibid., p. 13.

alive for they could still hope to eventually attain sufficient numbers in support of the park concept to force a change in the opinion of the administration.

The timber quality argument could not be turned to such good effect against the petition requesting that the land be opened for settlement, which provided a more formidable obstacle for the Society to overcome. It could not deny that whatever the hardship of converting such heavily timbered land to farmland, the proposed national park included an area of fertile flatland in a province, which in all fairness, could not be said to possess an over-abundance of such land. There was no opportunity to fall back on the arguments frequently available to the the Taranaki Society, that the land in question was only second rate sheep country or that there were strong water and soil conservation reasons in favour of retaining the bush cover. The Society did not entirely eschew utilitarian arguments but it did not belabour the point. Mr Graham gave evidence that it was the opinion of many people that once the land was cleared torrents would wash away much of the best soil but on further questioning he admitted that it was a common feature of formerly bushclad creeks to become enlarged after clearing and he made no suggestion that the extent of the probable scouring in the two valleys was likely to be greater than normal.⁴⁶ However, the Society did not neglect to point out that even with the bush cover still intact, the low lying parts of the Opouri Valley often flooded because there was little fall in the Opouri stream. Both Mr Graham and Percy Adams also raised the issue of the relationship between extent of bush cover and climate but Mr Graham, when questioned further on this point, felt unable to assert that retention of the bush in question would materially influence the levels of rainfall in the region.⁴⁷

The strongest argument in the Society's favour was that the bush would furnish but a poor living for the present generation on account of its density. Unexpected confirmation of this claim came from the opposition. Mr Erskine of the Havelock Town Board, in the course of evidence that milling was an essential prerequisite to settlement stated: " I positively assure you there is not a settler between the Pelorus Bridge and the Rai Saddle - and some have been there for twenty-five years - that is making a living.... In this heavy country, even when the mill has been through, you cannot get much more than three-fourths of it cleared. If it is a 100 acre section you cannot reckon on more than 75 acres of that in grass, for the first eight or nine years at all events."⁴⁸

46. Ibid., pp. 12 & 14.

47. Ibid., p. 12.

48. Ibid., p. 7.

Both the pro-park and anti-park lobbies attempted to influence the outcome of the hearing by continuing the debate in the newspapers. Just prior to the presentation of evidence by the deputation from the Society, Mr Gresley Lukin, the editor of the *Evening Post* once again took up battle against "the reckless, blind, and unthinking utilitarianism that has resulted in the destruction of what in the aggregate is an immense area of valuable forest timber throughout the country without any adequate reward," urging the Waste Lands Committee to heed the petition before it and set aside a permanent national reserve.⁴⁹ The petition, he believed, should

make clear the need of making wide, generous, and carefully selected reservations for the health, recreation, and welfare of the people, not for today, but for all time. And certainly it should show that if the Government is not prepared to make new reservations, those which already exist should not be swept away without the most careful deliberation, and with ample opportunity for Parliament to express approval or otherwise of any recommendation that may be made. Speaking generally, such reservations should not only be maintained, but they should be rigourously preserved against anything in the nature of defacement or devastation.⁵⁰

This drew forth a response from C. H. Mills, who attempted to devalue the petition by pointing out that many of the 4000 who had signed it came from as far afield as Westport and Collingwood and were therefore unlikely to have any local knowledge of the block of land or of the impact their action would have on the local timber industry. By implication, these 4000 signatures could not be compared with the 1300 signatures of those seeking to have the block opened, all local residents, many of whom had been requesting the Government for years to open the land for settlement. With reference to those who, in his view, had no legitimate interest at stake, he argued, "it is a well-known fact that people will sign almost anything that has an attractive heading, provided there is nothing to pay."⁵¹

Mr Lukin could not let these claims pass without further comment so taking what was perhaps unfair advantage of his editorial position, he responded with a leader in the same issue. "In this particular instance," he began, "it is not too much to say that the Member for Wairau is not arrayed upon the side of the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number." There was no validity to the argument that petitioners lived outside the region because this was not a local but a national question. "Does he... contend that in this young country, the fringe of which is not yet tilled, land is in such demand that 20,000 acres cannot be spared for a National Park?" With a sense of moral righteousness which betrayed scant sympathy for the interests of the local community, no doubt fuelled by his sense of the unnecessary destruction which had occurred throughout so much of the country, he argued that the *Evening Post* stood for the good of the whole country while Mr

49. *Evening Post*, 1 August 1898.

50. Ibid.

51. *Evening Post*, 10 August 1898.

Mills and his friends stood for the interests of a small industrial community which, at worst, will be required to change the locality of their work.⁵²

Unquestionably stung by the tone of the editorial, Mills hit back with the charge of elitism. "It is all very well for those whose lives have been cast in more pleasant moulds, and whose bread is well buttered from other permanent employment, to write on a subject of this kind from a broad, philosophical view, and out of pure sentiment; but the practical part of such a grave injustice should not be overlooked."⁵³ If the issue was a national one as claimed by the park lobby, they should look, he said, to the Wellington region, which has thousands of acres of first class land for a national park and deer park. Though the charge of elitism was predictable enough, it is difficult to place a charitable construction upon the reference to a deer park, which he had raised in the past and would repeat subsequently in the House of Representatives.⁵⁴ Mills was present at the Waste Lands Committee hearings and was certainly aware that supporters of the park specifically stated before the Committee on more than one occasion that they wanted the valleys to be closed against any shooting. For example, a Maori clergyman, the Rev. Bennet, presenting the view of the local Maori, who supported the Society's objectives, made it very plain in response to questioning from Mills himself, that he and those whom he represented, understood that if the area were declared a national park, it would become a sanctuary in which shooting would not be allowed and welcomed this as necessary to protect breeding grounds.⁵⁵ Clearly Mills statement was a deliberate attempt to mislead the public.

Prompted in part by this very public exchange between Lukin and Mills, which was also reported in Nelson, the Society re-entered the fray with a lengthy open letter from Mr Percy Adams to the Waste Lands Committee, Ministers and Members of Parliament, published in the *Nelson Evening Mail* on 19 August. It set out lucidly in twenty-one points the reasons why the Society believed the area should be reserved. These were largely a reiteration of points already made. Clearer emphasis was given to the fact that alternative areas were available in the region for settlement and for the timber industry. It was stressed more explicitly that the forest contained all the major fruit-bearing trees necessary for birds. A stronger point was made of climatic influence with the statement that "the experiences of India and Australia point to the absolute necessity of large reserves to regulate climate for

52. Ibid.

53. *Evening Post*, 16 August 1898.

54. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 104, 1898, pp. 294-5.

55. *A.J.H.R.*, 1898, I-5B, p. 28. Percy Adams also gave evidence in response to questioning by Mr Mills, that the very reason he was familiar with the region was because in the past he had spent months camping there to enjoy shooting, but he stated quite unequivocally that he now wished to see the area closed to hunting as a sanctuary for birds. (p. 27)

pastoral purposes and that in view of past destruction conservation was an absolute necessity."⁵⁶ This was an additional argument in favour of the need for large reserves from that adduced earlier by Percy Smith. The further new point was made that the forests were not only typical of those of the region but were the haunt of rare flora. Previously, the Society had stressed only the existence of rare fauna. Although the twenty-one points included a quite unambiguous statement that the Society wished to provide a sanctuary for birds, the deer park claim was not explicitly rebutted and this, in the light of subsequent events, may perhaps be seen as an error of judgment.

The decision of the Waste Lands Committee was reported at the beginning of September. It recommended that the Government should not purchase the tramway and that it should carefully consider the best means of conserving the valuable forest lands in the valleys of the Rai, Ronga, and Opouri.⁵⁷ Though not a clear-cut victory for the park lobby, it gave them grounds for optimism. However, the editor of the *Nelson Evening Mail* cautioned that in spite of the favourable report, the danger was not past. He advised the Nelson group to go to Wellington to continue lobbying. He claimed official reports of the petition hearings had been tampered with and hinted that Hansard was becoming prostituted into a party organ.⁵⁸ These were serious allegations, for which no firm evidence was presented, but they cannot have been made lightly. In such circumstances, the advice to continue lobbying was understandable.

The Committee's decision prompted opponents of the park, led by Mr Mills, to organise "an indignation meeting" at Havelock.⁵⁹ Hearing of this, the Society responded with a meeting of its own on the same night, intended as a "counterblast" to the one being held at Havelock. There was a large attendance and the following resolution was passed: "That the Government is earnestly prayed to take immediate and effective steps by special Act, if necessary, to give effect to the report of the Waste Lands Committee, so that the forests within the watersheds of the Ronga and Opouri Valleys may be for ever set apart as a sanctuary for native birds, and as a National Park for the people of New Zealand."⁶⁰

56. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 19 August 1898.

57. *A.J.H.R.*, 1898, I-5B, p. 1.

58. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 3 September 1898.

59. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 6 September 1898.

60. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 7 September 1898. The meeting was reported in the *Evening Post* of the same date.

The sequence of events after this date is obscure. Despite a thorough search of contemporary newspapers, I was unable to discover anything. Apart from a rather ominous editorial in the *Nelson Evening Mail* on 26 September 1898, there is no other mention of the matter. The editorial claimed that Mr Mills had succeeded in obtaining the support of the the Minister of Lands, John McKenzie who had taken up the deer park propaganda. This appears to be a reference to a question put to the Minister of Lands by Mills in the House of Representatives on 22 September, asking whether the Minister considered it desirable "to set aside 20,000 acres of valuable forest land for a national deer-park and a sanctuary for birds," adding that such a move would be "suicidal to the interests of the whole district."⁶¹ In response, McKenzie had indicated that he intended to consider very carefully the matter of making reserves for deer-parks and as sanctuaries for birds and though not opposed to the idea of a deer-park in principle, he believed that in order to be successful it would have to be removed far away from settlers. Placing a deer-park "near to large towns so that a few gentlemen from the cities might go and have a days deer shooting amongst the settlers, would very soon result in the settlers putting an end to the forest and the deer too."⁶² In what was a clear reference to the park supporters, he stated that he had come to the conclusion after reading newspaper articles on the subject "that some of those writers did not know anything about deer-parks or sanctuaries."⁶³

The Minister's comments in the House gave the pro-park lobby good cause to feel disquiet about the chances of attaining their object. Mill's willful misrepresentation of the national park proposal as a deer-park had clearly worked its mischief. The concept of the park, it seemed, was now inextricably bound up with the idea of deer hunting and a suggestion of elitism in the Minister's mind, notwithstanding that supporters of the park concept had explicitly disavowed any desire to create a hunting preserve. The first time the suggestion was raised they had made it abundantly clear that they desired a park where no shooting of any kind would be allowed. Mills had skilfully worked upon the prejudices of McKenzie, a well known champion of the small holder, whose strong convictions that New Zealand should be a country for small farmers had derived from first-hand experiences in his youth of the impact of the Highland enclosures on tenant farmers. Such a man was unlikely to show much sympathy for a wealthy elite who desired shooting grounds at the expense of needy and hard-working settlers. On the other hand he favoured unrestricted access to rivers, lakes, coasts and mountains for all New Zealanders. His 1892 Land Act made the notion of the Queen's chain more explicit than any previous piece of legislation.⁶⁴

61. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 104, 1898, pp. 294-5.

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Ibid.*

64. *DNZB*, Vol II, p. 296.

Curiously, the editor of the *Nelson Evening Mail* made no attempt to clarify the Society's position on deer-parks, other than to refer to the issue as propaganda. He reiterated the position of park supporters, that if fauna was to be preserved it must be in its natural environment, not acclimatised to other places. He was blunt in his comments on the Minister's views concerning location. The Minister was "talking rot" to speak of national parks in remote places; they must be accessible from centres of population.⁶⁵ If one compares the difficulty of travel in the late nineteenth century with conditions now, it is not difficult to understand the importance the Society and its supporters attached to ease of access from centres of population. The almost universal ownership of the private motor car and a well developed network of high quality roads has brought formerly remote areas within reach with an ease and degree of comfort scarcely dreamed of then.

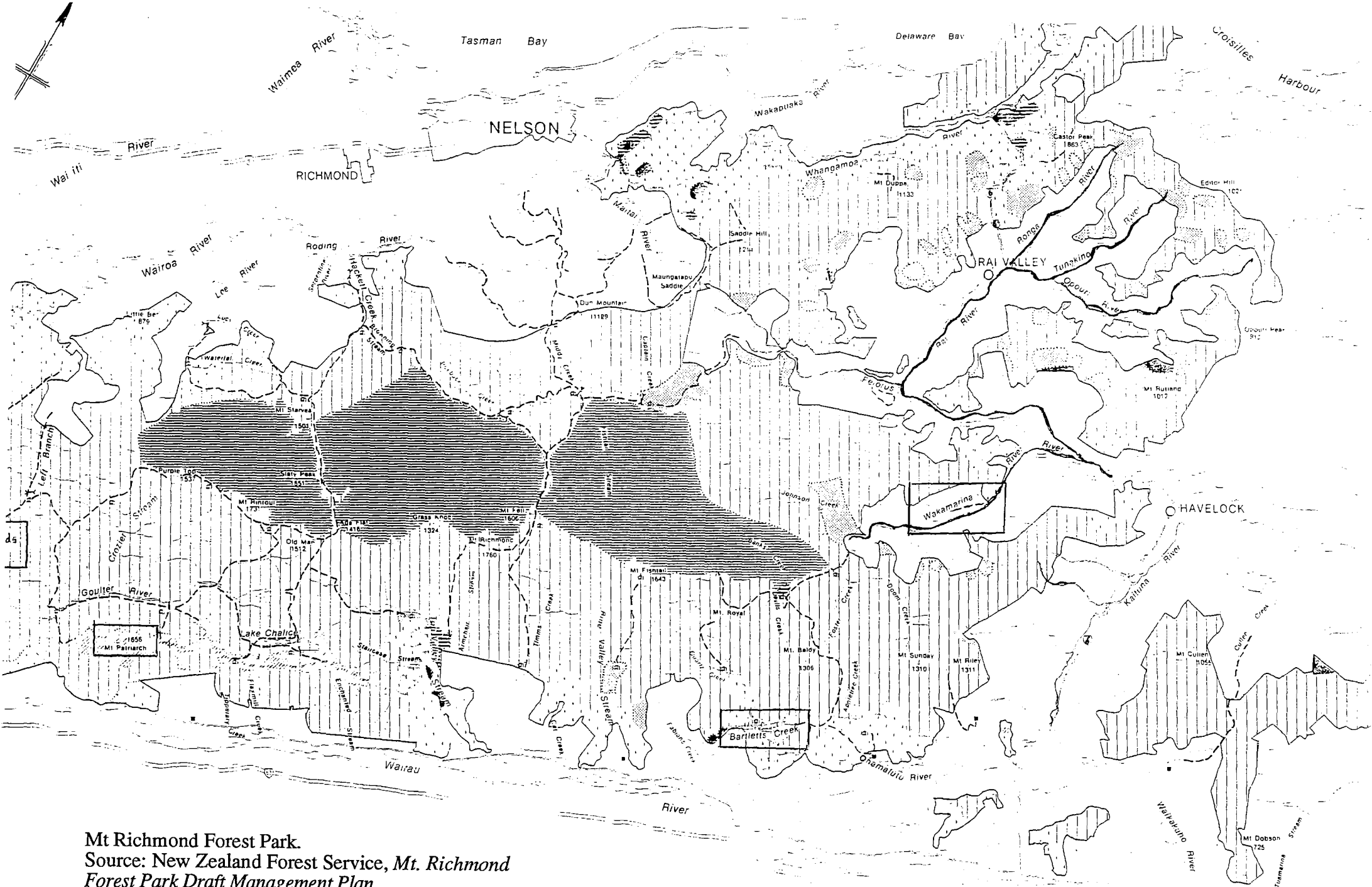
The editor of the *Evening Mail* was evidently no admirer of McKenzie, whom he variously described as "a Ministerial calamity, a kind of Indian God that must be constantly appeased" and "a spoilt child of New Zealand politics" against whom Parliament and the public were powerless to contend. He foresaw that the decision of the Committee would be "futile against the desires of the Minister.". Whatever the basis for this unflattering view of the Minister's character, it does not seem to have been justified by events in relation to the proposed park. There is no record of any decision by McKenzie on the issue and the bush was still intact at the time of his death in August 1901. That the land never became a national park is clear enough and the bush has long since been cleared, but the blame, it would appear, cannot be assigned to McKenzie.

The bush was apparently still standing in 1903 when a report was written on the preservation of flora and fauna in the Marlborough land district by C. W. Adams, who was still Commissioner of Crown Lands.⁶⁶ He described the bush of the Rai Valley, including its two branches, the valleys of the Ronga and Opouri Rivers, as "the most valuable forest we have in Marlborough for timbers purposes."⁶⁷ However, the report gave a fairly clear indication of the inevitable fate of the area. Speaking of the agitation for the Rai watershed as a national park, he acknowledged that it was admirably adapted for the purpose but went

65. *Nelson Evening Mail*, 26 September 1898.

66. *A.J.H.R.*, 1903, C13-B, pp.15-16. The report was made in response to Circular 507 by J. W. A. Marchant, Surveyor-General, requesting that all Commissioners of Crown Lands give further attention to the necessity of making reservations wherever possible for the protection of the flora and fauna of the colony, asking them to furnish returns showing what had already been accomplished and what could still be done.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 15.



Mt Richmond Forest Park.
 Source: New Zealand Forest Service, Mt. Richmond
 Forest Park Draft Management Plan.

on to add: "I fear that the commercial value of the timber is too great to allow of it being set aside as a scenic reserve."⁶⁸ This view was the same as he held at the time of the Waste Lands Committee hearing. He then proceeded to describe the Pelorus watershed above its junction with the Rai as a suitable alternative, "which from a scenic point of view, is perhaps superior to the Rai Valley, although the timber is not nearly so valuable."⁶⁹ It would adjoin existing and proposed climatic and scenic reserves to embrace a total area of something like three hundred square miles.⁷⁰ His implication was clear enough. The Pelorus was a suitable alternative precisely because it contained less valuable timber.

The precise date when milling began in the area remains to be established but there is sufficient evidence to indicate that it was under way within a couple of years of Adams report. A 1905 Report on the Timber Industry in New Zealand records two sawmills that might have been working in the area, the Rai Valley Mill and another with the suggestive name of the Ronga Sawmill, both described as working the Rai Valley.⁷¹ In 1906 John Craig and Daniel Reece gained milling rights to 800 acres of the Upper Opouri, described as magnificent timber, "probably the best ever grown in New Zealand."⁷² Milling in the Opouri was well under way by 1911. A further report on the timber industry in that year is clear as to its fate. It refers to the "Opouri Valley, now being divested of timber."⁷³

Though the Society came to the very brink of success, in the final analysis, it was not able to overcome the stronger forces of utilitarianism. But its campaign was not an unqualified failure. Even though the bush was lost in the end, it had achieved a moral victory. It had proven to itself and others that it could mobilise public opinion and carry through a sustained battle. Moreover, it had convinced the Waste Lands Committee of the justice of its cause. In reaching this point, it had demonstrated a growing strength of public feeling in favour of scenery preservation, and by its actions, had forcefully drawn the attention of Parliament to this fact. The publicity given to the cause of scenery preservation by this

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. ... The proposed reserves which would form the alternative "national park" comprised much of what is now the Mt Richmond Forest Park, an area from the headwaters of the Wakamarina to the east, south-east to the sources of Bartlett's Creek, south-west to Mt Patriarch and east to Ward's Pass. A further reserve was proposed for the head of the Ronga, which is now incorporated into Mt Richmond Forest Park. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1903, C13-B, pp. 16-17)

71. *A.J.H.R.*, 1905, C-6 .

72. John Orchard, "A Short History of Sawmilling in the Nydia Bay Area," *Journal of the Nelson and Marlborough Historical Societies*, 2(1) : 29-33, 1987, p. 30.

73. *A.J.H.R.*, 1911, C-1, Appendix III.

campaign must surely have played a hitherto-unrecognised role in the subsequent passing of the Scenery Preservation Act.

The battle for the Rai was important for its clear articulation of a number of conservation issues which would come to be accepted and promoted by increasing numbers of nature lovers with the passing of time. First, that it was necessary to have reserves which reflected the very best examples of New Zealand's flora and fauna, even if that entailed sacrifice of land suited for milling or settlement. Second, that it was wiser to preserve forests in which birds were abundant at present than to be forced in future years to remove the remnant to some other and possibly unsuitable place. Third, that though the protection of scenically attractive sites was a good and sufficient reason to set aside a reserve these would not necessarily represent ideal habitat for wildlife or outstanding examples of flora. Fourth, that if birds were to be protected in their existing habitats, small scattered remnants would not suffice. Fifth, that though upland forests might be scenically attractive and important for water and soil conservation values, it was the rich lowland forests which were of prime importance as a source of food for birds and that these need to be of a reasonable size to maintain viable populations. Sixth, that it was not sufficient to confine national parks to remote corners which on account of their very inaccessibility were under no immediate pressure for settlement or milling. While it cannot be supposed that anyone in the Society would have argued against a park in Fiordland on the basis of its remoteness, it made a strong stand on the need for parks which were readily accessible to the public as well as meeting the criteria listed above. It was only too well aware that the progress of settlement was daily diminishing the opportunities for such parks, especially sites which could be secured against the threat of fire.

The Taranaki Society had also made a case for protecting birds in their existing breeding grounds and the issue of accessibility had been an important aspect of its campaign to have Egmont declared a national park, but I think it fair to say that the arguments had never before been put so clearly and so forthrightly. The view that sanctuaries should be created where birds were found would not be articulated with greater clarity until Dr R. Fulton, the president of the Otago Institute, made the same point at a meeting of the Institute in 1907, almost a decade later.⁷⁴ In the meantime, the focus of the scientific societies' efforts continued to be directed almost exclusively to the protection of off-shore islands. The scenery preservation movement was as much a movement to protect flora and fauna as to

74. Dr R. Fulton, "The Disappearance of the New Zealand Birds," *T.N.Z.I.*, 40 : 485-500, 1907. In proposing the preservation of areas such as Maruia, "1,000 acres of virgin bush teeming with bird life," (including, he says, the kakapo, though very rare) he states: "Why make an attempt to preserve our native birds by providing sanctuaries in parts where birds are scarce, when in other parts, where birds exist in myriads, we wantonly and by law exterminate and destroy them."

protect scenery, as the Taranaki Society in particular had shown clearly. But even for the Taranaki Society, the protection of flora and fauna had tended to be subsumed under the general expression of scenery preservation in the majority of its campaigns. The importance of protecting the flora and fauna was stressed throughout the campaign for the Rai while the issue of scenery preservation was explicitly downplayed. The deliberate shift in emphasis brought about by the Nelson Scenery Preservation Society during the battle for the Rai, marked a significant development in the movement but it also highlighted the problem. With its desire to protect "an example of the best description of New Zealand forest that exists", the Society was also groping towards an expression of the need to protect examples of forest types, but it lacked the ecological perspective Cockayne would bring to bear on this issue.

Though the force of the Society's arguments made little impression in the short term, its efforts were not without immediate results, for the Marlborough Land Board was prompted into setting aside alternative reserves that it might not have done otherwise. Apart from the large areas of upland now forming part of the Mt Richmond Forest Park, already mentioned, the most significant of these was the Pelorus Bridge Reserve.⁷⁵ This remnant of lowland forest has become a very popular stopping-off place on the route between Blenheim and Nelson as the Society had every faith the area they proposed would become. Had it not been for the Society's hard fought battle, there is a strong probability that this forest too would have succumbed to the axe, or at the very least, the reserve would have been much smaller in scale.⁷⁶ Though there was strong contemporary testimony to the fact that the Pelorus forest was not of the same quality as the Ronga and Opouri valleys, McCaskill, nevertheless, expressed the view that this was one of the finest in New Zealand.⁷⁷ This being so, we can only regret the loss of what was an even finer forest according to all contemporary accounts.

If there was a major weakness in the Society's campaign, it lay in the failure to present scientific evidence concerning the value of the forest of the sort which Cockayne would provide for Dean's Bush, Kennedy's Bush and for extensions to Tongariro National Park, and that he and later W. McGregor, provided in the protracted battles to save Waipoua Forest. However it is doubtful whether such evidence would have had any impact upon

75. A.J.H.R., 1903, C13-B, pp. 16-17.

76. Even once the reserve was gazetted, it came under threat. The Harry Ell Archives contains a letter from Ell to the Minister of Education concerning a proposed school site at Pelorus Bridge, which, if adopted, would result in the "destruction of the most beautiful scenery along the 80 miles of road between Blenheim and Nelson." (Canterbury Public Library, Ell MS Papers, Box 8/11)

77. L. W. McCaskill, *Scenic Reserves of Marlborough*. Wellington : Department of Lands and Survey, 1981. The reserve, which contains 1008.6 ha was gazetted in 1906. Earlier, in 1900, 677.6 ha. were reserved at the head of the Pelorus.

the final outcome. The campaign would probably have been lost no matter how the battle was waged because the time was not yet ripe for setting aside such a large area which competed with potentially high quality farming land. After all, throughout the next two decades the Scenery Preservation Board would continue to emphasise, time and again, that the bulk of scenic reserves comprised land unsuited for close settlement, land which was unequivocally more useful to the country in its forested state than denuded of its protective cover. In the few instances where land capable of being settled was reserved the Scenery Preservation Board was at pains to point out that the land in question was suitable only for lease in large blocks at low rental.⁷⁸ Though areas of potentially high class land were reserved during this period, notwithstanding the Board's disclaimer, they were very few, almost invariably small and usually in areas remote from immediate settlement pressure.

The battle for the Rai demonstrated that New Zealand politicians were not yet prepared to protect scenery or flora and fauna except where material interests would not suffer. In this they were no different from their counterparts in the United States. Although the United States had led the way with the national parks idea, boundaries were drawn as carefully there as they were here to ensure that only "worthless" land was included. The campaign to create Sequoia National Park to protect the giant sequoias was successful because they were of little value to the lumber industry on account of the brittleness of their timber and the inaccessibility of their location.⁷⁹ On the other hand, American conservationists, in their campaigns to protect the sequoia's close relative, the much more valuable coastal redwood, faced difficulties comparable to those encountered by their New Zealand counterparts who sought to protect the rimu forests of the Rai or the kauri forests of Northland.⁸⁰

78. See for example *A.J.H.R.*, 1910, C-6.

79. A. Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience*. Lincoln : University of Nebraska Press, 1979, p. 62. Sequoia National Park was established in 1890.

80. For the story of the struggle to preserve the great redwood forests of coastal California see S. R. Schrepfer, *The Fight to Save the Redwoods: A History of Environmental Reform, 1917-1978*. Madison : University of Wisconsin Press, 1983.



H. G. Ell. Source: Oakley, *Harry Ell and His Summit Road*.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Harry Ell And The Summit Road Association

Hitherto, Harry Ell has been considered the dominant actor in the rise of scenery preservation consciousness at the turn of the century. By now it should be clear that he was not working in an intellectual vacuum and that his was not a lone voice in the wilderness. There were many others, a minority to be sure, the names of all but a few now lost to us, who were working through groups to save distinctive areas of scenery in their regions. The earliest of these groups were active a decade before Ell came to prominence. Their efforts to educate the public and politicians, particularly through such hard fought and well publicised campaigns as the battle to save the forests of the Rai or the protracted struggle to extend the boundaries of Egmont Reserve and have it declared a national park, paved the way for Ell's successful advocacy of the cause in Parliament. The dominance attributed to Ell in rise of the scenery preservation movement can perhaps be explained by his undoubted success at self-promotion in the interests of his cause and the understandable desire of his successors in the Summit Road Scenic Society to promote his achievements. Subsequent writers have tended to accept at face value the exaggerated claims of earlier admirers, typified by the following statement:

Harry Ell was a radical thinker, a public spirited man and a lover of nature *in a time when conservation of the natural environment was unthought of.*¹

Though the assessment of Ell as the dominant figure in the rise of the scenery preservation movement can now be seen as misleading, he cannot be denied a prominent place in the history of nature conservation in New Zealand. The final phase in the story of the scenery preservation movement rightly belongs to him, with his successful advocacy of the Scenery Preservation Act and his work on the Summit Road.

The Summit Road Association was established by Ell in 1909 to assist him with the project of forming a road along the summit of the hills separating Lyttelton Harbour from the city of Christchurch, between Evans Pass in the east to Gebbies Pass in the south-west, and of reserving and protecting the remaining bush along the route.² The Port Hills form the northern-most extremity of Banks Peninsula and are composed of volcanic rock. They rise to a height of 573 metres at Cooper's Knob, creating an impressive landmark above the flat

1. Summit Road Scenic Society. *The Summit Road, Christchurch, New Zealand*. Christchurch : The Society, 1972. [My emphasis] The Society was formed in 1948.

2. B. E. Baughan; et al, *The Summit Road; Its Scenery, Botany, and Geology*. Christchurch : Smith & Anthony, 1914.

Canterbury Plains. From their summit they afford a panoramic vista of city, harbour, ocean, coastline, lake, plains, foothills and mountains. In its commitment to one specific goal, the building of the Summit Road and acquisition of reserves along the route, the Association was unique amongst groups within the movement. Ell's vision of a series of reserves linked by road and tracks with rest houses at regular intervals had precedents in the Taranaki Society's efforts to promote roads, tracks and accommodation houses at Egmont, but no earlier group had pursued this goal on such a scale and with such single minded commitment or with such willingness to undertake fundraising and organise the work on its own initiative. The Association was not the last group to form which was identifiably part of the scenery preservation movement, but in its concentration exclusively on scenery preservation, undiluted by beautification concerns, it represented the culmination of the movement. Likewise, the creation of the Summit Road and the protection of its associated reserves can be seen as one of the crowning achievements of the movement.

The history of the Summit Road Association and the subsidiary groups Ell formed from time to time as he ran into conflict with his supporters, has been told elsewhere and does not need to be recounted here at length. Leonore Oakley in her biography of Ell devotes six chapters to the Summit Road.³ Gordon Ogilvie also relates the story of the development of the road in *The Port Hills of Christchurch*.⁴ Further accounts can be found in Roche (1979) and Dingwall (1981). It is the activities of the man behind the organisation which are of greatest interest for more often than not these were carried out despite the organisation. Undoubtedly the lion's share of the credit for the Association's success is attributable to Ell.

When Ell formed the Summit Road Association in 1909, he had already devoted a number of years to the pursuit of his goal.⁵ His interest in the Port Hills appears to have begun in December 1899 when he became aware of a danger that the public could be denied access to the hills by the closure of roads including one in the vicinity of Kennedy's Bush.⁶ It is

3. L. Oakley, *Harry Ell and His Summit Road*. Christchurch : Caxton Press, 1960.

4. G. Ogilvie, *The Port Hills of Christchurch*. Auckland : Reed Books, 1978.

5. There is some doubt as to the precise date of formation of the Association. Oakley (1960, p. 45) states that the first meeting was held in 1909 although Ell, in a publication setting out the history of the Port-Hills Akaroa Summit Road Trust, which he established to replace the Association, states that he worked without a committee until August 1909. (*The Port Hills-Akaroa Summit Road and History of the Summit Road Trust; How and Why It Formed*. Christchurch : New Zealand Newspapers Ltd Printers, 1929, p. 7) To add to the confusion, an editorial on the Summit Road in *The Press* dated 28 July 1909 refers to a "newly formed Association," which it is hoped will assist the progress of the project.

6. H. G. Ell, *Port Hills-Akaroa Summit Road; Some Early History and Guide*. Akaroa : Port Hills-Akaroa Summit Road Public Trust, 1934. At this time the power to close roads was vested in the road boards, county councils and ratepayers. Closure of the road and sale of the land provided an easy source

clear that at this point he was concerned at the loss of opportunities for public recreation. In a letter written on 26 March 1900 to the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Ward, seeking his help to prevent proposed closures by the Port Victoria and Little River Road Boards, he stated:

As you are no doubt aware, the people of this Province live upon the plains.... Confined as we are practically to the very flat country to make our homes, you will readily understand how highly people treasure the high lands; the hills are looked upon as the people's greatest source of recreation.⁷

He was probably guilty of overstating his case. It may be doubted whether the people did in fact "treasure" the hills as much as he imagined. With his own great enthusiasm for the area, fostered by childhood opportunities for exploration of the slopes in the vicinity of Halswell, he tended always to take an optimistic view of the interest of others. Once he began the Summit Road project he encountered resistance from many people who believed the reserves were too remote to be of any value. Arnold Wall cites a telling example of the extent to which he was out of touch with the reality of the interest in the hills. He records that Ell confidently expected thousands of trampers to visit the Sign of the Packhorse in its first year but that it was hardly visited at all.⁸ Nevertheless, sufficient numbers of people were prepared to back his ideas with time or money to ensure the ultimate success of the vision he dared to dream.

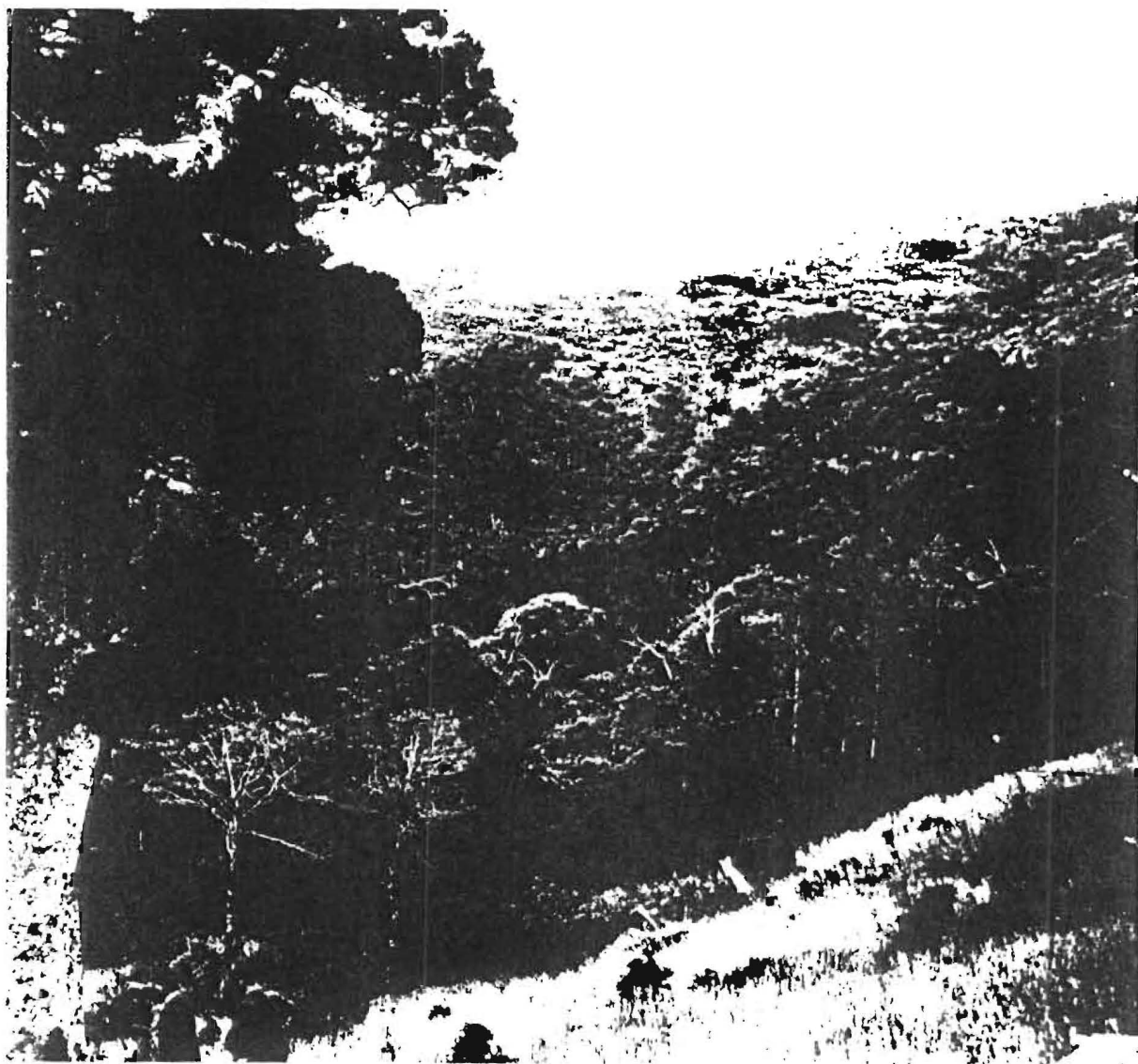
The first sign of interest in the hills specifically from a nature conservation point of view comes in his letter of May 1900 to the Beautifying Association on the subject of Kennedy's Bush in which, it will be recalled, his concern at that time was primarily to provide a sanctuary for native birds.⁹ In June 1901, Ell urged the case for preservation of Kennedy's Bush in Parliament, but the attempt foundered because the asking price of twenty pounds per acre was considered too high. However, he was not a man to be

of revenue. After sending many telegrams and letters on the subject and mobilising the Christchurch Beautifying Association to pass a resolution urging no more closures of roads, Ell was successful in obtaining an amendment to the Public Works Act 1900, preventing the closure of a road without first obtaining an Order in Council, which was required to be tabled in Parliament within 10 days of publication, thus effectively providing an opportunity for public debate.

7. Ell (1934). Also cited in Oakley (1960) p. 34.

8. A. Wall, *Long and Happy*. Wellington : A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1965. Arnold Wall was a member of the planting committee in one of the successors to the Association, the Summit Road and Reserves Association, along with Ell himself, Charles Chilton, Robert Speight and Robert Laing. Wall (1869-1966) came to New Zealand in 1898 as Professor of English at Canterbury College, a position he held until 1931. He was a keen mountaineer and an amateur botanist of note, who contributed greatly to the Canterbury Museum Herbarium collection. Robert Speight was Professor of Geology at Canterbury College from 1903 to 1930. He acted as honorary geologist for the Association. Robert Laing, born in Dunedin in 1865, was a local high school teacher, amateur botanist specialising in seaweeds and president of the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury (1894-1910 & 1927).

9. See Chapter Five, p. 151. In his 1929 account of the history of the road he states that he began negotiations to acquire the bush in March of that year.



Kennedy's Bush c.1920. Source: Harry Ell Papers, Z M.S. 8, Canterbury Public Library.

deterred by an initial rebuff if the cause was a worthy one. He was prepared to bide his time until circumstances were more propitious. The opportunity to pursue the matter further did not arise again until 1906, when having successfully negotiated a lower asking price for the land, he was able to obtain the promise of the Premier, Mr Seddon, that the Government would contribute two pounds for every pound the local community contributed, so long as the Scenery Preservation Commission consented to the acquisition. Despite the belief of the Crown Land Ranger that price was still too high, a long telegram from Cockayne outlining the species present in the Bush clinched the decision so far as the Scenery Preservation Commission was concerned. With the help of a small unofficial committee Ell raised sufficient funds to purchase an area of almost 53 acres, which was gazetted on 27 September 1906.¹⁰

Although his initial efforts in 1900 to obtain Kennedy's Bush bore no immediate fruit they were productive in another way, for it was in the course of various trips to the Bush that the idea of the Summit Road scheme took shape in his mind. According to his own testimony, he had never approached Kennedy's Bush by way of the rough track along the summit before the occasion of his visit to the Bush with the Mayor. From 1903 onwards he had opportunities to make many more excursions by the summit route and was impressed with the beauty of the views. Investigation of early maps revealed that a road reserve had been set out along parts of the hills but there were a number of gaps and in other places the gradients were unsuitable. He set about obtaining the necessary consent of the landowners for the proposed route to pass through their properties.¹¹

Ell had taken the first steps towards a goal that would dominate his time and energy for much of the remainder of his life. Had he merely confined his attention to obtaining public access to the spectacular views obtainable from the summit, all those who have subsequently enjoyed the road would have reason enough to be grateful for his foresight and tenacity in the face of many obstacles, but we would have less cause to remember his achievements from a nature conservation point of view. However, the aim of preserving the distinctive vegetation of the hills formed an integral part of his plans. The preservation of Kennedy's Bush was an important first step, a key component in a

10. *New Zealand Gazette*, No. 82, 1906, p. 2504. A further area was added in 1908 to increase the area to 97 acres. (*New Zealand Gazette*, No. 15, 1908, p. 733) The same year a Board was established to administer the reserve, comprising the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Ell, Cockayne, Reece, G.T. Booth and George Harper. (*New Zealand Gazette*, No. 38, 1908, p. 1310) Though Ell's claims to have worked without the assistance of a committee on the Summit Road scheme prior to August 1909 may be correct so far as negotiations over the proposed route are concerned, he was assisted in the campaign to acquire Kennedy's Bush by both Cockayne and Chilton. Cockayne not only provided botanical information but also helped to publicise the cause with articles in the press outlining the significance of the proposed reserve. Chilton assisted with the collection, control, and disposal of money.

11. Ell, in Baughan et al. (1914). pp. 2-3.

proposed chain of reserves linked by a walking route which in time would extend to Banks Peninsula.¹²

By 1919 no less than 20 reserves formed part of the scheme, ranging from two acre pockets of bush such as Jollies Bush to major reserves such as Herbert Peak (240 hectares), protecting a range of vegetation which included open tussock, dryland scrub, significant remnants of forest and alpine vegetation.¹³

Although recreational and aesthetic considerations seem to have provided the initial impulse for the scheme, and always remained important goals, it seems certain that by late 1903 Ell was also thinking in more sophisticated terms of the opportunity it provided to protect representative areas of the various plant associations found on the hills. In September of that year he publicly articulated for the first time a concern with protection of representative areas of vegetation. He called upon the Minister of Lands to enclose small areas "so as to preserve the native plant-life typical of the various districts of the colony."¹⁴ He had been moving towards this position throughout 1902 with repeated requests for the government to provide reserves at regular intervals in bush country being newly opened to settlement.¹⁵ But in seeking the protection of plant life "typical of the various districts of the colony," he seems to have had in mind more than just bush country but all forms of vegetation. If he had simply intended to refer to forests, contrary to a straightforward interpretation of the words, he would surely have had little need to then continue as he did, specifically seeking the preservation for all time of typical examples of the growth of "the more remarkable descriptions of New Zealand forest" in virgin condition (words that bring to mind the arguments used in the Rai valley campaign a few years earlier). Here, then, was a call to achieve on a national scale what he would accomplish on a more modest scale on the Port Hills and Banks Peninsula. The later formation of the New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society,¹⁶ a group closely associated with Ell which is discussed in the

12. By 1913 he had extended his plans to Pigeon Bay Saddle overlooking Barry's Bay on Akaroa Harbour. (Ell, 1929)

13. The list of reserves was set out in a Summit Road and Reserves Association publicity document.

14. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 125, 1903, p. 704.

15. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 116, 1901, p. 418; Vol. 119, 1901, p. 108; Vol. 120, 1902, p. 274; Vol. 121, 1902, p. 375. His concern for the provision of regular reserves was prompted by the decision to open a large block in the Kawhia district with no apparent provision for reserves. Although he was unsuccessful in obtaining a commitment to provide reserves of 100-150 acres at intervals of 4-5 miles, by 1902 his agitation had resulted in the provision of 6,006 acres as forest or scenic reserve in the district, with the proposal for the reservation of a further 7,160 acres. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 121, 1902, p. 375)

16. This group should not be confused with the present Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society which began life as the Native Bird Protection Society. This is discussed in Chapter Ten.

following chapter, may be seen as an attempt to address this issue further at the national level. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of Ell and his supporters, the political will did not then exist to undertake systematic protection of representative habitats. Almost a century later this goal remains imperfectly accomplished although within the last couple of decades serious efforts have been made to remedy the situation. Our belated efforts to accomplish this goal testify both to Ell's great foresight and to the extent of the obstacles he faced.

Curiously, Ell never clearly expressed the goal of protecting representative vegetation in relation to the Summit Road scheme, even though the scheme had precisely that effect so far as the vegetation of the hills was concerned. In fact, in his 1929 account of the scheme, he explained when purchasing reserves he had sought out vantage points so as to preserve the most beautiful views for people to enjoy. This was a publicity document, intended to generate further support for the scheme. It is probable that he deliberately emphasised that aspect of the project most likely to appeal to the public. The goals of protecting scenic viewpoints and protecting vegetation were quite compatible because in selecting the vantage points it was possible to protect a variety of vegetation types. There is ample evidence from his statements elsewhere as to the importance he placed upon the protection of the vegetation. For example, in a document dated 31 July 1916, addressed to members of the Summit Road Scenic Reserves Board, in which he set forth his views for the future development of the project, he made clear his intentions that "every effort should be made to preserve the Native Vegetation on the road sides throughout the whole length of the Summit Road."¹⁷ He went on to add that no effort should be made to introduce any native plants to the bush preserves, though he considered it acceptable to plant small patches of native trees in the open country. This represents an evolution in his thinking since the days when he and Cockayne had proposed to introduce plants from other parts of the country into Kennedy's Bush.¹⁸ However, in referring to the planting of patches of bush in open country, it is unclear whether he had in mind the revegetation of formerly wooded areas and if not, whether he intended that this should apply in actual reserves or only in open country that was not included within reserves. The previous year his friend Cockayne had made clear the importance, in his view, of keeping tussock reserves intact and free from intrusive vegetation in a report on the scenic reserves of the Port Hills. He considered the tussock-covered hillsides which were an extremely characteristic feature of many New Zealand landscapes as "one of the most remarkable plant-forms of the Dominion," but one that was rapidly being eradicated and replaced by an indigenous turf-forming grass,

17. Chilton Papers, Box 2, File 11, p. 7, Canterbury Museum. Elsewhere in the document he expressed his views on the attractions of the tussock country: "The open tussock land is beautiful and the wild growth of ferns and tutu bush with cabbage trees here and there is a beauty which is a real delight to all lovers of nature." (p. 21)

18. See Chapter Five, p. 148-149.

Danthonia pilosa. This man-induced association had no place in the Port Hill reserves, he argued, "for the museum standard demands the natural plant-covering."¹⁹

It seems probable that Ell's developing interest in representative reserves owed much to his friendship with Cockayne, who had begun to formulate his ideas about ecological regions and plant associations or plant-formations, to use the term favoured at this stage, in a lecture presented to the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury in August 1899 on the plant geography of the Waimakariri River basin.²⁰ In this he divided the survey area into two main plant-regions based on the climatic differences between the eastern and western sides, with further sub-regions based on altitude. Within each sub-region he defined a number of plant-formations, smaller communities of plants which were characteristically associated together, such as, for example, lowland grassy meadow, lower mountain grassy meadow, sub-alpine meadow and alpine meadow. The definition of ecological zones or regions, which he eventually applied to the whole country in greater or lesser detail, provided a basis for preserving ecological diversity and emphasised the protection of habitat rather than individual species. It surely provided the intellectual underpinning for Ell's notion of preserving the plant-life "typical of the various districts of the colony." The idea of distinctive plant associations and ecological districts would undoubtedly have appealed to his desire to impress upon New Zealanders the distinctiveness of what was indigenous, a concern which found another outlet in his interest in Maori place names and a desire to ensure correct spelling of them.²¹

By the time Kennedy's Bush was successfully acquired in 1906, Ell had laid the groundwork for the Summit Road scheme. He had planned the route, earmarked reserves and begun to form tracks. He had not been idle in other directions either. Sometime around 1902 he had urged the Minister of Lands to obtain a report on the remaining areas of forest on Banks Peninsula with the object of acquiring such areas and having them set aside for all time as sanctuaries for the preservation of flora and fauna.²² In Parliament he had taken every available opportunity to promote the cause of conservation and the need

19. L. Cockayne, "Note on the Plant Covering of Kennedy's Bush and Other Scenic Reserves of the Port Hills, Canterbury," *A.J.H.R.*, C-6, 1915.

20. L. Cockayne, "A sketch of the plant geography of the Waimakariri River basin, considered chiefly from an ecological point of view," *T.N.Z.I.*, 32 : 95-136, 1899. In 1901 he developed this work further in a lecture on the Chatham Islands. "A short account of the plant-covering of the Chatham Islands," *T.N.Z.I.*, 34 : 243-325, 1901.

21. For example, he was keen to see Maori place names used for roads and marked on maps. Letter to Halswell Road Board, 16 May 1903; Letter to Mayor of Sumner, 16 May 1903, Ell letter-books, Ell Box 8/1, Canterbury Public Library. In his letter to the Mayor of Sumner he reveals that he discussed Maori place names with Percy Smith.

22. Chilton Papers, Box 2, File 11, Canterbury Museum.

had surely never been greater with the marked shift to intensive farming from the turn of the century.²³ His persistent advocacy contributed to the successful promotion of the Scenery Preservation Act 1903, a fact acknowledged by the Hon Sir J.G. Ward during debate on the Bill, although his role must be viewed in the context of the work of the preservation societies, particularly the Taranaki group, whose campaign for such legislation had, as we have seen, preceded his efforts.²⁴ The Act provided him with a mechanism through which he could begin to achieve his goals. It established a Scenery Preservation Commission to travel throughout the Colony inspecting lands possessing scenic or historic interest, or thermal springs and to recommend to the Governor those which ought to be conserved, whether on public, private or native land. The sum of 100,000 pounds was set aside for this purpose, although not more than 25,000 might be drawn upon in any financial year. The land once acquired was to be vested in the control of Boards appointed by the Governor.²⁵

Work on the Summit Road began in earnest in November 1908. The following year Ell formed the Summit Road Association to assist him with his work. George Harper, who had already been appointed to the Kennedy's Bush Scenic Reserve Board on his recommendation, agreed to act as chairman. Cockayne was honorary botanist until he shifted to Wellington. Formation of an association, Ell believed, would release him from the work of raising funds, leaving him free to organise acquisition of the reserves and the building of the road and rest-houses. Unfortunately, relations between Ell and the Association quickly deteriorated as he proceeded to incur liabilities in the name of either the Association or the the official Reserves Board, of which he was a member, without seeking the authorisation of either body and with complete disregard as to whether there was actually any money available. By 1915 the finances of the two bodies were so hopelessly entangled that the Reserves Board agreed to undertake the liabilities of the Association,

23. As part of his concern for the provision of frequent bush reserves he called for bush to be preserved at regular intervals along the Main Trunk line and other railways in order to make the journey more interesting for tourists. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 124, 1903, p. 147) He sought to have bush reserves laid out on every townsite established in forest country. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 125, 1903, p. 229) Other issues he took up included the protection of Kauri forest, (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 122, 1902, p. 409) the preservation of Kapiti Island, (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 124, 1903, p. 649) and the reservation from sale of steep slip-prone land and land at the head of water catchments. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 123, 1903, pp. 253-4) He believed that all forest land of such poor quality that it was valued at less than 7s 6d an acre also ought to be reserved from sale. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 121, 1902, p. 311; Vol. 124, 1903, p. 142) Trees were the best crop likely to be obtained from such land in his view and retention of these areas, which his opponents scornfully dismissed as scrub, would add to the attractiveness of the country while helping to maintain water supplies.

24. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 126, 1903, p. 705.

25. The object of the Act was widely supported in the House, although several members felt a Commission was too expensive a mechanism, and indeed when the Commission was abolished three years later and replaced with a Board, saving money seems to have been the motivation. Three members suggested that it would be cheaper and preferable to obtain the assistance of scenery preservation societies, rather than establish a Commission. Others felt the sum of 100,000 pounds was too high, though not in disagreement with the general goal.

which for a time went into recess until revived again by Harper under the new title of the Summit Road and Reserves Association.²⁶ Friction soon resulted again from the same causes. Notwithstanding the problems, by 1916, when Ell placed on record his future plans for the scheme in a report to the members of the Summit Road Scenic Reserves Board, he could look back on his achievements with a sense of satisfaction. By that date most of the reserves had been fully purchased though there remained a few areas he desired to acquire.

From 1919, when he left Parliament, the scheme thoroughly dominated his life, though by now most of his efforts were directed to completion of the road and building of the rest-houses. Relations with the Association also deteriorated further from that time. William Machin, who became chairman of the Association in that year was determined to grapple vigorously with the problem of overspending, but debts continued to accumulate notwithstanding. A decision by the executive that no further commitments of any kind were to be entered into until the most pressing liabilities facing the Association had been cleared was to little avail. There was no holding back Ell, who, utterly convinced that his ideas were right and should be completed no matter what the cost, was of no mind to curtail work until past debts were settled. He continued to incur liabilities in the name of the Association without the authorisation of the committee and deeply resented what he perceived as an attempt to mould the policy of the Association, which he viewed as his business. In an unsuccessful attempt to counter his "opponents" he formed the Summit Road League but difficulties soon developed with this group as well. By 1923 the rift with the Association was so great that he determined the best course for securing the future of the scheme was to establish a trust which would become responsible for the administration of affairs and completion of the road. Accordingly, having persuaded a small group of leading citizens to act as trustees, perhaps surprisingly in view of his well publicised past difficulties, he proceeded to form The Port Hills-Akaroa Summit Road Trust Board which was registered in 1925. By now it will come as no surprise to learn that this too would be dogged by friction over money.

Members of the Association and subsequent organisations found themselves in an unenviable situation. They sympathised with Ell's aims but were caught in the middle between a growing number of creditors and a man whose commitment to the cause bordered on fanaticism. The difficulties they faced in keeping up with his rate of expenditure on the scheme were compounded by his unbusiness-like attitude towards money and the astonishing irresponsibility he sometimes displayed in incurring

26. From an undated publicity booklet put out by the new Association, it appears that it was formed around August 1918.

unnecessary costs. An example was the instance related by Arnold Wall in which he took a taxi to the Kaituna Valley, a distance of approximately 50 km from Christchurch, to do work at the Packhorse and had it stay there all day, asking the driver to charge the bill to the Association.²⁷

In his preparedness to take risks Ell lies at the opposite extreme from the attitude of Bathgate in Dunedin, who might with advantage have adopted Ell's approach to acquisition of reserves. He outlined his method in a 1918 letter to Sir Francis Bell, the Minister in Charge of Scenery Preservation.

I have first secured the option of purchase and then I have paid a small deposit, placing the Reserve or proposed Reserve under an Honorary Trustee or Trustees to hold the reserve until such time as the purchase is completed, and the Reserve automatically passes under the control of the Summit Road Reserves Board.²⁸

This tactic, which might have seemed a little unorthodox to contemporaries, has come to be more widely adopted as a means of securing land in the public interest. In essence, the financial woes which beset him and the Association arose from the fact that in the interests of the cause he was prepared to be as liberal with the money of others as he was of his own, to his personal financial detriment. Although he tended to under-rate the importance of making proper financial provision for his scheme and his enthusiasm sometimes led him beyond the bounds of reasonableness, these were the attributes of a visionary. A man of more sober business-like temperament would surely never have undertaken a scheme on the scale and grandeur conceived by Ell.²⁹

His biographer, Lenore Oakley, makes the point with justice, that without the considerable financial aid and forbearance shown by interested citizens, including the landowners who donated parts of the reserves or asked less than market value for the land and were prepared to wait a considerable time for full payment, the scheme at many periods would have been severely curtailed, if not abandoned altogether.³⁰ Those loyal supporters, along with the

27. Wall (1965) p. 101.

28. Chilton Papers, Box 2, File 11, Canterbury Museum.

29. He planned 12 rest-houses in all, though only four were built.

30. Oakley (1960) p. 50. Amongst the landowners who materially assisted the cause through outright gifts of land or sizable reductions in the price asked for the land were Messers. Arthur and Richard Morten, Mr R. Allan, Hon R. Heaton Rhodes, Mr R. M. D. Morten, Mr and Mrs A. E. G. Rhodes, Mr A. Loe, Mr W. F. Parkinson and Mr J. Cracroft Wilson. Other prominent financial supporters included Mr G. Bowron, Mr H. F. Wigram and William Reece. Others helped the cause by publicising the scheme. These included Leonard Cockayne, who has already been mentioned in this context, the writer and poet, Miss B. E. Baughan, the journalist, James Drummond, Robert Speight and Robert Laing. For more on Baughan and Drummond see Chapter Eight.

long-suffering members of the Association, undeniably deserve some of the credit for the ultimate success of the scheme, as Ell himself was always ready to acknowledge. But in the final analysis the cause succeeded primarily because the very strength and power of Ell's convictions were such that he was able to carry others along with his enthusiasm, persuading them to keep backing him, despite the many criticisms which were from time to time levelled against him and his scheme.

From 1914 until he left Parliament a new society had a call on Ell's attention, the New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society, founded in Wellington on 11 February 1914.³¹ Throughout its apparently brief existence, this Society, which marked a new phase in nature conservation, would be closely associated with the name of Harry Ell. However, from 1919, when he left Parliament, he no longer seems to have been involved with conservation organisations on a national scale, but devoted himself with renewed determination to the complete realisation of his Summit Road dream. He worked with enthusiasm and tireless energy right up to the time of his sudden death on 25 June 1937. He did not achieve all he planned but it was probably in the nature of the man that he never would. His fertile mind would always have sought new possibilities for improving public accessibility to his much loved hills. The road and the reserves are an enduring legacy to his far-sighted vision, one that is now widely appreciated, vindicating his faith and optimism that with time the Summit Road would become a much valued public asset.

31. *The Press*, 13 February 1914.

CHAPTER EIGHT

"Back To The Wilds"

The First New Zealand Forest And Bird Protection Society

Part 1. The Society, Its Formation, Its Goals and Its Achievements

The foundation of the New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society in February 1914 was a landmark in the history of nature conservation in New Zealand. For the first time we had a national organisation devoted exclusively to the pursuit of nature conservation. It marks a new phase in another way as well. The key note is no longer scenery preservation but conservation of wild nature. This change of emphasis was signified in the name of the Society and in its objects. Reference to scenery preservation appeared in neither. The goal of preserving fauna was recognised for the first time in the name of a group and the objects proclaimed the new emphasis unequivocally with the provision that the Society shall be "an association for the conservation of wild nature."

In the phase of nature conservation discussed so far, "scenery preservation" provided a justification for achieving the desired object of protecting the rapidly vanishing indigenous flora and fauna, augmented always by utilitarian arguments. The loss of the Ronga and Opouri Valleys helped to establish the limitations of conservation based around the concept of scenery. Although the Nelson Society did not base its proposal for a national park on the grounds of outstanding scenery, its opponents sought to attack the proposal on the basis that there was finer scenery, in a picturesque sense, elsewhere. Ultimately, those with the power to make decisions over land use determined the outcome by providing an alternative "national park", which, in their view, comprised better scenery and conveniently less valuable timber. One of the achievements of the next phase of conservation would be the development of a more sophisticated conservation philosophy, including the redefinition of the concept of scenery, which had been enshrined in the Scenery Preservation Act.

The change from "scenery" to "wild nature" also implied a shift in awareness from an essentially anthropocentric approach to a greater biocentric consciousness. It would be simplistic to describe the latter phase as fully biocentric any more than it would be fair to describe the earlier phase as completely anthropocentric, as the previous chapters make clear. There was a discernible evolution towards a more biocentric approach throughout the scenery preservation movement. This was amply demonstrated by the Rai campaign and those to protect Kennedy's Bush and Dean's Bush. The terms anthropocentric and biocentric were not ones any of the participants in these groups would have used

themselves but, with the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to see a distinct shift in emphasis.

The Formation of the Society

There is no record of a preliminary public meeting called to consider the establishment of a society, and the report of the first council meeting contains no hint as to where the idea originated. However there is considerable evidence that Harry Ell was a leading figure in the promotion of the Society. An editorial accompanying the report of the first meeting described Ell, "a tireless enthusiast for trees and birds," as "one of the movers."¹ The journalist and nature writer James Drummond, who was a founding member of the Society, later stated in one of his weekly nature columns: "It is evident that the Bird and Forest Protection Society which Mr H. G. Ell MP has established, has not come too soon."² This suggests that Ell was not merely "one of the movers" but the prime mover behind the Society. Whether or not the idea originated with him or arose from mutual discussion amongst a number of the founding members, it is certain that Ell had already begun thinking about the need for a society along the lines of the Forest and Bird Protection Society as early as 1912. A letter from Ell to H. Guthrie-Smith dated 27 April 1912, contains the statement that "a vigilant wild bird society would do a great deal towards creating a healthy public sentiment for the protection of wild birds and would also do much towards checking collectors."³ Ell's letter was written in response to an earlier letter (now lost) by Guthrie-Smith, inviting him to stay at Tutira. In that letter, Guthrie-Smith had apparently expressed the conviction that vigorous action was needed to protect the bird life of the country from skin hunters and collectors. It is not possible to tell from the context of Ell's letter whether his reference to a society signified agreement with a suggestion previously made by Guthrie-Smith or whether it represented Ell's solution to the problem raised by him. In the absence of the original letter from Guthrie-Smith this question cannot be resolved but both men were clearly of like mind. Guthrie-Smith was also a founding member of the Society and in *Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, written in 1913, he set forth

1. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1914.

2. Clipping dated 10 June 1914, J. Drummond Papers, Unsorted press cuttings, Canterbury Museum.

3. Ell letter-books, Ell Box 8/1, Canterbury Public Library. An earlier suggestion for a Native Bird Protection League was made by a correspondent styled "Makanihi," writing to an *Otago Daily Times* column entitled "Our Public Schools." These columns were collected by Drummond, who was a friend of Ell. Drummond may perhaps have drawn his attention to the suggestion. The column is undated but it certainly precedes Ell's 1912 letter. It appears in a box containing clippings of columns written by Drummond and others. The box was dated 1906 by the Canterbury Museum, where it is held, although 1908 seems a more probable date as Drummond did not begin his nature columns, which are included in it, until that year.



Left. Leonard Cockayne. Source: Thom, *Heritage The Parks of the People*, p. 106

Right. H. Guthrie-Smith. Source: Woodhouse, *Guthrie-Smith of Tutira*.

his views on the need for a society "yet lacking in New Zealand - a Society for the Protection of Native Birds and Plants."⁴

Whatever the actual genesis of the idea, it is clear that Ell, who was described as the organising secretary, was one of the Society's most active members. The prominence of the role played by him was acknowledged at the seventh council meeting of the Society, one year after its formation. Special mention was made of his tireless energy in efforts to promote the aims and objects of the Society.⁵ A reference to the Society a number of years after it had ceased to exist in a letter from Perrine Moncrieff to the honorary secretary of the Native Bird Protection Society, Val Sanderson, confirms the dominant role of Ell. The Society, which was described as having done good work especially in getting new reserves created, was said to have been run mainly by Ell but to have fizzled out when he left Parliament in 1919.⁶

The Council of the Society

The original council of the Society comprised fifteen members. Apart from Ell himself, the list of original council members included five of the major writers and thinkers on conservation from the turn of the century, Leonard Cockayne,⁷ George Malcolm Thomson,⁸ Herbert Guthrie-Smith,⁹ James Drummond¹⁰ and Blanche Baughan.¹¹ The

4. Guthrie-Smith, (1914) p. 9.

5. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1915.

6. Letter dated 2 August 1927, Royal Forest and Bird Collection, M.S. Papers 444, Folder 192, Alexander Turnbull Library.

7. Refer to Chapter Five, note 69 for biographical details on Cockayne.

8. G. M. Thomson (1848-1933) was born in Calcutta, India and educated in India. He emigrated with his parents to Southland in 1868 but after three years moved to Dunedin. In 1871 Thomson joined the staff of the High School of Otago (later Otago Boy's High) as a tutor and from 1877 to 1903 he was science master at the school. In 1908 Thomson entered Parliament for Dunedin North as a support of W. F. Massey. He lost his seat in 1914 but served on the Legislative Council from 1918 -1932. He vigorously promoted both science and education in the House. Thomson was an active member of the Otago Institute and was three times president of the New Zealand Institute. He was also a prolific writer, publishing 375 scientific papers and articles during the course of his career. He took a particular interest in the debate about naturalization and his major monograph on this topic, *The Naturalization of Plants and Animals in New Zealand*, was published in 1922. (NZDB, II, 537-538)

9. Herbert Guthrie-Smith (1861-1940) was born at Helensburgh, Scotland. he was educated in Scotland and England before coming to New Zealand in 1880 to work as a cadet on the estate of his uncle, George Dennistoun, of Peel Forest Station, South Canterbury. In 1882 he and Arthur Cunningham, who had accompanied him to New Zealand, jointly bought Tutira estate in Hawke's Bay. In 1903 he became the sole owner. His account of the changes in the the natural history of the run, *Tutira The Story of a New Zealand Sheep Station*, first published in 1921, has become a New Zealand classic. From 1908 he devoted an increasing amount of his time to bird study and the writing of books on New Zealand bird-life. (*An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, pp. 889-890; Woodhouse, 1959)

ideas of these writers, some of whom have already been encountered in previous chapters, will be examined in detail in the second part of the chapter. Other members with an established record of nature conservation were Mr B. M. Molineaux, who had been a founding member and honorary treasurer of the Wellington Scenery Preservation Society, Mr G. E. Tollhurst, also a member of the Wellington Society, Dr R. Fulton and Professor H. B. Kirk, prominent biologist, son of the noted botanist and former Conservator of Forests, Thomas Kirk.

Robert Fulton was an active member of the Otago Institute. His 1907 presidential address, entitled "The Disappearance of the New Zealand Birds," led to the passing of a resolution calling for the absolute protection of all land-birds and most swimming-birds, with certain exceptions under clearly defined circumstances in the case of game birds, and birds which were considered to cause harm such as shags, harriers and pukekos. The resolution also called for the setting aside of island sanctuaries and sanctuaries of swamps, river-beds and lagoons in every county. This was the first call for a national network of wetland sanctuaries. At the suggestion of Fulton, a joint conference was arranged with the Otago Acclimatization Society, the Agricultural and Pastoral Society, the Otago Gun Sportsman's Association and the Otago Branch of the New Zealand Farmers' Union to try and develop workable laws which would protect equally the rights of the farmer, the sportsman, the bush-resident and the bird-lover. As a result of the conference representations were made to the Colonial Secretary and the Attorney General on the necessity for further legal protection of birds.¹²

Harry Kirk was active in the cause of conservation through the Board of Governors of the New Zealand Institute. In 1912 he was appointed a member of a sub-committee of the standing committee of the Institute¹³ to investigate the conditions of leasing the outlying

10. Drummond was born in Thames in 1869 and educated in Gisborne and Napier. He was apprenticed to the *Poverty Bay Herald*. He spent time as the editor of the *Southern Standard* in Gore before moving to Christchurch in 1900 where he was, for many years, the chief reporter. Drummond published a number of books during the course of his career (See note 116 below) and was actively involved with the Canterbury Philosophical Society. He died in 1940. (Obituary, *The Press*, 9 September 1940)

11. Baughan was born in Putney, England in 1870. She attended London University, graduating B.A. with honours in Greek. Before emigrating to New Zealand in 1900 she joined the English Suffragette movement, and was involved with welfare work in the East End of London. In New Zealand she established a reputation as a poet and a writer of travel pamphlets. (See note 126 below) She continued her involvement with social welfare in New Zealand and in 1935 received the King George V Jubilee Medal for her literary and social services. She died at Akaroa in 1958. For further biographical details see *An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol.1, pp. 170-171 and N. M. Harris, *Making it New: Modernism in B. E. Baughan's New Zealand Poetry*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (English) University of Canterbury, 1992.

12. *T.N.Z.I.*, 40, Pt II, pp. 577 & 581, 1907.

13. The standing committee comprised members of the Board of Governors resident or present in Wellington.

islands of New Zealand, which the Institute was anxious to see protected as sanctuaries. At the January 1914 annual meeting of the Institute he advocated the introduction of a Plumage Bill along similar lines to one before the British Parliament and he supported Cockayne in advocating extensions to Tongariro National Park. He was later responsible for the motion in which the Institute agreed to co-operate with the Forest and Bird Protection Society, as a consequence of which the Institute took an active interest in securing adequate administration of Kapiti.¹⁴

The remaining members of the council were L. O. H. Tripp,¹⁵ Mrs H. M. Campbell, wife of the member of Parliament for Hawke's Bay, Dr J. A. Thomson,¹⁶ noted paleontologist and director of the Dominion Museum from 1914 to 1928 and son of G. M. Thomson, C. I. Dasent, the secretary, and the president, Mr C. H. Treadwell, a Wellington lawyer. Others known to be associated with the group but who were not members of council included the Venerable Archdeacon Walsh, a long-time conservationist, who had been one of the first to draw attention to the harm caused by grazing animals; Phillips Turner, Inspector of Scenic Reserves and close associate of Cockayne; B. C. Aston, who in later years was active in the cause through the New Zealand Institute and the Native Bird Protection Society, serving terms as president of both organisations; and David Hutchins, the South African Forestry expert who spent a number of years in New Zealand and figures

14. *T.N.Z.I.*, 46 : 361-2; *T.N.Z.I.*, 50 : 334-5, 1918. Kirk was appointed to a sub-committee to deal with Kapiti. Following a deputation from the Institute calling for better administration, the Government agreed to set up an advisory committee, on which Kirk was the Institute's representative. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 51 : 468-9; *T.N.Z.I.*, 52 : 471, 1919.) During his long association with the Board of Governors of the Institute he continued to play an active role in conservation issues. Kirk was born in Coventry, England in 1859 but came to New Zealand with his family in 1863. He was educated in Auckland and Wellington. After receiving his M.A. with honours in botany and Zoology in 1883, he became an assistant inspector of Maori schools. In 1903 he was appointed to the newly established chair of biology at Victoria University College. He was an outstanding teacher who nurtured his new department into two flourishing departments (Botany and Zoology). Kirk retired in 1943 and died in 1948. (*An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol 2, pp. 231-232)

15. Leonard Tripp was a Wellington lawyer. He was actively involved with the Wellington Acclimatization Society. In 1913 he gave evidence before the Royal Commission on Forestry on behalf of the Acclimatization Society. In the course of his evidence he made a plea for bush in Canterbury and Otago, especially on pastoral runs, to be preserved for the protection of birds. He advocated exemption from taxes and rates in relation to areas of bush preserved by private owners. He also called for greater management of reserves, suggesting that Acclimatization Society rangers be involved, as well as the police and rabbit inspectors. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1913, C-12, p. 85) Tripp was a good friend of Guthrie-Smith and shared many of his views on the best means of saving native birds. His ideas will be discussed further in the following chapter.

16. James Allan Thomson also took an active interest in conservation through the New Zealand Institute. In 1917 he submitted a report with Cockayne on the destruction of fur seals in Fiordland, which had become a public reserve "for a national park" in 1905. (It was not officially constituted a national park until 1952.) The report recommended amendment to the legislation to prevent sealing in the park, in essence an early attempt to have a marine sanctuary declared. This was followed by resolutions seeking the same. (See the Appendix.) Thomson was also actively involved with the Institute's campaigns in relation to Kapiti and Tongariro before his untimely death in 1928.

prominently in the history of the New Zealand Forestry League, the subject of the next chapter. In addition to the two parliamentarians on the council, the Society had the firm support of W. H. Field, member for Otaki, G. J. Anderson (Mataura), A. S. Malcolm, (Clutha) and H. M. Campbell (Hawke's Bay).¹⁷ The absence of names of certain people who had figured prominently in earlier groups such as Skinner, is perhaps surprising, but it may simply reflect the general paucity of surviving information.

Objects and Goals

The president of the Society, Mr Treadwell, explained at the first meeting of the executive council that the organisation had been called into existence "to protect and preserve native birds and existing reserves and to secure reserves in remaining forests in districts where they do not already exist."¹⁸ The objects of the Society were:

- (1) To be an association for the preservation of wild nature.
- (2) To inculcate amongst the public, especially children, an intelligent interest in the native flora and fauna.
- (3) To secure the conservation of the native forest growing on roadsides and riverbanks and other public lands, and to secure protection for the same as far as possible.
- (4) To procure and set aside as public reserves all privately owned forests which are in danger of being destroyed.
- (5) Generally to assist any movement, whether organised by private persons, local authorities or the State, taken for the purpose of protecting any area of land covered with native forest.¹⁹

With the exception of the first and last objects, there are clear links with the objectives of earlier societies. The fifth object reflects the group's aspiration to act as a national co-ordinating organisation for the conservation movement. In that respect it represented the embodiment of W. H. Skinner's hope to achieve a national association of kindred societies. Statements similar to those in the third and fourth object were common to all the groups which followed the general formula established by the Taranaki Society. The second object is identical to one used by the Rangitikei Society. It is possible that the draftsman was familiar with the objects of the Rangitikei group, which had formed the previous year. If so, it is surprising that the terms of the fourth object were not modelled on the Rangitikei Society's provision dealing with private land.²⁰ That was much more precise and, to judge from what is known of the Forest and Bird Society's subsequent activities, would

17. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1915, 1 December 1916. Of these, W. H. Field was particularly active in the cause of conservation. He was responsible for conserving remnants of bush near Waikanae and had supported the cause in Parliament. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1913, C-12, p. 84) He was later involved with the Forestry League and was also co-founder of the Tararua Tramping Club, which took a serious interest in conservation issues. (See Chapter Nine, note 25)

18. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1914.

19. *Ibid.*

20. For the objects of the Rangitikei Society see Chapter Five, p. 158.

surely have better reflected its intentions than the sweeping terms of the fourth object as reported in the press.

The Society was intended to fill a greatly felt need for an organisation which was national in scope, through which those interested in preserving birds and forests could give expression to their views. Although many of the leading members of the Society already had established records of promoting the conservation of our flora and fauna through whatever channels were available to them – writing, lectures, participation in groups of more limited scope, or through Parliament - the formation of the new Society provided them with the means of giving unified voice and weight of numbers to the cause while at the same time providing a focus for all those silent supporters who, for whatever reason, were less well placed to promote their beliefs.

One of its stated aims was to assist any movement, whether organised by private persons, local authorities or the State, taken for the purpose of protecting any area of land covered in native forest.²¹ As an organisation based in Wellington with a majority of the executive residing in the capital, it was well placed to lobby government or seek responses from the appropriate authorities on behalf of those living in other parts of the country. The executive also included members from Christchurch, Dunedin and Hawke's Bay. This wide compass of geographic knowledge fell somewhat short of national representation but was extended further by the familiarity of certain council members with other regions of the country. Cockayne had travelled widely in the course of the various botanical surveys he had carried out for the Government and in his own private capacity. In addition, he was in contact with many amateur botanists throughout the country so that, in the words of A. D. Thomson, he "established what was virtually his own botanical survey."²² The twenty years Professor H. B. Kirk spent as assistant inspector of Maori schools had enabled him to travel widely and at the same time pursue his interest in the study of New Zealand flora and fauna. Blanche Baughan had visited and written about the major scenic areas of the country, Drummond was familiar with the Gisborne area and Southland, and Guthrie-Smith was familiar with South Canterbury and Stewart Island.²³

A truly effective national organisation required more than the knowledge of council members. Nor could it rely on the good will of interested members of the public to report

21. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1914.

22. Thomson, 1983, *The Life and Correspondence of Leonard Cockayne*, p. 24.

23. Guthrie-Smith later travelled more extensively, including much of the South Island, the subantarctic islands and the Kermadecs. Leonard Tripp was familiar with South Canterbury, being originally from Orari Gorge.

that reserves were in danger of destruction or that native fauna was being interfered with (though the reporting of such information was encouraged and welcomed). It needed members residing in the regions, who were familiar with local conditions and who could be relied upon to keep the executive well informed. To this end the Society aspired to have corresponding members in all districts (an idea adopted from the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society) and ultimately to form branches.²⁴ The first of these aims was achieved in part. After the first year corresponding members had been appointed in Napier, Dannevirke, Otorohanga, Inglewood and Ohakune.²⁵ It is doubtful whether the second aim was ever achieved. There is no record of the formation of official branches although Christchurch, Dunedin and Hawke's Bay were all well represented on council and it is possible that informal branches may have operated in those districts. In Christchurch sufficient organisational strength existed to mobilise the community into supporting petitions. *The Press* of 15 May 1914 reported that a petition in support of the efforts of the New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society to prevent the sale of the Everitt Road Reserve in Taranaki had been signed by 34 local people including a number of ladies.²⁶

Education was a key goal of the Society. It shared a faith with the earlier groups in the importance of education, but for the specific concern for the education of the young was a new development. It is true that the objects of the Rangitikei Society also referred to the inculcation of a love of flora and fauna especially among children, but there is no evidence that it was able to pursue this goal during its brief existence. In furtherance of the goal of educating the young the Society offered a prize to school children throughout the country for essays on botany or natural history. A report in the *Evening Post* for 8 April 1914 recorded that the Society had decided to invest thirty pounds in prizes for suitable essays. The money for the prize was donated by Guthrie-Smith.²⁷

Given the already established and continuing commitment of many in the group to education, either as professional educators or as nature writers, it is scarcely surprising to find that the Society placed great emphasis upon this issue. The experience that laws to protect native fauna and reserves had not had the salutary effect hoped for must have

24. Ibid., p. 6.

25. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1915.

26. Amongst the signatories were a number of people closely associated with the Summit Road scheme, including Geo Harper, William Reece, W. J. Jamieson, A. E. G. Rhodes, G. Booth, G. Bowron, Geo Gould and A. W. Beaven. Amongst the women who signed were Mrs Deans, who had gifted Riccarton Bush to the nation, Rose Rhodes, who with her husband had donated land on the Port Hills, Ethel Pyne, Helen Rolleston and Helen Hall.

27. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1915.

reinforced the view that moral suasion was ultimately more important than the force of the law. Not long before the formation of the Society, Drummond had commented on the failure of the bird protection laws.

Fairly effective laws have been passed in New Zealand protecting birds but they are largely a dead letter because the public have not yet realised the necessity for protecting the representatives of the ancient inhabitants of this land. If the public conscience was more sensitive on this point, large numbers of native birds, killed every year, would be spared, and more consideration would be given to the wood pigeon, the pukeko, the godwit, and other birds whose slaughter the law at present allows.²⁸

The situation with reserves was no better, with frequent reports of the damage caused by intruding stock, fire, noxious weeds and vandals. Reserves were widely denounced by adjoining land owners as sources of noxious weeds and other pests, leading at times to deliberate sabotage and to frequent petitions for removal of reserve status. That the problem was real enough cannot be doubted when we find such an ardent supporter of conservation as Guthrie-Smith writing in *Mutton Birds and Other Birds*:

Reserves are, in fact acquiring a bad name, and instead of local interest in their preservation, there are justifiable complaints that they are mere harbours for mischievous aliens, and that from them the homestead plantations and farm hedges become infested with blackberry seedlings.²⁹

The problem was symptomatic of the lack of funds devoted to management during this early phase of nature conservation.

The goal of interesting children in native flora and fauna was a subject especially dear to the hearts of several members of the Society. Ell was convinced that few New Zealand children had any knowledge of the indigenous flora and fauna. As far back as 1901 had urged the Government to have coloured posters of native birds and flowers printed for distribution to schools.³⁰ Though he was not successful in achieving this, his campaign in Parliament may have played some part in the Department of Education's decision to commission James Drummond to write a series of articles on native birds for the *School Journal* and to sponsor the publication of Cockayne's book on plants.³¹ Drummond had

28. "In Touch With Nature," Drummond Papers, Canterbury Museum, date uncertain, box of clippings labelled 1912.

29. *Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, p. 6.

30. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 119, 1901, p. 319. The Minister of Public Works, Mr Hall-Jones, agreed this would be desirable but expensive and there were many more urgent calls on expenditure. A number of years later the Native Bird Protection Society took upon itself the task of printing and distributing posters of birds.

31. Letter dated 17 December 1908 from editor of the *School Journal* requesting series of 10 articles on New Zealand Birds, Drummond Papers, Box 1 Canterbury Museum. The articles in the *School Journal* do not name an author but a series on "Birds of New Zealand" began in 1909, continuing into 1910. There can be little doubt that these are the articles by Drummond. The *School Journal* was established in 1907 by the Hon. George Fowlds, Minister of Education, but the appointment of an editor with a strong interest in nature study perhaps owed something to the campaigns of both Ell and G. M. Thomson. From the

already established his credentials as someone interested in making natural history accessible to young New Zealanders with the publication in 1902 of a simple introductory book entitled *Nature In New Zealand*, intended for the use of children in elementary schools. This covered not only the usual birds and plants but also the lesser known animals including insects, sea mammals and fish and shell fish.

The person with the longest standing interest in educating the young to appreciate nature was G. M. Thomson. From the time he joined the teaching staff at Otago Boys High School in 1871, he aimed to awaken a love of nature in his pupils. This he did not only in the classroom but also by instituting walking excursions on Saturdays, which were often attended by as many as 50 or more boys.³² He was a great believer in working from real objects rather than text books which he viewed as "a curse that dominates everything." He was concerned at the lack of powers of observation of natural phenomenon amongst ordinary people, a problem he attributed in part to the tyranny of examinations and excessive reliance on text-books. This was the subject of a paper he presented to the Otago Institute in 1898.³³ In the paper he proposed that the Institute offer prizes to primary school pupils for the best-kept record of observations of natural phenomenon made over the course of a year, in order to stimulate greater interest in natural history, a suggestion which was adopted unanimously. The suggestion that the Society offer prizes for essays may well have originated with Thomson.

His belief in the importance of field study was also demonstrated by his founding of the Dunedin Field Naturalist's Club in 1872. He was actively committed to the Club over many years, frequently accompanying members on excursions.³⁴ The Club was not aimed exclusively at young people, but it did prove a stimulating training ground for a number of young naturalist's who would later achieve prominence in their chosen fields of science, including D. Petrie and B. C. Aston. During Thomson's parliamentary career, which began in 1908, and during his term as a Governor of the New Zealand Institute (from 1905

evidence of correspondence it is clear that Ell was in a position to exercise some influence with the Minister. Both men shared a strong interest in prohibition, reforms in the land tax, and the welfare of the young. Fowlds was sympathetic to the cause, recognising the value of protecting scenery for tourism. In 1924 he founded an organisation to promote tourism in New Zealand, the New Zealand Tourist League. During the 1920s and 1930s the Tourist League took an active interest in nature conservation and worked in association with the Forestry League and the Native Bird Protection Society. It called for better management of reserves and a clear national parks and reserves policy, including the exclusion of exotics. It favoured retaining 25% of the land in forest as a safety margin (a figure which may well derive from the forest laws of Mauritius - see Chapter Two, note 88). IA 165/1 & 165/3, National Archives, Wellington.

32. E. Yvonne Speirs, *George Malcolm Thomson*. M.A. Thesis (History) University of Otago, 1983, p. 4; William Benham, "George Malcolm Thomson, 1848-1933," *T.N.Z.I.*, 64 : 413-421, 1935.

33. "On the Study of Natural History," *T.N.Z.I.*, 31 : 40-742, 1898

34. Dunedin Naturalist's Field Club Papers, M I 533/A-D, Hocken Library, Dunedin.

onwards) he advocated, without success, the introduction of natural history into the school curriculum and strove to achieve improvement in the training of teachers in regard to the teaching of nature study.³⁵

Like G. M. Thomson, Guthrie-Smith believed that the soundest sort of education was not that taught out of books but that "drawn by the children themselves direct from nature."³⁶ Or as he would say elsewhere, "nature watched close is nature cared for."³⁷ Cockayne, too, was a great believer that facts can best be learnt in the field. He was a keen advocate of planting native gardens at schools as a means of familiarising school-children with our indigenous plants. He saw such gardens as a valuable adjunct to nature study, for the reality was, that in many areas, field study in the local neighbourhood could only be based on "interlopers from abroad."³⁸ In his important book *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*, first published in 1910 under the auspices of the Department of Education, he included a chapter on the cultivation of New Zealand plants suitable for school grounds, which he asserted, contrary to popular belief, were not difficult to grow. The section included information on methods of propagation and collecting, with lists of suitable species. He looked forward to a time when the schools would "become sanctuaries where the native plants, one of the peculiar features and special glories of the land, would be safe for all time."³⁹ He believed strongly that "one great step" in the direction of protecting our grand natural heritage of fauna and flora from spoliation and destruction by fire lay in educating our children "to prize such possession and to know and feel that any damage inflicted on them is sinful."⁴⁰ The careful nurture of a school garden was an important means to this end.

The love of trees, the value of forests, the reverence for Nature; and, not least, the love of country, can sink deep into the minds of children from their school gardens of native plants, their very own.⁴¹

35. Speirs (1983) Chapter 6; Benham (1935) pp. 413-14. Lance McCaskill, who features in Chapter Ten played an important role improving the teaching of natural history at training college and in the schools during the late 1920 and the 1930s.

36. *Birds of Water Wood and Waste*, p. 207.

37. *Bird Life on Island and Shore*, p. viii.

38. *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*, (1st ed.) p. 167.

39. *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*, (1st ed.) pp. 167-176. This section was excluded from later editions probably because in 1923 he published a separate and more extensive volume entitled *The Cultivation of New Zealand Plants*. This continued to advocate native planting for schools. He also advocated greater use of natives in town gardens and city parks, though true horticulturalist that he was, he did not wish to deny a place to exotics.

40. "A Glimpse into the Alps of Canterbury," p. 215.

41. *The Cultivation of New Zealand Plants*, p. 115.

Perhaps surprisingly, Cockayne appears to have felt no qualms about encouraging the collection of plants from the wild either in 1910 or 1923, but to the contrary regarded it as "one of the finest, most exciting, and healthy sports in the world," which brings the collector "into the presence of Nature... on the sea-shore... in the noble forests... the broad, shingly, river-beds, the brown tussock-grasslands... [and] the alpine heights."⁴² Once established, such plants would stock a garden "with mementos of many a happy hour, and will recall scenes of beauty."⁴³ Opposition to the collecting of plants did not become a serious issue until the 1930s, when a sub-committee of the Alpine and Rock Gardens Society was set up to establish the effects of grazing, felling and erosion on individual species. The sub-committee aimed to compile a list of plants believed to be rare and endangered. Its work led to the Native Plants Protection Act 1934 and in 1937 the sub-committee evolved into the autonomous Native Plant Protection Society.⁴⁴

The ideas of Thomson, Guthrie-Smith and Cockayne had much in common with the nature study movement, which began to develop in the United States in the mid-1880s. This movement placed great emphasis on the direct observation of nature, on learning to see the whole not merely the part, on paying attention to the common as much as the rare or unusual and above all learning not merely to see but also to understand. The use of readers was deemed incidental and secondary. In the words of Liberty Hyde Bailey, the leading spokesman for the movement, its purpose of nature study was "to put the pupil in a sympathetic attitude towards nature for the purpose of increasing the joy of living."⁴⁵ He distinguished it from the science teaching movement in which nature was studied with the primary object of discovering new truth for the purpose of increasing the sum of human knowledge. While not denying the value of studying nature for this purpose, he believed it encouraged "the conceit that every thing is made to please man." Nature study by contrast desired to inculcate the view that "each thing lives for itself and its kind."⁴⁶ The final result of nature study teaching should be the development of a love for and keen personal interest in all forms of nature and a desire to cease from abusing them. In common with Cockayne, Guthrie-Smith and Thomson, he did not adopt a purist stance against either

42. *The Cultivation of New Zealand Plants*, p. 13.

43. *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*, (1st ed.) p. 168.

44. D. R. Given, *Rare and Endangered Plants of New Zealand*. Wellington : Reed, 1981, p. 125.

45. *The Nature Study Idea : Being an Interpretation of the New School Movement to Put the Child in Sympathy with Nature*. New York : Doubleday, Page & Co., 1903. The nature study approach contrasted strongly with the normal approach to the teaching of natural science in the United States at that time, which emphasised the study of animals injurious to man in order to more effectively combat them. In 1915, Bailey produced another book entitled *The Holy Earth*, which set out his philosophy.

46. *Ibid* , p. 100.

hunting or collecting, but hoped that the child would become much more interested in living things than having the desire to kill. Collecting should only be encouraged when it had some definite purpose. Nature study, he believed, had an important role to play in creating an enlarged vision respecting man's place in the natural world in which spiritual factors would have a growing influence and our points of contact with nature would strengthen and multiply.⁴⁷ It is not certain whether members of the Society were directly acquainted with the ideas of Bailey, although R. M. Laing, a friend of both Ell and Cockayne possessed a copy of *The Nature Study Idea*.⁴⁸ Thomson, as a professional educator, was almost certainly familiar with some of the writings and ideas of the movement, though he had developed his ideas on first hand observation well before the publication of Bailey's book. The points of similarity between Bailey's view of man's place in the world and that of members of the Society probably developed out of similar frames of mind rather than from direct influence.

The editor of the *Evening Post*, in an enthusiastic editorial on the formation of the Society, was in no doubt as to the wisdom of emphasising education over legislation.⁴⁹ The first need in his view was "the formation of an intelligent, genuinely humanitarian, public opinion." It was "absolutely necessary to persuade people to think about trees and birds, and in time a feeling of glad fellowship will be the best protector of Nature's great family of fauna and flora." That such a state of affairs was far from having been achieved he felt bound to admit, but he saw no cause for despair. Without making specific reference to the efforts of earlier groups, he stated that evidence of progress was discernible. Nevertheless the general level of support was far from what the movement hoped for. He believed it was still true to say that "no palpable public opinion on this subject exists today. The general mass of New Zealanders has not yet been roused, and very few folk of stimulating temperament are trying to stir them. Public men duly elected by popular vote are also indifferently interested, though several meritorious exceptions have to be noted." He was under no illusions as to the limitations of the role of the press in bringing about the desired

47. In *The Holy Earth* (1915) Bailey expanded more fully upon the theme of man's relation to nature. In it he promotes a new ethic based on the view that the earth, as our common habitation, must be inviolable. Although we have a right to use the products of the earth, we cannot act rightly towards our fellows unless we know how to act rightly towards the earth. We can no longer assume we have no obligation to the inanimate which we consider the earth to be. Science constantly narrows the gulf between animate and inanimate, organised and unorganised, the traditional basis for our ethical distinctions. The creation is one creation which we must accept or reject in its entirety. Acceptance necessitates movement into a sustainable relationship with the earth based on an understanding of our proper relation to creation. Resource use must be elevated into the realm of statesmanship and morality. In many ways Bailey pre-figures Aldo Leopold's better known land ethic which he first began to articulate in 1933. (See Chapter Two, p. 65.

48. His copy was bequeathed to the University of Canterbury Library.

49. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1914, p. 6.

changes of attitude. "The great need is personal service. The press alone cannot move mountains - the shoulders of stalwart citizens have to help." The formation of the new Society comprising just such stalwart citizens gave grounds for optimism. He was convinced that even one zealous worker in each district would bring about an improvement and hoped that branches would soon be established throughout the country.

Achievements

Tantalisingly little is known about the Society and records of its activities cease after December 1916, when it was concerned that areas of the Wellington Botanical Gardens be set aside for the cultivation of New Zealand plants.⁵⁰ That leaves at least two years of activity unaccounted for, if, as has been suggested, the organisation folded sometime in 1919. There is evidence that it was still active in January 1918 because in that month the New Zealand Institute passed a resolution at its annual meeting declaring that it was in sympathy with all movements for the protection of harmless birds and was prepared to cooperate with the Forest and Bird Protection Society in that direction.⁵¹ The fullest account of the Society's activities is to be found in a newspaper summary of the first annual report, which was presented by Ell to the seventh council meeting in February 1915.⁵² This records that during the year over 150 telegrams had been written and received in dealing with the work of the Society and its influence had been brought to bear with the object of protecting and securing reserves and bird sanctuaries in 27 districts. Matters dealt with included the issue of extensions to Tongariro National Park; reserves along the Main Trunk line in the vicinity of Tongariro; reserves in the Waipoua district, the Catlins district, near Port Levy and a number in Taranaki; bird sanctuaries at Cape Kidnappers, Codfish Island and the Poor Knights; protection of the volcanic cones of Auckland and limestone outcrops at Waro, near Whangarei; and the fencing of existing and proposed reserves. If the Society continued to be as active in succeeding years as it was in its first, then Perrine Moncrieff's observation that it had done good work in securing reserves would seem amply justified.

50. *Evening Post*, 1 December 1916. During an earlier deputation on this subject Cockayne had stressed that the Society did not wish to interfere in any way with the remaining portions of ancient bush in the gardens which should be kept intact. (*Evening Post*, 21 September 1916)

51. *T.N.Z.I.*, 50 : 334-5., 1917. The Institute immediately made good this resolution by passing another, on the motion of Dr Thomson, appointing a sub-committee to visit and report on Kapiti Island. Professor Kirk and Mr M. A. Elliott of the Manawatu Philosophical Society were appointed members. This was the beginning of a long-standing interest by the Institute in the proper guardianship of Kapiti. Earlier, in December 1914, the Council of the Otago Institute had supported efforts by the Manawatu Philosophical Society and the New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society in their endeavours to have the boundaries of Tongariro National Park extended. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 47 : 647, 1914)

52. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1915.

Part 2. The Conservation Philosophy Of Key Members

Although it would be satisfying to have a fuller picture of the causes the Society took up, it seems clear from the involvement of these people that the historical importance of the group depends less upon the actual areas it was successful in securing than in the changing ideas about conservation that it represented and was able to convey to the public. In spite of the lack of information, it is possible to build up a much clearer picture of the concerns which motivated the group by examining the writings and other activities of these key members.

Leonard Cockayne

The contributions of Cockayne in the context of the Christchurch Beautifying Association and the Summit Road Association have already been mentioned. He was also active in pursuit of conservation issues through the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury and the Board of Governors of the New Zealand Institute and continued to further the cause through this and other avenues after the Forest and Bird Protection Society had collapsed. However, at this stage what is of interest are the conservation ideas and philosophy he promoted up to and during the life span of the organisation. These were developed and elaborated over time through lectures, books, scientific papers and the series of reports he prepared for the Government and through his many popular, non-technical articles, written with the aim of encouraging a love and understanding of and respect for New Zealand's indigenous flora and unquestionably constituted his most important contribution to the cause of conservation. The influence of his ideas on Ell has already been suggested. What little we do know of the issues taken up by the new Society leaves no doubt as to his influence on the thinking of the organisation.

One important contribution he made, and certainly one that it now easy to underestimate, was to convince both the scientific community and the public that the New Zealand flora was not destined to extinction, a necessary pre-condition for serious conservation effort.⁵³ Although the displacement theory had not prevented attempts to preserve forests particularly for climatic and water catchment purposes or where associated with spectacular scenery in remote areas unsuited to development and for the preservation of birds on certain off-shore islands, so long as it prevailed, it lent weight to the constant clamour to have this

53. The view that extinction was inevitable, known as the displacement theory, was the scientific orthodoxy in the nineteenth century and continued to have an important influence in the early twentieth century. It was based on the idea that the introduced Scandinavian flora would inevitably prove stronger in the struggle for existence against the the indigenous flora because it had been rendered more fit through greater competition in the course of its development. The leading promoter of the idea was J. D. Hooker in his *Handbook of New Zealand Flora*, Pt 2 (1867). Darwin in his *Origin* (6th ed, 1872) and Wallace in *Island Life* (1880) and *Darwinism* (3rd ed. 1905) also subscribed to the view. (See H. H. Allen, "Indigene Versus Alien in the New Zealand Plant World," *Ecology*, 17(2) : 187-193, 1936) The weakness of the idea was that in emphasising the greater competition northern species had been exposed to it gave insufficient weight to other aspects of natural selection, including the adaptive advantage the indigenous species had gained in relation to environmental factors over the course of their development.

or that reserve revoked in the interests of settlement. The theory also provided barren ground for the acceptance of the idea which was beginning to be articulated at the turn of the century and is now widely recognised as one of the most important tasks of conservation, that we should attempt to preserve representative examples of every type of ecosystem, for their own intrinsic value, irrespective of their utility or whether they have what is conventionally considered to be scenic or aesthetic appeal.

Cockayne was not the first to cast doubt upon the displacement theory, but he did more than anyone else to get the message across. As far back as 1873, John Buchanan had expressed the opinion that loss of native grasses was not the result of any lesser vitality. He had no doubt some northern hemisphere species would also disappear if their seeds were not collected and re-sown.⁵⁴ Thomas Kirk, in 1877 and again in 1895, more strongly challenged the extreme view that displacement would eventually result in the extinction of indigenous species. Displacement, he argued, rarely passes into complete replacement and rarely or never results in the extirpation of indigenous species, although it greatly reduces the number of individuals.⁵⁵ Thomas Cheeseman favoured Kirk's opinion, stating that he saw little evidence to support the view that a considerable portion of the native flora would become extinct. The struggle between introduced and native flora, he believed, would result in the limitation of range of the native species rather than their actual extermination. He estimated that no more than a score or two might disappear altogether.⁵⁶ These men represented a minority viewpoint.⁵⁷

Cockayne's 1898 paper on the impact of burning in the Upper Waimakariri was the first detailed scientific study to challenge the displacement theory.⁵⁸ It showed that even in an area which had been subjected to major interference, the flora was much more resilient than was commonly believed. In the first edition of his very popular book, *New Zealand Plants and Their Story* (1910), based on a group of articles written by him in 1907 for the

54. J. Buchanan, "Flora of the Province of Wellington," *T.N.Z.I.*, 6 : 210-235, 1873, p. 213.

55. T. Kirk, "On the Naturalised Plants of Port Nicholson and the adjacent District," *T.N.Z.I.*, 10 : 363-378, 1877, p. 363; "The Displacement of Species," *T.N.Z.I.*, 28 : 1-27, 1895, p. 27.

56. T. Cheeseman, "On Naturalised Plants of Auckland District," *T.N.Z.I.*, 15 : 268-298, 1882, pp. 271-274.

57. A contemporary example of the displacement theory was found in an article by W. W. Smith on plants naturalised in Ashburton County. He considered antipodean plants to be "less vigorous," with few exceptions having "never attained the development necessary to fit them in the struggle with the strongly developed European plants." (W. W. Smith, "Plants Naturalised in the County of Ashburton," *T.N.Z.I.*, 36 : 203 -225, 1903, pp. 204-205)

58. L. Cockayne, "On the Burning and Reproduction of Subalpine Scrub and its Associated Plants; with special reference to Arthur's Pass District," *T.N.Z.I.*, 31: 398-419, 1898.

Lyttelton Times, the *Dunedin Evening Star* and the *Auckland Star*, he emphasised that so long as the primitive plant-covering is undisturbed and the soil left intact, "it is very hard indeed for the world's selected weeds - even the best equipped for aggression - to gain a foothold, and it is almost impossible for them to spread."⁵⁹ In this he went further than Kirk, but like Kirk he was optimistic that no plant species would become completely extinct.

Finally, there comes the question whether any of the the native plants are liable to extinction. Personally, I should answer this in the negative. There is nearly always some haven of refuge, and, though many species will eventually become much more rare, it is most unlikely that any will be entirely eradicated.⁶⁰

His message was clear. It was possible to preserve the primeval vegetation so long as we took steps to ensure it was protected from burning, grazing or other disturbance, themes he would reiterate again and again. As he emphasised in the second edition of *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*, its future rested "not in the laps of the gods, but in the good sense of us New Zealanders."⁶¹ He challenged those who asserted that it was impossible to reserve small areas cut off from a general forest mass, typified by the statements of Mr Kirkbride, M.P., made during the course of debate on the Scenery Preservation Bill.

I wish to impress upon the Government that it is a difficult thing to preserve a small area of bush. You want a fairly large area, or otherwise the bush will disappear, unless of a certain kind - the puriri, pohutukawa, dwarf totara, and karaka.... But, generally speaking, unless you have a large area of heavy forest it gradually disappears. It does not seem to stand well when fully exposed to the wind.⁶²

It was Cockayne's belief that this sort of statement was

a half truth at best. Such areas, even if only an acre or two in extent, will remain intact for years, perhaps for quite as long as they would have done had the whole area been preserved.... But turn cattle, &c, into such pieces of forest, make wide roads into them, set them on fire occasionally, and of course they will no longer remain intact. On the other hand, even when much damaged, quite small pieces of forest may be confidently expected to improve rather than dwindle away.⁶³

59. 1st ed. (1910) p. 132. He expanded upon this point much more fully in the three subsequent editions, pointing out that were it not for the changes produced by farming operations, drainage, exploitation of forest and swamp, the host of foreign invaders would be powerless against the indigenous plants which were attuned to the conditions of their native land. He scorned the view "even yet current in biological literature, where it is affirmed *ad nauseam* that the New Zealand vegetation is powerless when it comes to competition with the European plants...." (2nd ed. (1919) p. 147)

60. 1st ed. (1910) p. 136.

61. 2nd ed. (1919) p. 158.

62. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 126, 1903, p. 706.

63. "Forestry in New Zealand," *A.J.H.R.*, 1909, C-4, p. 93. Guthrie-Smith was less optimistic than Cockayne about the fate of small reserves from fire and weeds. Also, with his focus on birds, he was conscious of their limitations from the point of view of bird conservation. (*Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, pp. 5-7)

The reason most commonly advanced against the setting aside of reserves, whether small and isolated or large forest reserves, was the virtual inevitability of their eventual destruction by fire. This point was made repeatedly during submissions to the Commission on Timber and Timber Building Industries in 1909.⁶⁴ A parliamentary debate in 1913 over the proposed withdrawal of reserve lands illustrated that the belief was still flourishing. For example, Mr Wilson, member for Taumaranui, stated:

It seemed useless to attempt to preserve all the native bush from destruction by fire - it would be far better to utilize them where milling timber was available and devote the proceeds to afforestation.⁶⁵

Cockayne did not deny that bush-fires were common-place, but these, he claimed, were almost invariably in partially milled or otherwise damaged forest. "In point of fact... it is a very difficult matter to burn a virgin forest." He accepted that the same was not true of subalpine scrub, "but a fire there could only be the result of unpardonable carelessness or of design."⁶⁶ It was clear to him, that even if the danger were acute, it would not alter the necessity for reserves but should simply suggest the need for reserves to be more carefully guarded.

Whenever possible he tried to refute popular misconceptions about the viability of the indigenous vegetation and to convey the message that we have an incontrovertible duty to protect the unique plants and animals which constituted our natural heritage by setting aside "abundant reserves" as sanctuaries, "where nature can carry on her work unmolested."⁶⁷ Although he never refers to the preservation of nature for its own inherent worth or intrinsic value in as many words, his recognition of the need for nature to be left to carry on its work was surely tantamount to the same thing.⁶⁸ But like others before him he typically couched his arguments in more utilitarian terms which had greater persuasive appeal for his contemporaries.

64. *A.J.H.R.*, 1909, H-24.

65. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 163, 1913, p. 612. Mr Wilson was not alone in his belief. Mr Hall (Waipawa) and Mr Smith (Waimarino) were equally convinced of the impossibility. It was widely believed that Kauri forests in particular, must eventually succumb to the ravages of fire and this was strenuously urged as a reason against preserving Waipoua forest in submissions to the 1913 Forestry Commission. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1913, C-12) The disastrous bush fires which raged through large areas of New Zealand in the mid-1880s helped to foster the belief that bush could not be protected from fire. (See Rollo Arnold, 1994)

66. "Forestry in New Zealand," *A.J.H.R.*, 1909, C-4, p. 93. On the other hand, Phillips Turner, the Inspector of Scenic Reserves, in his report for the same year appeared to disagree. "It is a great mistake for any one to assert that fires do not spread in green bush." (*A.J.H.R.*, 1909, C-6)

67. *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*, 2nd ed. (1919) p. 158.

68. See the discussion of these concepts in Chapter Four, note 41 .

He drew attention to the importance of conservation for climatic purposes wherever appropriate. Under conservation for climatic purposes he included conservation for the purposes of soil protection, prevention of denudation, water-conservation, prevention of floods and shelter from wind.⁶⁹ He always took care to point out the extent to which any area he recommended as a reserve was suited for settlement or any other form of development, such as timber or mining. As a matter of principle, he endeavoured to meet what he viewed as the essential needs for preservation without recourse to land suited for settlement if there was an alternative available. For example, when recommending extensions to Tongariro, he was able to exclude areas of potential farmland and millable timber while still preserving examples of the varied plant associations typical of the area. He acknowledged that even the areas proposed for inclusion could support sheep but not without destroying the distinctive quality of the landscape and increasing the areas of desert, a consequence he considered unacceptable.⁷⁰ In the final analysis, if it came to a choice between using or saving a unique remnant of the primeval world such as Riccarton Bush, Waipoua Forest or the subantarctic islands, he had no hesitation in declaring in favour of preservation. In relation to Waipoua, he was adamant that the employment of a few sawmillers for a limited time was too great a price to pay for the loss of the magnificent heritage it would provide for future generations, an attraction which would constantly increase in interest. There was even less reason to open the land to settlement, in his view, as it would support few farms and much better land elsewhere remained unoccupied.⁷¹ Cockayne also stressed, more persuasively than anyone before him, the importance of setting aside reserves in the interests of science. He was firmly convinced that our reserves and sanctuaries represented "great natural museums," in effect outdoor laboratories which no artificial museum could ever rival, providing unequalled opportunities for both study and education.⁷² Finally, like earlier conservationists, he emphasised the links between

69. He gave a very lucid account of the need for climatic conservation in his Report on the Timber Industry, *A.J.H.R.*, 1909, C-4.

70. L. Cockayne, "Report on a Botanical Survey of Tongariro National Park," *A.J.H.R.*, 1908, C-11. His efforts to accommodate development where possible were also evident in his report on Stewart Island. He argued that the plant-covering should be kept intact as far as possible and that the forest and other plant associations were more valuable to the nation from a monetary point of view if they were preserved than if they were turned into farms. Even so, he believed the forest might advantageously be cut down and the land eventually converted to farming in certain areas, where to do so would not change the scenery. He had in mind the forests of Freshwater Valley and the northern shores of Paterson Inlet to the Mt Anglem Range. (L. Cockayne, "Report on a Botanical Survey of Stewart Island," *A.J.H.R.*, 1909, C-12)

71. L. Cockayne, "Report on a Botanical Survey of the Waipoua Kauri Forest," *A.J.H.R.*, 1908, C-14, p.31. He was also strong in his condemnation of the Government's efforts to earn a trifling revenue from sheep on Campbell Island. (A Botanical Excursion during Mid-Winter to the Southern Islands Of New Zealand," *T.N.Z.I.*, 36 : 225-332, 1903, p. 304)

72. Cockayne first used the expression "natural museums" in relation to the subantarctic islands in 1903. ("Southern Isles Plant and Animal Life," *Lyttelton Times*, 25 July 1903) From around 1908 he increasingly used the term open-air museum, an expression he appears to have first used in his report on

scenery preservation and benefits to be derived from tourism. He had great faith in the potential of the natural areas of New Zealand as tourist resorts. Tourist traffic he believed was "sure to swell to very large proportions" as speed of travel increased.⁷³

Although Cockayne always drew attention to the potential economic benefits to be derived from natural areas, in his view, the indirect benefits to be derived from them were equally precious. In the true spirit of Romanticism, he was convinced that they provided a place for spiritual recharging and physical recreation for both tourists and our own citizens "worn out with city life."⁷⁴ This was true of all natural areas, but especially mountains. He made this clear in "A Glimpse into the Alps of Canterbury," where, in advocating more parks in the mountains, he stated: "Mountains are the noblest recreation ground, the finest school for physical and moral training, a source of perfect health to those who visit them, and the place of all places for enlarging our minds by the study of nature in Nature's greatest laboratory."⁷⁵

Cockayne introduced a new sophistication to the arguments for scenery preservation based on tourism. He saw more clearly than his contemporaries the value of the primeval as an attraction in its own right, one which differed from the charms of the Old World where the scenery owed much to a blending of nature and human industry. He was convinced it was a value which would become more highly prized with time as virgin flora and fauna became ever more scarce in a rapidly changing world. He expressed this view most forcefully in his 1909 "Report on a Botanical Survey of Stewart Island." He foresaw that soon, in the temperate regions at least, there would be "little of primitive nature left." Already in the Old World it was practically gone forever. The "prime advantage" of a place like Stewart Island, "one hard to overestimate," lay in the fact that it comprised an "actual piece of the primeval world." This was "an asset possessed by very few countries indeed" and one which increased "infinitely its value as an attraction to visitors," over and above its scenery *per se* and the many opportunities it provided for outdoor recreation. "Artificial and delightful scenery can be created, as the Old World proves, but the primeval, the unique,

Tongariro. He was convinced that remote, isolated islands, such as New Zealand's southern islands, were especially important as "almost the only place where the general laws that govern... vegetation modification can be found out, for the gradual changes from purely virgin formation to final 'reclamation' can be observed and the factors bringing them about noted." ("A Botanical Excursion during Mid-Winter to the Southern Islands Of New Zealand," *T.N.Z.I.*, 36 : 225-332, 1903, p. 301)

73. L. Cockayne, "A Glimpse into the Alps of Canterbury," in *Canterbury Old and New 1850-1900: A Souvenir of the Jubilee*. Christchurch : Whitcombe & Tombs, 1900, p. 215.

74. L. Cockayne, "Report on a Botanical Survey of Tongariro National Park," *A.J.H.R.*, 1908, C-11, p. 33.

75. "A Glimpse into the Alps of Canterbury," p. 215.

when once destroyed, can never be replaced."⁷⁶ Cockayne's views may be contrasted with those of Travers, which were typical of the ideas imported by the colonists.

Describing Lake Arthur and its surroundings he stated:

It is impossible to imagine a scene of greater beauty, unless we can look forward to the time when the shores of the lake will be studded with villas, giving to it the appearance of life and animation which are alone wanting to complete its loveliness.⁷⁷

According to traditional canons of European taste, the finest scenery was that which had human associations. As another early commentator, William Swainson expressed it, New Zealand "in its natural, uncultivated state" could not equal the scenery of an area such as Westmoreland and Cumberland "combining so exquisitely, as it does, the beauties of nature and art."⁷⁸

More distinctive still was his argument that the indigenous vegetation was the most important feature of our landscape, the one which distinguished us from all other countries. Furthermore, the unique character of the scenery attributable to the vegetation depended less upon the individual species comprising it than on the special combination of plants into associations or societies. In this way he was able to assimilate a rationale for preservation based on ecological grounds into the existing legislative framework which recognised preservation primarily for scenery purposes, climatic purposes or timber conservation. Thus he opened the way for preservation of areas which neither served the latter two goals nor were conventionally scenic.

He first articulated the idea that vegetation most distinguishes the scenery of one country from another in 1900.⁷⁹ It was not until his 1905 article urging the preservation of Riccarton Bush that he linked that idea with his concept of plant societies.⁸⁰ The argument received its fullest elaboration in his "Report on the Botanical Survey of Tongariro" and in the joint report prepared at the same time with Phillips Turner, setting out recommendations on the alterations of the park boundaries:⁸¹

76. L. Cockayne, "Report on a Botanical Survey of Stewart Island," *A.J.H.R.*, 1909, C-12, p. 41; "Stewart Island and Its Scenery - Where Nature is Supreme," *The Press*, 16 March 1907. The recreational attractions he foresaw for the island included boating and yachting, fishing, bathing, picnicking, walking and mountain climbing, all amongst the very finest scenery.

77. W. T. L. Travers, "On the Extinct Glaciers of the Middle Island of New Zealand.," *T.N.Z.I.*, 6 : 297-309, 1873.

78. W. Swainson, *New Zealand and Its Colonization*. London : Smith Elder & Co 1859, p. 238-9.

79. "A Glimpse into the Alps of Canterbury," p. 210.

80. "Riccarton Bush, Its History and Its Future," *The Press*, 13 May 1905.

81. *A.J.H.R.*, 1908, C-11 & C-8.

it must not be forgotten that mountain, river, lake, glacier, and even hot spring, are much the same the world over, and that the special features of any landscape depend upon the combinations of plants which form its garment, otherwise a monotonous uniformity would mark the whole earth. Therefore the more special the vegetation, the more distinctive the scenery. And nowhere does this dictum carry more weight than in New Zealand, where the vegetation is unique.... Nor is it merely the individual species which are interesting, but equally important and of greater moment to the scenery is the manner in which they are associated together.⁸²

This led him to assert that "in any national domain *representations* of the special plant-life of the district should be the *first care*, and a National Park of the importance of that of Tongariro should contain *typical examples of every primitive formation* which is to be found in the neighbourhood."⁸³ Here he was proposing a justification for the constitution of national parks which differed markedly from the prevailing philosophy of monumentalism or preservation based around spectacular topographical features, of which Tongariro was a pre-eminent example.⁸⁴ He was not the first to promote the preservation of vegetation on its own merit independently of other "scenic" features, as the battle for the Rai had demonstrated. Nor was he the first to publicly call for what was in essence a policy of preservation of representative habitats. As we have seen his friend Ell had already done that in 1903 with his call for preservation of examples of the plant-life "typical of the various districts of the colony," although it was Cockayne's work in delineating plant societies and his efforts to establish that the flora was not doomed which gave meaning to such a policy. But through his linkage of vegetation with what was unique about our scenery, he was the first to articulate a clear rationale for representative preservation and for giving primacy to this goal in the setting aside of reserves.

The consequences of this argument were demonstrated in relation to Tongariro. The park as originally constituted was not entirely devoid of vegetation, but was made up "chiefly of steep slopes and deep gullies covered with volcanic cinders and ash destitute of all plant life."⁸⁵ Cockayne advocated the need to include three distinct types of beech forest, as well as examples of what he termed the grass-steppe (dominated by red tussock) and shrub-

82. A.J.H.R., 1908, C-11, pp. 2-3.

83. Ibid., p. 33. [My italics]

84. Monumentalism was imported along with the national park idea from the United States. It was characterised by the setting aside of spectacular topography deemed of no value for human use, other than for tourism, recreation, or climate and water conservation. Boundaries were drawn with these factors in mind, scant regard being given to the requirements of the animals living in the region or to vegetation other than that valued as scenic. The earliest New Zealand national parks all exhibited the qualities characteristic of monumentalism; volcanic features at Egmont and Tongariro, fiords in the West Coast Sounds, glaciers and outstanding mountain scenery at Mt Cook and the Upper Waimakariri. It was these features, together with their manifest unsuitability for settlement and their value for climatic conservation (particularly in the case of Egmont and the Upper Waimakariri) which had ensured their protection. The attempt to create a national park around vegetation alone at the Rai had been a dismal failure.

85. A.J.H.R., 1908, C-8 p. 2.

steppe, (dominated by the reddish-orange hues of *Dracophyllum recurvum*), which were such characteristic features of high volcanic plains. These associations, he argued, were really much more uncommon than the volcanoes themselves and the thermal phenomenon connected with them which were the reason for setting aside the park. The majority of Cockayne's contemporaries would have had little difficulty with proposals to include forest within the boundaries of the park, but had they given the matter much thought, they would undoubtedly have had difficulty with the inclusion of the steppe areas, which would have seemed to them merely monotonous and barren wastes. This was the sort of viewpoint which led to wide support for Cullen's efforts in the second decade of the century to "beautify" and "make more productive" these same areas through acclimatization of heather and grouse.⁸⁶ Even today some people would have difficulty in accepting the implications of Cockayne's association of vegetation with scenic distinctiveness, at least so far as non-forest landscapes are concerned. Mountains, lakes, and rivers still figure prominently in what most people consider to be beautiful landscapes, although we have become better used to appreciating the more subtle beauties of an area such as the volcanic plateau independently of the cones which form the focal point of the park. This new perception is attributable at least in part to Cockayne's persistence in getting his message across.

Although Cockayne would stress again and again throughout his writings that it was the characteristic plant societies which gave local colour to scenery, distinguishing it from that of other places, a no less important reason for their preservation was the fact that they constituted living and therefore changing entities which could not be preserved in museums or even botanic gardens. People were too apt to forget, he reminded readers of his plea to preserve Riccarton Bush, that species in museums "are but substitutes for living plants and animals." It was true that individual species of plants could be preserved in botanic gardens, but this took no account of the distinctive groupings of plants that form natural features of the landscape, which were "as much a natural object as is a species."⁸⁷ A plant formation or plant society, once destroyed, was as irrevocably lost as a bird species known only from museum specimens. Thus, the prime thrust of Cockayne's conservation effort

86. Had the area been highly sought after for settlement, undoubtedly many arguments would have been raised against its lack of scenic quality. As it was, the park board approved the proposed boundary changes, apparently without widespread opposition. This was no doubt because of the obviously marginal character of the land. Even so, the changes were not implemented until after World War I because of reluctance on the part of the Premier, Mr Massey, to upset his small farmer constituents with yet further locking up of land. For a history of the introduction of heather see A. G. Bagnall, "Heather at Tongariro: A study of weed introduction," *Tussock Grasslands and Mountain Lands Institute Review*, 41 : 17-21, 1982.

87. "Report on a Botanical Survey of Kapiti Island," *A.J.H.R.*, 1907, C-8, p. 15. He emphasised the consequences of preserving plants only as species in *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*. "Were the protection of the species themselves all that was desired, then they might well be collected in botanic gardens, and the whole length and breadth of the land turned over to flocks and herds and fires, becoming on barren ground hot beds of weeds, unprofitable for farming." (1st ed., 1910, p. 134)

was not the protection of individual species, although he believed it was important to make a special effort to protect rare species, but the protection of living plant communities and the animals which depended upon them.⁸⁸

In common with other members of the Society, he saw the actual establishment of "these havens of refuge" as but a first step. The next was to guard them with "that zealous and loving care which such priceless possessions demand."⁸⁹ What constituted zealous and loving care, in his view, was evident from a number of papers and articles. It meant, of course, that every effort should be made to guard against fire and vandalism and required the absolute protection of sanctuaries from hunters and collectors. Like others before him, he also stressed the necessity for fencing to prevent the harmful impact of grazing animals. However, his opinions were backed by closer scientific observation.

A 1905 report on Kapiti Island by James Cowan, commissioned by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, illustrated the need to keep stressing the damage caused by grazing animals.⁹⁰ Cowan was asked to investigate its potential for the purposes of a bird sanctuary and game reserve. He concluded that it would not only make an excellent bird sanctuary, so long as the present area of bush was not diminished, but would also make an excellent deer preserve and a suitable experiment ground for various types of big game. This could not contrast more strongly with the opinions of Cockayne, who took every available opportunity to point out the harm caused by such animals, which he strongly believed should be confined to designated hunting preserves and declared vermin elsewhere.⁹¹ Not only would he have been adamantly opposed to the introduction of

88. Cockayne's efforts to protect rare species included personally supervising the translocation of bird species from the subantarctic islands to Kapiti in the hope that this would improve their chances of survival, in what was the first experiment at transferring birds to one of the bird sanctuaries from a great distance. Species moved included flightless duck, parakeets, snipe, fern birds and robins. The transfers were not a success, although the larger birds survived the journey. Cockayne's concern for the protection of birds is easily overlooked because his botanical work is so much better known. He had no doubt as to the importance of the bird sanctuaries which had been established by the Government, considering that the annual expenditure on them was a mere trifle, which was not too much to pay to ensure that future generations would be able to see "representatives of the bird-types that give scientific distinction to the Dominion." (*The Press*, 4 December, 1907) Other instances of concern specifically with fauna include his joint report with J.A. Thomson on the destruction of fur seals (note 17 above) and a plea for the protection of shags on Stewart Island at the fifth meeting of the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury for 1909. It may have been this which prompted the Society to set up a committee to suggest amendments to the Animals Protection Act as reported at its AGM later that year. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 42 : 70 & 108, 1909)

89. *New Zealand Plants and Their Story*, 2nd ed. (1919) p. 158.

90. *A.J.H.R.*, 1907, C-8A. This was published in the Appendices alongside Cockayne's botanical survey.

91. Cockayne promoted the concept of deer parks strongly while questioning witnesses as one of the 1913 Forestry Commissioners. There can be little doubt that the recommendation made by the Commission to take measures to restrict deer to limited areas sufficient for sport derived from him. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1913, C-13, pp. xv-xvi) He subsequently took a less compromising approach on the basis of

game animals to Kapiti, he went much further. He sought the destruction of all animals "foreign to the island."⁹²

This was a key point for Cockayne. Above all, zealous and loving care of our priceless natural refuges required that their virgin character be maintained, an idea he first expressed in relation to Deans Bush. He emphasised the necessity of removing all exotic growth and preventing its reappearance and also of restoring the forest with only such plants as belonged to the ancient forests of the Canterbury Plain so as to maintain the character of this remnant plant society.⁹³ He made it clear in his report on Kapiti that he was not simply concerned with the removal or destruction of obviously harmful animals such as the goats and wild cats, but also the apparently harmless Californian Quail. Similarly, he argued that there was no place for horses, deer or hares at Tongariro, even though he acknowledged that they were not present in sufficient numbers to do damage. His message was clear. Foreign plants and animals should be removed and every effort be made to prevent their introduction, irrespective of whether they were causing harm at the time. It is not certain to what extent other members of the Society shared his beliefs in the removal of exotics. Guthrie-Smith was prepared to countenance the planting of exotic berry-producing trees in sanctuaries and national parks to help stem the decline of birds.⁹⁴ By the time the introduction of heather and grouse to Tongariro became an issue, former members of the Society were among those who were loud in condemnation. That issue prompted the New Zealand Institute to formulate the following policy in 1927:

The New Zealand Institute considers that the flora and fauna of the Park should be protected against the competition of any plant or animal foreign to the Park, and to this end the Institute seeks to prohibit the encouragement of any foreign plant or animal to make its home in the Park. This Institute is strongly hostile to the introduction of foreign game birds or animals, and to plants which would be necessary as food for them.

In formulating this policy the Institute is guided by the example of the United States of America and the Swiss authorities in the management of National Parks in those countries.

The guiding principle in the development of the park should be that the natural features are preserved with only that alteration that the passage of time effects, and that the wild life, both

further observation of their impact until the flora and came to favour complete extermination and a reassessment of the possibility of containment to specified areas.

92. "Report on a Botanical Survey of Kapiti Island," *A.J.H.R.*, 1907, C-8, p. 15. He evidently meant animals not native to New Zealand because, as we saw in note 54, he was involved in the trans-location of subantarctic species.

93. "Riccarton Bush, Its History and Its Future," *The Press*, 13 May 1905.

94. In a letter written *circa* 1923, he advocated the planting of hazel nuts, walnuts and certain pines to attract birds at reserves like Egmont. (Letter dated 9 June 1922 or 1923, Guthrie-Smith to Leonard Tripp, Tutira Papers, Box B, Hawke's Bay Museum) Later he modified his opinion. In a letter to J. W. Heenan, Under-Secretary for Internal Affairs, he again raised the issue of boosting bird numbers at Egmont, but this time referred only to the use of native nectar and drupe bearing plants. (Woodhouse, 1959, pp. 233-4)

plant and animal are protected so that the Park will afford for all time to the native-born an example of primitive New Zealand.⁹⁵

Cockayne, in expressing his no-exotics view as early as 1905, was well in advance of the thinking of the time.

Zealous and loving care also meant giving priority to conservation of species over access for people, if necessary. Although, as we have seen, he saw great potential for protected areas to become resorts for the pleasure of foreign tourists and New Zealanders alike, and indeed recognised the need for people to experience such areas if they were to grow to appreciate the importance of protecting our plants and animals, he did not hesitate to put the interests of people second where access would compromise the main objective of protection. Thus, at Riccarton Bush he considered it essential that the process of restoration should have priority over immediate public access. At a sanctuary such as Kapiti, the priority of protecting the flora and fauna over allowing public access applied with even greater force.

The greatest caution should be observed in allowing visitors to land on the island. *The merely curious have no business there. It is no place on which to picnic.* Only those really interested in animal and plant life should be permitted to land, and they should be compelled to exercise every care not to destroy anything or to disturb the birds in any way.⁹⁶

The direct influence of Cockayne's thinking on the work of the Society was evident in its campaigns relating to areas such as the extensions to Tongariro National Park and reserves in the Waipoua district, which he had advocated the need to protect prior to formation of the Society. It was also apparent in the Society's effort to protect specific plant formations such as a kahikatea forest at Tokatoka or a matai forest near Dannevirke, in its campaign to fence reserves and in its call to set aside parts of the Wellington Botanical Gardens for the cultivation of native species while at the same time protecting the remaining portions of ancient forest in the gardens.⁹⁷

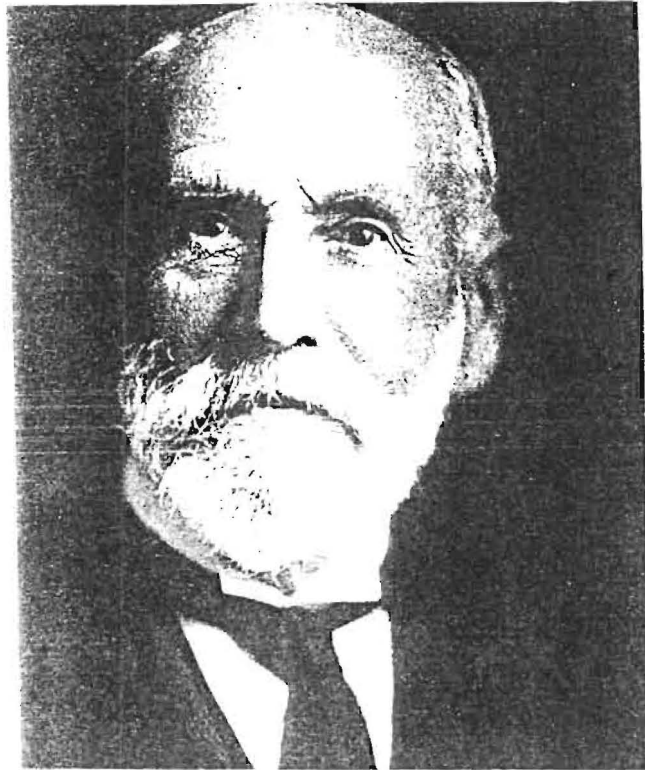
George Malcolm Thomson

Like Cockayne the record of Thomson's endeavours in the cause of conservation through the New Zealand Institute and the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society represent only a part of his activity on behalf of New Zealand flora and fauna. Though his contribution through those channels, especially the New Zealand Institute, was significant, his efforts to stimulate a love of nature among the wider public was no less important. He

95. *T. N.Z.I.*, 58 : 5, 1927.

96. *A.J.H.R.*, 1907, C-8, p. 15

97. *Evening Post*, 13 February 1915 & 21 September 1916.



G. M. Thomson. Source: Fleming, *Science, Settlers, and Scholars*, p. 134

was as firmly committed as Cockayne to educating the public to value and protect the natural world which surrounded them. His concern likewise grew out of a love of science, an instinctive appreciation of the intrinsic worth of nature which, for him, was always nature with a capital "N" and a belief that getting away to the outdoors was beneficial physically and spiritually.

There is nothing more delightful than climbing on the mountains when the flowers are in bloom,—aye, even when they are not, — and getting right away up into the open, where the air seems to be freer and the world becomes so much larger to the view.... Those who live on the lower levels and have never tasted the joys of a walk on a mountain side have missed one of the true pleasures of life — the kind of pleasure that brings no pain, but only such fatigue as causes deeper sleep and stronger pulses of health.⁹⁸

In November 1898 he began contributing a series of natural history articles, called "Notes By The Wayside," to the *Otago Daily Times*. This was followed by a monthly series beginning in May 1903, entitled "A Naturalist's Calendar." In 1909 both series were collected together and published as a book under the title *A New Zealand Naturalist's Calendar*. These articles are imbued with a deep sense of love and joy in nature, an impression conveyed less by explicit expression than by the wealth of closely and lovingly observed detail based on years of rambling around the environs of Dunedin. He opened the eyes of the reader to the commonplace and insignificant as well as the showy, thus revealing the wonder and beauty which can be found everywhere in nature. He talked about the humble life to be found under decaying weed on the sea-shore or the forest litter and the little-known life of the harbour. He drew lessons about the strategies of nature from common garden weeds and vegetables. His regret at the displacement of so much native vegetation did not prevent him from appreciating the beauties and virtues of the ubiquitous gorse and broom which, so often, were the undesired end-products of bush clearance: "There are many people who cannot see beauty in anything that is common, but to those who can appreciate a work of Nature at its intrinsic worth I can appeal to the magnificence of the heavily flowered branch of either gorse or broom."⁹⁹ He went on to condemn the practice of clearing gorse by burning and thus wasting a valuable opportunity to greatly enrich the soil by returning the plants to it.

By teaching his readers to appreciate the humble, even unattractive, aspects of nature and their function within the scheme of nature and by discussing a wide range of habitats, he helped to pave the ground for acceptance of the idea of protecting representative habitats, although he never developed a theory of representative protection himself. Among the

98. *A New Zealand Naturalist's Calendar*, p. 43.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 204.

habitats he discussed were dunes, lagoons, rock-pools, swamps, native forest, plantation and farmland, in the course of which he introduced his audience to topics such as the economy of nature, the geographic distribution of species, the interrelationships between species and man's often adverse impact upon the balance of nature. He recorded the changes in vegetation and birdlife which had taken place with European settlement, noting with regret the loss or rarity of many formerly abundant species. He was strongly critical of the loss of some of the finest beauty spots in close vicinity to the city through pollution of streams by inappropriately sited industries and clearance of bush for the sake of fire wood or poor quality pasture. He was equally condemnatory of the city's failure to adequately conserve the bush cover of its water catchment, taking the opportunity to educate his readers on the relationship between vegetation cover and water flow. Although the articles contain few overt calls for preservation of the bush, there can be no doubt where his sympathies lie. The following passage is typical of a number which convey the sense that former beauty has been lost for dubious gains.

My first ascent of Mount Cargill was made through deep bush, thick with crape and filmy ferns. The little bog just under the cliffs at the summit was full of Alpines and slender leaved *Astelias*. My last ascent, more than twenty years after, was through fields covered with poor growth of Yorkshire fog and sorrel and roughly fenced with fallen trees; then up through broken muddy ground poached deep by wandering cattle, which evidently, from the number of their footprints, had to travel far for bare sustenance among scattered remnants of scorched and blasted skeletons of old trees; and, finally, through a patch of burnt scrub, from which we emerged black and grimy to meet the smoke of a bush fire on the western side of the mountain, and which was sweeping over its summit in thick hot puffs. We might well say "Ichabod," for the glory had indeed departed.¹⁰⁰

A sensitive reader must begin to share his joy in the boundless variety of the natural world and regret with him the destruction which, so often, had been needlessly wrought upon it, while at the same time gaining greater understanding of the forces and relationships at work in nature and the consequences of our impact upon them.

After the Society formed, Thomson continued to contribute articles to the press. Three different series, which appeared in the *Otago Witness* between 1915 and 1919, confronted the issue of preservation more directly than his earlier articles. A series entitled "Nature Notes" ran from February 1915 to January 1916, another entitled "Field Club Rambles" appeared from March to October 1916. A further group called "Vignettes from Nature" appeared in 1917 and 1919.¹⁰¹ In these, he attacked the belief that natives are doomed;¹⁰²

100. Ibid., p. 216.

101. Copies of these are held in the Hocken Library.

102. His opposition to the displacement theory was probably influenced by Cockayne's beliefs. His public statements against the theory come later than Cockayne's, but he certainly did not just blindly follow the latter. He records in "Nature Notes," Article III, (1915) that he carried out experiments, scattering exotic seeds on the roadside through the Town Belt to see which would come away. The only successful plant was the fox glove. His own observations of exclosures in the tussock country also convinced him that native species had remarkable powers of recovery. (Ibid.)

he publicised the damage caused by wandering stock and urged the need to fence reserves and for tougher measures against those who continued to graze their stock in defiance of the law;¹⁰³ he drew attention to the problems of soil impoverishment and erosion caused by denudation and constant burning; he pressed the need for scientific forestry in order to avoid the prodigious waste of material and destruction of land which followed from prevailing practises;¹⁰⁴ he attacked the city of Dunedin for its failure to protect important areas of bush close to the city; and he criticised the unscientific approach which had characterised past efforts at acclimatization. He urged the need for great caution before allowing the introduction of any further species, in order to avoid future errors. His belief that New Zealand's ocean fisheries could be enhanced by the importation of commercial species show clearly that he was not opposed to acclimatization but he advocated that no importations should be permitted without first seeking expert scientific advice.

Herbert Guthrie-Smith

In 1914, Guthrie-Smith was at the beginning of an illustrious career as one of New Zealand's foremost nature writers and spokesperson for conservation. His two natural history books to date, *Mutton Birds and Other Birds* and his earlier book, *Birds of the Water, Wood and Waste*, an account of the birdlife to be found on his sheep station, Tutira, had both been well received by the critics, who likened him to Gilbert White of Selbourne. More importantly, the public was buying and reading the books.¹⁰⁵ His lovingly and closely observed descriptions of birds and their habits were almost biographical in style, as if describing dearly valued acquaintances. These were complemented by charming photographs, the first of New Zealand birds in their natural habitats. Through these books he did much to stimulate popular interest in native birds, to show the way towards appreciation of nature through observation of living creatures in their natural habitat rather than study of dead specimens, and to encourage use of the camera lens rather than the gun. He wanted his readers to understand and value living things for themselves rather than for their utility to man. The earlier book contained few overt references to conservation but,

103. One measure he suggested was to boycott milk suppliers who allowed their cattle to graze in reserves. While very much opposed to the presence of grazing animals in reserves, he was not as rigorous in his opposition to deer as Cockayne. He had himself urged the importation of chamois to stock the mountain ranges of the South Island in 1888-9 and again in 1894-5. (*The Naturalisation of Animals and Plants in New Zealand*, p. 60; Swann, 1962, p. 172; Spiers, 1983, p. 54)

104. Unlike George Eliot, who was said to have grieved at the enormous amount of energy going to waste in natural forces every hour of the day, Thomson found no cause for grief in this, but "when I sit on a denuded area like Pine Hill, I do grieve over the waste of material and beauty, which follow so many attacks of man on Nature's lavish resources, and I do grieve over the things we know we shall never see again." ("Field Club Rambles," Article Three, 1916) Throughout his career, both in and out of Parliament, Thomson was a consistent and frequent spokesman for the establishment of a forestry department founded on the principles of scientific forestry.

105. Woodhouse (1959) pp. 73-4 & 88.

through use of the literary device of treating readers as confidants, they are led into an almost unwitting acceptance of his values, which subvert the usual values of the day. One cannot help but regret with him the exigencies of life on a sheep station which demand that rather than observing the nesting habits of tuis he must turn his attention to shearing and "be about the shed and sheep yards, when really I should have been working."¹⁰⁶ Having learnt to see the birds of Tutira through his eyes one must surely concur with him that it is "those who protect their natives birds" who will be there at the "last great drafting, when St Peter races off the just."¹⁰⁷

In *Mutton Birds and other Birds* he confronted the issue of conservation head-on. Not even the most dull-witted reader could be left in any doubt that in his view we have a moral responsibility to protect birds.

In its birds, each generation has but a life interest; no more than sea or sky do they belong to any period. They are property entailed and to be transmitted age to age inviolate. Their annihilation, is in very truth wrong done not to ourselves, or in our own time alone. Civilization succeeds civilization as do the seasons of our mortal life, cities are razed and on their ruins others rise, knowledge destroyed can be again attained, but the extinction of a species is an everlasting blank - a loss that time itself cannot repair.¹⁰⁸

At this stage in his career he was not optimistic about the long-term chances of survival of most indigenous bird species on the mainland except in the largest and most inaccessible reserves, because of the spread of stoats and weasels, the shortage of cover and food supply, fires and indiscriminate shooting and all the other indirect effects of civilization. But he was convinced that they could and should be saved in the great natural sanctuaries remaining, the Westland National Park, by which he meant Fiordland, Stewart Island and the other islets and islands of our long coastline, especially the subantarctic islands.¹⁰⁹ Like Cockayne, he was adamantly opposed to the leasing of these islands for sheep farming, which was comparable, in his view, to Esau's sale of his birthright for a mess of potage.¹¹⁰ He continued to develop his ideas on how best to preserve the birds, including the development of management techniques for protecting birds on the mainland, though the protection of off-shore islands always remained a key part of his thinking.

106. *Birds of Water, Wood and Waste*, p. 173.

107. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

108. *Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, p. 200.

109. *Ibid.*, pp. 7 & 200.

110. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Guthrie-Smith was not in principle opposed to hunting birds though he was, of course, adamantly opposed to hunting in sanctuaries or other reserves. He was not a supporter of the anti-cruelty movement. He believed it no more cruel to kill a humming bird than a turkey, "the awful difference" lying in the possibility of the annihilation of a species in the case of the former though not in the case of the latter because of its usefulness to man.¹¹¹ Although he did not encourage hunting, he reserved judgement on the question of whether shooting or the taking of life in any way is to be condemned and he was a realist enough to see that the usefulness of a species offered it better hope of survival than persuading the majority of people to respect nature for its own sake.

Perhaps the taking of life in any way is to be condemned, but if Humming Birds and Birds of Paradise were bred for the market, as capons and beeves are bred, the most lovely species would be as safe to the race as barn-door fowls.¹¹²

Similarly, he took a relaxed view about the common childhood pastime of bird-nesting, an activity he had engaged in with pleasure as a child. He was inclined to the view that it was, "like the fear of the Lord, the beginning of wisdom."¹¹³ He recognised from his own experience, as Leopold would later, that a genuine love of nature could develop from activities such as bird-nesting and hunting.

Sometime in 1914, Guthrie-Smith returned to Britain to visit his family. Plans to return to New Zealand were disrupted by the outbreak of War and in the event he did not return home until early in 1919.¹¹⁴ As a consequence, his active involvement with the Society cannot have extended much beyond its time of formation. Donation of the prize money for the essay competition sponsored by the Society in 1914 may have been his last practical contribution to the group. But through his writing he was able to do a great deal to promote the cause. *Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, in particular, which appeared in 1914, led many readers to urge that steps should be taken to preserve our birds.¹¹⁵ With each book he published, Guthrie-Smith became more forthright in his calls for conservation, culminating in *Sorrows and Joys of a New Zealand Naturalist*, (1936) perhaps the most eloquent statement ever made about the devastation we have inflicted upon our land and its wildlife.

111. *Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, pp. 2-3.

112. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

113. *Ibid.*

114. Woodhouse (1959) pp. 90-97.

115. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

James Drummond

James Drummond, a journalist by profession, was the author of a number of books, pamphlets and articles on New Zealand flora and fauna, designed to make New Zealanders more familiar with the natural history of the country, the best known and most significant being *The Animals of New Zealand*, co-authored with F. W. Hutton.¹¹⁶ But his claim to importance as a conservationist rests principally on a series of weekly newspaper columns entitled "In Touch With Nature," which began in 1908 and ran for twenty-five years. The articles, which also featured correspondence from nature lovers and observers throughout the country, were syndicated to all the major dailies and weeklies throughout the country. Through them, Drummond was able to educate New Zealanders about aspects of their natural history and keep them well informed on developments in preservation both here and overseas. He aimed to interpret scientific findings to lay readers. The columns also provided a readily accessible outlet for nature lovers to exchange observations and a channel for public debate on topical nature conservation issues.

The columns were important for conveying to a wide audience the message that native birds were not doomed to inevitable extinction, contrary to the belief of Buller and many earlier naturalists, a belief which hindered serious efforts to protect them. Drummond stressed time and again that though decline in numbers was inevitable as more and more areas were cleared, there was no reason to believe any species would be driven to extinction so long as adequate sanctuaries were provided, especially on predator-free off-shore islands. He began expressing these views strongly in columns dating from 1910. He was convinced that reckless assertions had been made about the number of species which had become extinct since the advent of the European. If he erred on the optimistic side in believing that perhaps only the quail had become extinct, nevertheless, there can be little doubt that by beginning to turn around the idea that extinction was inevitable and instead pointing to causes within our control, he did much to improve the chances of survival for many of our vulnerable species.¹¹⁷ The same message would be reinforced a little later in Guthrie-Smith's popular books, as we have already seen. Drummond believed that what Buller

116. Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1905. Other titles included *Nature in New Zealand; Feathered Friends of the Bush; Our Feathered Immigrants; The Romance of the Moa*; and "A Conservative New Zealander, An Aristocrat in a Democratic Land," in *Maoriland: Old Times in a New Country* (on the Tuatara).

117. Even Drummond's most pessimistic correspondents such as P. J. O'Regan, who in his earliest letters expressed the conviction that the liberation of stoats and weasels had irrevocably doomed our native fauna, came to believe by 1912 that if proper care were taken in preserving forest from destruction there was a reasonable prospect of saving the birds from utter extinction. Drummond's repeated assertions to this effect no doubt played a role in changing his opinion. In *Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, (1914) Guthrie-Smith also argued against what he felt to be the erroneous belief that our birds are doomed to extinction. He was rather more pessimistic than Drummond as to their chances of survival on the mainland, except in areas such as Fiordland. (pp. 7 & 200)

took to be a decline was in some cases accounted for by seasonal patterns of migration, a view supported by the subsequent observations of Guthrie-Smith.¹¹⁸ He also presented regular pleas for better protection of our flora and fauna with frequent reminders about species that were legally protected. By presenting up to date information on developments in conservation overseas, he reminded his readers that measures to protect nature were part of an international trend.

W. W. Smith, himself a noted advocate in the cause of native birds through the newspapers, testified to the great interest aroused by the columns, in a letter to Drummond.

Your weekly budget of Zoological notes has already done more good in inspiring a general and genuine interest in the native fauna than all the papers previously published. I can earnestly assure you that your "notes" are read extensively and with interest throughout the Dominion and I would also sincerely remark that your name is almost now a household word....¹¹⁹

But the importance of the columns went beyond the undoubted success of their educative role or the equally vital role of arousing enthusiasm for nature conservation and concern for the fate of our flora and fauna.

One of Drummond's main aims in undertaking the column was to collect data from throughout the country on the current status of New Zealand wildlife. Before he began the column he sent circulars to several hundred individuals throughout the country who were in a position to observe wildlife on a regular basis, seeking their co-operation in providing notes on anything unusual or peculiar and in answering questions. He was also able to persuade the Government to issue instructions to caretakers of sanctuaries, surveyors in unsettled districts and lighthouse keepers to supply him with periodic reports on wildlife.¹²⁰ The columns attracted a large following of regular contributors, including a number of overseas correspondents. Drummond claimed to have between 500 to 600 correspondents in total.¹²¹ Not all the contributions were of equal value, many of the

118. While on Stewart Island, Guthrie-Smith had observed altitudinal migrations between mid-autumn and early spring as well as regional migration patterns, but he was unable to guess from what areas the birds had been drawn. "In view of these great bird movements - I have noticed them on Tutira amongst ground birds too - it is difficult indeed to arrive at conclusions as to the numbers of our natives still left." (*Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, p. 71) This type of information would only become possible with the banding programs introduced by the Ornithological Society in the late 1940s. The important lesson to be drawn from these observations of migration patterns is that reserve boundaries need to take this factor into account if they are to provide effective protection for the native fauna and where this is not possible corridors need to be provided to allow for migration. This issue has not been properly focussed upon until comparatively recently, in part because of the strong emphasis on off-shore island reserves as the mainstay of our effort to ensure the continuation of native species.

119. Letter from W. W. Smith to Drummond dated 17 November 1911. Correspondence File 2, Box 1 Drummond Papers, Canterbury Museum.

120. Letter dated 23 May 1908 to editor of the *Otago Daily Times* offering to supply a column and explaining his aims. Correspondence File 1, Box 1 Drummond Papers, Canterbury Museum.

observations on threats to wildlife being based on opinion rather than fact. Even so, the columns contain a great deal of valuable information based on first-hand observation from a time when habitats were undergoing rapid modification. Drummond's unusual and innovative approach provided new information on seasonal movements of birds, the increase or decline of species in various districts and the factors contributing to their present population status. His project was the first attempt in New Zealand to systematically obtain data on the current position of wildlife. It was not until 1923, more than a decade later, that the New Zealand Institute set up sub-committee (consisting of G. M. Thomson, Johannes Anderson, J. G. Myers and Major R. A. Wilson) to compile a list of rare birds which should be suggested to the Government as deserving protection.¹²² The list seems to have been based on available data rather than a field survey undertaken by the sub-committee. Drummond intended to collect together the information he obtained and publish it as a book so as to place it on permanent record because he was convinced it was "an important public work."¹²³ Despite the efforts of Ell, G. M. Thomson and Thomas Mackenzie to persuade the Government Printer to undertake publication, he was unable to find a willing publisher.¹²⁴

Drummond's journalistic contribution to nature conservation was not confined to the "In Touch With Nature" series. He wrote another series entitled "Nature Notes" and contributed regular features on the work of people such as Cockayne and Ell. Correspondence between Drummond and Ell, contained in the Ell papers held at Canterbury Public Library, reveals that Drummond often released information in the press on behalf of Ell concerning projects such as the Summit Road scheme. The source of the information was sometimes deliberately withheld so that support for the cause would seem more widespread. He pursued every possible opportunity to promote the cause in the way best open to him. When he retired, Drummond received the unusual distinction of having his retirement noted by the British periodical *Nature*. His efforts to encourage a love and understanding of nature were recognised and commended with the following tribute:

121. Letter from Drummond to Ell dated 12 October 1910, Correspondence File 2, Box 1, Drummond Papers, Canterbury Museum.

122. *T.N.Z.I.*, 55 : 756, 1924.

123. Letter dated 6 March 1911 to Ell re publication of book. Correspondence File 2, Box 1, Drummond Papers, Canterbury Museum.

124. Ell and Thomson raised the issue on more than one occasion in the House. During one debate on the issue Mr Buddo pointed out that proof of the value of his work "was to be found in the fact that it had been copied in other countries." Ell pointed out that "there was no more enthusiastic man in New Zealand in regard to the preservation of bird-life" and that no one "had been more self-sacrificing in collecting information" and he ventured the opinion that "no-one was in possession of so much information in regard to their habits as Mr Drummond. (*N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 164, 1913, p. 767) It would still be of great value to publish the complete set of columns today.

realising that in the newspaper Press he had a unique means of passing knowledge on to the public, he seriously and earnestly took in hand an educational work in this direction.¹²⁵

Blanche Baughan

Blanche Baughan, like Drummond, is comparatively little known today. In her own time she had an established reputation as a poet and was also known for a series of descriptive essays on some of the best known scenic features of the country, originally published in booklet form and later collected together in a popular book entitled *Studies in New Zealand Scenery*.¹²⁶ Amongst the essays in this collection is a piece entitled "The Summit Road", written for the Summit Road Association to encourage public support for the cause. The earliest essay in the collection was written in 1908.

Of all the members of the group, she had the strongest sense of topography. She had a greater eye for the geological components of the landscape and the powers and forces of nature that contribute to the moulding of landforms than Cockayne, with his strong focus on the vegetation. Though she probably would not have disagreed with his view that it is the vegetation which gives New Zealand scenery its distinctive character, it was the geological features of the landscape which invariably called forth her most expressive writing. Though fully appreciative of the beauties of vegetation, she was most strongly attracted to those features of the landscape which reveal clearly the power of nature and through that, the power which is the "Essence of Life."¹²⁷ She was the self-confessed nature mystic of the group. She was consciously influenced by the neo-Platonist philosophy of the American Transcendentalists, who celebrated nature as an inspiring reflection of the divine "oversoul," and by the nineteenth-century German philosopher, Gustav Theodor Fechner, who believed in what he called the earth-soul.¹²⁸ She was also

125. *Nature*, 127 : 141, 1931.

126. *Studies in New Zealand Scenery* was published by Whitcombe and Tombs in 1916 and reprinted in 1917. It was so popular that in 1918 a new edition was brought out under the title *Glimpses of New Zealand Scenery*. This was reprinted in 1922 and 1926. A number of the individual essays which formed part of these collections also went through several editions, including *The Finest Walk in the World* (4 editions) and *Uncanny Country* (3 editions). Her other works included *Reuben and Other Poems* (1903), *Shingle-Short and Other Verses* (1908), a collection of short stories entitled *Brown Bread from a Colonial Oven* (1912) and *Poems from the Port Hills* (1923). Original New Zealand poetry is generally not assumed to have appeared until the 1920s and 1930s with poets such as Mason and Fairburn. However, Harris (1992) makes the case that by 1908 Baughan had introduced many of the changes credited to the poets of the succeeding generation. In the present context the features worth noting are the absence of "anglophilia" typical of her contemporaries, and a strong national consciousness (exhibited in choice of topics which relate to New Zealand experience and a strong sense of geographical location in a real rather than a romanticised New Zealand landscape with no attempt to gloss over the rough edges of a new colony).

127. Baughan took a scientific interest in botany and collected specimens for Cockayne. The items she collected on a trip through the Copeland Pass are recorded in the Transactions of the New Zealand Institute by Cockayne. ("Some Hitherto-unrecorded Plant-habitats," *T.N.Z.I.*, 45 : 51-263, 1912)

128. Fechner was born in Germany in 1801 and is now best remembered as the founder of experimental psychology. He believed in a hierarchy of consciousness, culminating in the consciousness of the universe,

influenced by the mystical traditions of the East, particularly the teachings of the Vedanta, which likewise emphasised the essential oneness of all things.

This Earth-life -neath her robes of green and blue
 Our fellow-dust, our fellow-spirit too!...
 Nature, Man's Sister! whose activities,
 Though guided not, like his,
 Down nerve and muscle from desire and thought,
 Have yet this bright and living splendour wrought;
 Whose body is but this grass,
 Yonder cold snows, waters that witless roll,
 Clouds that uncaring pass:-
 But yet whose life, like his, is very Life;
 Whose soul is very Soul!

Yes, Yes! For though, as Man we may not guess
 How flow these currents of her consciousness,
 As Spirit, we sense them! What, must flesh and
 blood
 Be Soul's one vesture? who would have it so
 Not yet hath understood!¹²⁹

Her strong sense of the "oneness" of all creation, that the soul of the universe pervades all things, led her to reject more emphatically than any other member of the group a human dominated view of the universe. She recognised that nature had its own intrinsic value independent of any value to humankind just as plainly as orthodox Christians recognised the intrinsic value of each human soul. This view was expressed most clearly in a passage from "Snow Kings of the Southern Alps," first published in 1910. Contemplating an alpine landscape devoid of all human associations, she was reminded of Ruskin's claims that if the Swiss alpine scenery he found so appealing were removed from all historical and human association, his enjoyment would turn to despair.¹³⁰ Such an opinion held no more merit for Baughan than it did for John Muir, the great Scottish/American wilderness advocate, in his beloved Sierras.¹³¹ She shared with Muir and with Cockayne an

which men usually term God. Just as consciousness of self is more inclusive than the sensory consciousness from which it derives, so the individual consciousness becomes part of a higher human consciousness, and this, together with the consciousness of the animal and vegetable kingdom, forms the earth consciousness, which in turn forms part of a solar system consciousness and so on. For more on Fechner see W. Lowrie, *Religion of a Scientist; Selections from Gustave Th. Fechner* London: Kegan Paul, 1946.

129. From "The Summit Track" in *Poems from the Port Hills*, pp. 32-33. This collection was written in 1913 but not published until 1923.

130. Baughan is reported to have met Ruskin, whom she admired, and to have had conversations with him. (Harris, 1992, p.18) Harris notes that some of her descriptions of scenery show the stylistic influence of Ruskin.

131. Muir, though recognising much that was great in Ruskin, rejected what he considered to be his heresies of "mtn. gloom, mtn. evil, mtn. devil and the unwholesome-ness of mtn. beauty," an opinion he believed would be shared by all true mountain-lovers. He went on to declare in the letter to a friend in which these opinions were expressed; "I have never experienced his mtn. gloom wh.(sic) doubtless is bogle humbug." (Cited in F. Turner, *Rediscovering America: John Muir in His Time and Ours*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1987, p. 222)

appreciation of primitive or "virgin" nature, though in the case of Cockayne it seems to have derived less from a strong spiritual affinity than from scientific interest.

Ah, Ruskin never saw our Southern Alps! Awe-inspiring certainly they are; but not awful; chilling, desolating, not at all; but only and always glorious. More; to some of us it seems as though their separateness, their emphasised aloofness, from his world may constitute to Man at once their chief attraction and their greatest value. For it widely instructs him: it enlarges immensely the horizons of his understanding. In presenting to him Nature - that other half of what Fechner calls the Earth-Soul, at any rate the co-sharer with him of this planet - thus isolated and distinct from his occasions, it reveals her to him as an integral whole, a true-existence, a Something in terms of her own self, not only of his. How often do we think of Nature so? As Man's slave, his creature, his convenience: as his nurse, his consoler... as his "feeder with lofty thoughts," his spiritual admonisher and witness to the Divine: - in all these capacities, their rank rising, be it observed, exactly step for step with the ennobling of man's needs, as though she were at all points adequate to his call upon her, nature, "*inanimate* Nature," as he notwithstanding queerly calls her - is often recognised by him, and nowadays widely valued. But how often in her own right is she recognised and valued simply because she is herself? And yet, as Emerson says, "there must be very two before there can be very one"; and to exchange the former view of her for the latter is like taking that great step up, out of mere gratitude to some friend for services performed, into some kind of comprehension of his faculties and character as they are in themselves, above and past the limits of our wants. It is, to attain disinterestedness - a mental stage often as far beyond that of being *interested* as the latter is beyond that of being *uninterested*. It is to lose sight of oneself... and to see, in consequence, much further. It is to gain a new world, because a new view of the world.... spiritually, vitally, we seem among these soaring snows to ascend... to certain regal and mid-air peaks of our own being; serene, solitary heights, standing veiless and voiceless before the presence of the primal unspeakable Forces, and offering vast new breaths of vision that enable us to discern - What? That man is not the only entity on this earth? That Nature, "*inanimate* Nature," is in reality another soul? That the universe is nowhere dead matter, but everywhere alive and active, bright Spirit throughout? In the solitudes of the sea, one sometimes suspects this; in the precincts of Aorangi one is sure of it.¹³²

I have quoted this passage at length, not because it expresses so well the transcendental ideal of losing oneself in the presence of nature and thus enlarging one's understanding and sympathies, nor because it makes a powerful case for wilderness experience offered by mountains but because it is the most striking expression of the intrinsic value of nature that I have encountered in a New Zealand writer from this period, clearly revealing how far removed in thought she was from the majority of her contemporaries. Thomson, Cockayne, and Guthrie-Smith all seem to have instinctively felt the same but fall somewhat short of an unequivocal statement to that effect. The contemporary writer she most closely resembled was John Muir. But even Muir had not expressed the intrinsic value of nature more clearly or more insistently in his published writings to that date.¹³³

132. *Studies in New Zealand Scenery*, pp. 100-101. This is not the only instance in which she dwells on the intrinsic value of nature. Earlier in the same piece she refers to the beauty of the snow-fields and alpine flowers "all unseen, unthought of, not even guessed at, by Man.... Without his approval, they go on *being*, just the same...." (p. 95) In "Uncanny Country," she refers to a resident of the region who longs for another eruption. This leads her to ask the rhetorical question, whether it is a sentiment as incomprehensible as it is inhuman? No, she responds, "say rather, ultra-human; and springing from no hatred or indifference to Man, but only from a sense of a real Existence other than his, and a susceptibility to its dignity and worth." (p. 153)

133. During the thousand mile walk Muir made during 1867, he firmly reached the view that plants and animals exist first and foremost for themselves and strongly rejected the presumption that the earth was made for man or that he was the lord of the universe and like Baughan found it impossible to believe man

The similarities between the two writers did not stop short at their shared proselytising for wild nature or their rejection of the "lordliness of Man."¹³⁴ The outstanding characteristic of both is a shared perception of flow and movement in nature, to be found in almost every page of their work, but at its most striking when applied to what is normally perceived as inanimate nature.¹³⁵ Nature for them is fluid, constantly changing, mutating. Both have a very strong sense of the forces at work moulding the landscape, recognising what had in a sense become a Romantic cliché, the inseparability of life and death, destruction and creation and their reconciliation in nature, but with a deeper understanding than the Romantics, derived not only from the increasing knowledge of geology, evolution and the new theories of thermodynamics, but also from the opportunity of observing primeval nature, relatively untouched by the hand of man. Here is Baughan writing in 1910:

Here Water, the Protean, works and plays in all his varying forms, and passes incessantly from one to another; the light-whirling snow-flakes weld themselves into masses of irresistible power, the plough-shares of the glaciers eat the solid rock, convert the barren mountain tops into the fruitful fields of the future, and carry them headlong down towards the plain; water is turned to ice and ice to water; creeks warble, rivers rage, mists melt, or are massed into tosses of golden glory, clouds form and fade, and the the rainfall of the regions far away is visibly dictated. The deep ocean of the air, cleansed to a new clearness, swims calmly here between the bright peaks of crystal, itself all crystal-bright, but quivering, and as it were alive, with joy....¹³⁶

alone was possessed of a soul. "Not content with taking all of the earth, they also claim the celestial country as the only ones who possess the kind of souls for which that imponderable empire was planned." (Cited in H. F. Smith, *John Muir*. New York : Twayne Publishers, 1965, p. 47) However the record of this journey, based on his journals, was not published until 1916 as *A Thousand Mile Walk*. Baughan and Muir both go further than the Transcendentalists, with whom they share much in common. Emerson and Thoreau ultimately accept the dominance of man. Thoreau, for example, though advocating protection of wilderness in *The Maine Woods*, still speaks of man as the lord of creation. Reflecting on the pine, he says "It is as immortal as I am, and perchance will go to as high a heaven." Taken by itself this would suggest acceptance of the pine's intrinsic value. However, the preceding paragraph refers to everything as having a higher and lower use and Thoreau's belief that it is the poet who makes the truest use of the pine, not the lumberman. (pp. 121-122) The pine is still perceived as serving Man's needs, of the more ennobled variety to be sure, as a "Feeder of lofty thoughts." Thus, while Thoreau clearly recognises the inherent value of nature over and above its commercial value, he seems to stop a little short of Baughan's recognition of intrinsic value completely independent of man.

134. "Uncanny Country," in *Studies in New Zealand Scenery*, p. 152.

135. With both writers the sense of movement is enhanced not only by frequent use of verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs, all suggestive of motion, but also through a sense of active participation with the environment by the full engagement of all the senses. The scenes described are never picturesque set pieces defined and confined by the painter's single angle of vision. The writer moves through the environment, pausing now to describe something close, now something distant, here something in front, there something behind, above or below. Both authors increase the sense of immediacy and movement through the landscape through use of the pronouns "we" and "you" to include the reader as though on an actual guided tour. A typical example is found in "Summit Road."

There is more sea, too, waiting to be looked at---turn North! Do you see, far away beyond the plain there, a little spoon-tip of sapphire? That is Pegasus Bay. We seem to stand here between two seas, though they are but one in reality. (*Studies in New Zealand Scenery*, p. 203)

136. *Studies in New Zealand Scenery*, pp. 96-98. The essay was first published in this form as a pamphlet in 1910. It was based on an earlier essay in *The Spectator* in 1908.

And now Muir in 1911:

Contemplating the lace-like fabric of streams outspread over the mountains, we are reminded that everything is flowing - going somewhere, animals and so-called lifeless rocks as well as water. Thus the snow flows fast or slow in grand beauty-making glaciers and avalanches; the air in majestic floods carrying minerals, plant leaves, seeds, spores, with streams of music and fragrance; water streams carrying rocks both in solution and in the form of mud particles, sand, pebbles, and boulders. Rocks flow from volcanoes like water from springs, and animals flock together and flow in currents modified by stepping, leaping, gliding, flying, swimming, etc. While the stars go streaming through space pulsed on and on for ever like blood globules in Nature's warm heart.¹³⁷

At the deepest level their work is less about the scenery they set out to describe than a philosophical reflection on the relation between man and nature. On a superficial level their perception of flow derives from scientific understanding, but on a more important level it reflects their belief in a living, sentient earth, endowed with a soul as we are. The much criticised device of "pathetic fallacy," or "humanising" of nature, so often overworked by nature writers, was not an artificial posture on their part but flowed naturally out of their conviction that no hard and fast boundary exists between the perceiving human and other entities in nature. Theirs was an ecological vision characterised by the perception of participation in a greater harmony in which everything was interconnected. Thomas J Lyon describes Muir as founding an "ecological humanism."¹³⁸ This description seems equally applicable to Baughan's philosophy. Both accepted humankind's right, indeed, ecological imperative to transform nature but emphatically denounced a purely commodity view of nature which was inimical to their conviction of our unity with the world. It was a vision which rejected the labelling of nature's actions or creatures as "good" or "bad" as defined by their impact upon humankind. Theirs was an essentially democratic view of nature in which all our "fellow-spirits" stand equal in the eyes of God.

They challenged the traditional Christian perception of humankind's place in the universe in another way too. They took the findings of science on evolution and extinction and moulded them into an uncompromising philosophical acceptance of the fact that we and our co-sharers of the planet are ultimately insignificant in the cosmic scheme of things. Baughan expressed this view forcefully in her poem *The Summit Track*, which contains a distillation of her philosophy "that Reality is Perfection, and One-ness."

Once, in days of old,
Where yonder landscape lies,
A fiery chaos roll'd....
And changed at last, to skies,
Rocks,.... and these fields and Sea....
And warm Humanity.
Now, daily does Man die, and is re-made;
Daily the mountains melt, the sea exhales,
The fields revive and fade.

137. *My First Summer*, p. 236. The book was based on notebooks he wrote in 1869.

138. Thomas J. Lyon, *John Muir*. Boise, Idaho : Boise State College, 1972, p. 27.

-----What if, some day, they not revive? if Man
 No more at last his race replenish can?
 If, oe'r the perish'd City, gradually
 This hill sink down to the exhausted Sea?
 If Man and Nature both, both born of Change,
 Through Change to Change should pass and cease
 to be-----

Till the whole Earth-life vanish utterly,
 A broken wave, a life cell failed and cast,
 A climax past?.....
 What matter, O what matter? Past the range
 Of Rise-and-Fall, past the creating strife:
 Beyond all Change, though with all changes rife:
 Safe still, for ever safe, is That Which Saves!
 The Ocean is not counted by its waves;
 Containing all, by aught containéd never,
 Fadeless and formless, past all forms, for ever
 Shines the Essential life!

...
 O, Man, and Nature and earth, I see all gone
 On! past themselves----all fused
 With all, and yet free!
 Their utmost powers used,
 Their lives not lost, but loos'd,
 In union, Universal Life, with Thee!¹³⁹

It is not certain whether Baughan was familiar with the writing of Muir. Her most important articles were written before publication of his most important philosophical works. She may have been familiar with *The Mountains of California* (1894), the book closest in style to *My First Summer in the Sierra* (1911), which has been described as his spiritual autobiography and is the book her best articles most bring to mind. Her direct comparison of the height of the Yosemite Falls with the Sutherland Falls in Fiordland, and her use of the term canyon to describe the Clinton Valley suggest possible familiarity with that work or perhaps with some of his magazine articles.¹⁴⁰ Given that Muir's major philosophical books had not been published before she wrote *Snow Kings*, it seems probable that her philosophy was reached independently of Muir, even if she was familiar with some of his earlier work.¹⁴¹ Common reading from transcendental sources and from

139. "The Summit Track," pp. 37-38. Similarly, Muir can contemplate the disappearance of man with equanimity. For example in the *Thousand-Mile Walk* he states: "This star, our own good earth, made many a successful journey around the heavens ere man was made, and whole kingdoms of creatures enjoyed existence and returned to dust ere man appeared to claim them. After human beings have also played their part in Creation's plan, they too may disappear without any general burning or extraordinary commotion whatever." (Cited in Smith, p. 48)

140. *Century*, for example, which published some of his articles on California, was available in Christchurch. The articles tend to be less lyrical than his books and are therefore unlikely to have provided a stylistic source for Baughan. Other books published prior to her articles were *Picturesque California and the Regions West of the Rocky Mountains from Alaska to California* (1888) and *Our National Parks* (1901).

141. The possibility cannot be discounted that she met Muir when he visited Christchurch briefly in 1904. However little is known of what he did on his visit and whom he met. See C. M. Hall, "John Muir in New Zealand," *New Zealand Geographer*, 43 : 99-103, 1987.

Ruskin would explain the similarities of thought and style. Besides, despite the obvious similarities, there are clear differences.

Notwithstanding Muir's critique of conventional Christian attitudes towards nature, his God was recognisably the Christian God, and nature His sanctuary in the Romantic tradition. In contrast to Muir, Baughan seldom refers to God. Her creative force is somehow more distant and impersonal. She speaks of the "All-source," the "Essential Life" or sometimes, simply the "Power." But for all her nature mysticism, Baughan always remains much more people oriented than Muir, a fact made clear in her poetry which deals as often with man as with nature. Her full commitment to the need to set aside reserves, and regret at the losses which have already occurred, did not prevent her from appreciating the heroism of those who toil to convert nature to man's use.

However, unlike so many of her contemporaries, Baughan was not intoxicated by a sense of humankind's technological conquest of matter. She was ever conscious that nature's power, when unleashed to the full, can render lordly Man as helpless as a blade of grass. Her acceptance of the necessity and desirability of change derived in part from her conviction that change is the essence of nature, that through change comes growth. Her regret at the devastation our actions so often bring to nature was tempered by the reflection that these too are temporary and will, in time, be displaced by a natural order which, though different, will be no less beautiful than what went before. She shared with Muir a powerful faith in the ultimate order and beauty of the universe. This conviction was expressed strongly in a 1925 booklet, *Arthur's Pass and Otira Gorge*. Looking down from the Pass into the Otira Gorge, she reflected on the immensity of force which had gouged out the gorge and worked havoc to form the naked scour of boulders sweeping from Mt Otira into the gorge, and from this derived faith, fortitude and reassurance.

Blessed Place! clear of squalor, clear of ignorance, free from all the sins and human struggles... the world through your strong showing, had been seen to be not only stably but also nobly governed; not only justly but generously, and all for beauty, all towards joy! Our human shingle-slips of devastation and ruin have been perceived to have (like yours) the Everlasting Arms almightily beneath them.... For all Life is one, ruled by one Law, and that Law right...¹⁴²

For both writers Beauty, found pre-eminently in nature, which was free of the squalor and ignorance of human life with all its sins and struggles, was a key to overcoming the defects of civilization and participating in God or the Essential Life.¹⁴³

142. *Arthur's Pass and Otira Gorge*. Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1925, pp. 52-53.

143. Muir made the point succinctly when he stated: "no synonym for God is so perfect as Beauty." Cited in Lyon (1972) p. 42.

Baughan is one of the most interesting thinkers associated with the Society but it seems that, like Guthrie-Smith, her contribution to the group must have come largely through the educative impact of her writing. N. M. Harris states that she left for California in 1912 and did not return to New Zealand until 1917.¹⁴⁴ If these dates are accurate, then she must have been away when the Society formed, and for a large part of its duration. However, she certainly maintained close contact with the country as during this time a number of important works were published, including her essay on the Summit Road for the Summit Road Association (1914), *A River of Pictures and Peace* (1913), *Forest and Ice* (1913) and the very popular *Studies in New Zealand Scenery* (1916). By allowing the inclusion of her name as a councillor of the Society, she signalled her support for its goals and objectives.

Part 3. Conclusion: Aesthetes and Elitists?

It will be recalled, that the editor of the *Evening Post*, in welcoming the formation of the Society, expressed the view that the general mass of New Zealanders did not yet understand the need for nature conservation. The accuracy of this editorial assessment as to the general indifference of the public and the need for a group was amply illustrated during a Parliamentary debate on the issue of Forest Reserves in 1910.¹⁴⁵ The debate arose in response to a proposal to withdraw 300 acres from a Forest Reserve in the Wellington District.¹⁴⁶ Ell objected that no reasons had been cited. He argued that reserve status should not be lifted without careful examination, as many forest reserves served important water conservation purposes. This sparked a general debate on forest reserves and scenery preservation, the issue of the adequacy of the method for removing reserve status being completely lost in the general fray of conflicting opinions. While the majority of speakers purported to support scenery preservation to some degree, their approval was hedged about with qualifications. In Mr Hall's view it was all very well to preserve areas for picnic grounds but it was impractical to protect large areas of bush and small areas were just a nuisance to adjoining property owners because of the rabbits and noxious weeds they harboured. Mr Smith was of the opinion that admiration for birds can go too far. With complete disregard for their seasonal feeding requirements or varying habitat needs, he felt if we were to save them we should annex high country. Mr Stallworthy had no doubt it was "wasteful to have millions of acres put aside for birds to the exclusion of the population in the form of human beings." The prevailing view was that enthusiasts such as Ell and his colleague Thomas Mackenzie went too far in their demands. In the sort of attack that continues to be familiar to conservationists, they were portrayed as impractical

144. Harris(1992) p. 19.

145. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 150, 1910, pp. 861-877.

146. The paper is found in *A.J.H.R.*, 1910, C-17. It appears from this that the withdrawal was intended to improve boundaries to permit fencing and involved no commercial timber or water conservation values.

men with no understanding of land capability, mere aesthetes concerned with beauty at the expense of those struggling to earn a living for themselves and the country, elitists who pandered to the concerns of a wealthy minority. These criticisms were summed up well by Mr Ross, the member for Pahiatua.

We have large areas of land in this country capable of carrying a very large population and of increasing the exports materially, which at the present time are being used for no other purpose than to gratify the fads of a certain section of the community. Within the last year or so the member for Christchurch South (Ell) visited my district and in travelling over the Puketois he was struck with horror in finding that the country had been denuded of forest and used by men for the common purpose of grazing sheep. Evidently it would have been more pleasing to his eye to see rata in full bloom and everything in the garden looking lovely instead of prolific. He had no appreciation of the ordinary using capacity of the country. And it is only a matter of degree whether we are going to run the country in the interests of tourists exclusively; and in this respect I am a bit surprised at the honourable gentleman, because I thought he was somewhat of a democrat and did not cater for those wealthy enough to travel about the country feeding their eyes on the beauties of nature. I thought he was more anxious to do something for those men and women who are labouring in the recesses of the Dominion, developing the country... but it appears... that he is more disposed to gratify the desire of the globe-trotters and rich persons to feast their eyes upon beautiful scenes, which of course, we know, were available to all who at one time traversed the outlying portions of our Dominion. I am glad to see that the time is rapidly going past when we are content to remain in possession of a Dominion which accepted as its chief function the gratifying of the whims of certain fastidious sections of the community.¹⁴⁷

It was a gross distortion of the truth to claim that Ell pandered to the desires of globe-trotters. As Thomas Mackenzie was quick to point out in his defence, he had always stressed the need to secure reserves close to centres of population to meet the needs of the ordinary New Zealanders. Mr Ross's attempt to impugn Ell's credibility as a democrat did him little credit. Ell's record of concern for the underprivileged members of society had been amply demonstrated both in Parliament and outside it, as Mr Ross must have been fully aware. He sought, wherever possible, to improve conditions for the working man, for example, taking an interest in old age pensions, widows' pensions, homes for the working class, health and safety conditions at the workplace and the introduction of the forty hour week. At a time when nothing was being done to combat tuberculosis, which was taking a growing toll of lives, he promoted sanatoria for those suffering from the disease. He was concerned for the humane treatment of mental patients who were regarded and treated more like criminals than people who were sick and he took a special interest in the education of mentally retarded children.¹⁴⁸ He favoured land tenure and tax reforms which would improve the distribution of wealth in the community. In common with many other progressive liberals at the time, he was in favour of nationalisation of land and public utilities. He wanted all Crown Land withdrawn from sale, with periodic revaluation of Crown leases and increased land tax (alongside lowered income tax) in order to more

147. *N.Z.P.D.*, Vol. 150, 1910. p. 863.

148. See Oakley (1960) Chapter Two. His concern for the dignity of every human being found expression in his campaigns to have the terms "lunatic" and "lunacy" outlawed, to accord respect to old age pensioners by addressing them as "Mr" or "Mrs" rather than just by name.

evenly distribute the wealth created by public works.¹⁴⁹ Ell was a supporter of the Political Labour League (formed in 1905) whose platform included land reforms, the establishment of a State Bank, Government control of trusts and combines, free State education, abolition of the Upper House, public defenders for indictable offences and equal pay for men and women.¹⁵⁰

The charge of elitism and concern with bush and birds at the expense of people was no more appropriate in the case of other leading members of the organisation. G. M. Thomson was one of the founders of the Dunedin City Mission and for twenty years was the president of the Y.M.C.A., but his sincere and selfless humanitarianism found particular expression in the field of education. In the words of A. H. McClintock, author of the provincial history of Otago, he attempted to give his efforts "in the cause of social reform some quality of permanence by linking them closely with educational trends."¹⁵¹ He was concerned with the improvement of educational opportunities for those unable to go on to secondary school and was largely instrumental in founding the Dunedin Technical Classes Association, a voluntary organisation out of which grew the Dunedin Technical School, established in 1889. This provided night classes, fees being waived in the case of impoverished students. He whole-heartedly supported the creche movement of 1879, the Free Kindergarten movement of 1889, being a long-time member of the advisory council on Kindergarten in Dunedin, and the free Secondary Schools movement of the early twentieth century. In these movements he saw "the only real solution to social drudgery and economic unrest."¹⁵²

Blanche Baughan was involved with social work amongst the underprivileged in the East End of London before coming to New Zealand. She continued to be interested in all kinds of social welfare after coming to New Zealand. She was especially interested in the welfare of the sick and handicapped and prisoners. She volunteered as a nurse during the 1918 influenza epidemic and was active in the Red Cross but her greatest contribution was in penal reform. Her interest led her to gain personal experience through work at a Women's Reformatory in Wellington. In 1924 she founded a Christchurch branch of the Howard League and she subsequently formed the New Zealand Howard League for Penal Reform. She also took a life-long interest in women's rights.¹⁵³ Guthrie-Smith also demonstrated

149. Letter December 1899 from Ell to Mr Rollit, Auckland, H.G.Ell Manuscript Papers, Canterbury Public Library, Box 8/1.

150. H. G. Ell Manuscript Papers, Canterbury Public Library, Box 8/3.

151. *The History of Otago*, p. 476.

152. *Ibid.* See also Speirs (1983) pp. 16-24 and Benham (1935) p. 7.

more than ordinary concern for his fellow men with his voluntary war work in London, visiting wounded New Zealand soldiers, supplying them and their families with comforts and extras which he did not allow himself, and providing many convalescent New Zealanders, both Maori and Pakeha, with the means to holiday or helping in any other way within his power. He applied the whole of the income from Tutira to these and other war causes.¹⁵⁴

It is probable that these leading members of the Society devoted more effort and energy to the help and relief of their fellow humans than most of their critics. Their concern for the protection of nature was part and parcel of their humanitarian beliefs, deriving at least in part from the conviction that healthy outdoor pursuits in the presence of nature were essential to the physical, moral, and social well-being of the community and should be the birthright of every New Zealander. They were not reactionaries who railed against change and progress or denied the benefits of civilization. Their deep commitment to the programme of civilization was exemplified by Guthrie-Smith's determined efforts to wrest a living out of Tutira, by G. M. Thomson's long-term advocacy of and practical efforts to promote the efficient exploitation of marine resources and his efforts to find answers to New Zealand's soil fertility problems, which would, of course, help to open formerly marginal land to exploitation¹⁵⁵ and by Cockayne's commitment to applied botany as demonstrated by his sand-dune studies and his work on the beech forests. Thomson, Cockayne, Ell and Kirk, were all as firmly committed to the development of New Zealand's forest assets as they were to the preservation of forests. They were highly critical of the wholesale waste, in which only a portion of the resource was utilised and trees were treated largely as an encumbrance in the way of farming. They desired to see exploitation put on a scientific footing under the direction of properly trained foresters and founded on research.

Members of the Society not only believed in progress but pursued it with an energy deriving from the sort of conviction expressed by Drummond on contemplating a tuatara he kept for study:

153. See Harris (1992) Chapter One and *An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol.1, pp.170-171. In 1936 Baughan anonymously published a book on prison reform called *People in Prison*.

154. See Woodhouse (1959) pp. 92-95.

155. Guthrie-Smith saw very clearly the implications of greater use of fertiliser for the indigenous flora and fauna. Areas such as the gum and pumice country which earlier were worthless and afforded some respite for the natives, were now open to development. "The insatiable appetite for land will swallow almost any kind of soil, and there will remain to the birds an area inconsiderable even in acreage and meagre to the last degree in food supply. Almost all scrub and bush will have fallen, for if, even in the palmy days of the squatter and when taxation was light, the great land-holder could hardly bear to leave untouched a score or an hundred fertile acres, what can be expected of the farmer? For five extra blades of cocksfoot he would scalp his parents." (*Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, p. 5)

When I am in a lazy mood and feel that it is better to relinquish the struggle, and cease to fight against the vexations of life, I go into the garden and look at my tuatara and say - "You chose a life of ease and indolence, and the busy world has no time for you now. God has stretched forth his hand against you... and the fate that awaits you, my friend, will overtake all who do not try to progress."¹⁵⁶

Where they differed from their contemporaries was not in a denial of progress but in the way they defined it. They did not desire wilderness at the expense of civilization any more than the earlier generation of conservationists but like them, they recognised that humanity was diminished by loss of contact with nature. Guthrie-Smith, one of the most eloquent critics of the crass materialism of the day, put it in the following terms:

It may at once be admitted that humanity can survive without the rarer and more recluse birds. The race could exist without the more beautiful orders of flowering plants, without music, and without art, but if anything is true it is that "man does not live by bread alone."¹⁵⁷

But to live as a human being, rather than to merely survive, it was as essential to be able to experience nature in all its variety of forms as it was to be able to experience the music of a Mozart, the writing of a Shakespeare or the painting of a Rembrandt.

"Back to the land" is the soundest of all political cries, but more than that is needed. "Back to the wilds" is what will bring to each who makes the trial, the happiness that brings no later regrets, from which all troubles will be forgotten, and which, unlike any other portion of our lives, will leave the memory only of its pleasure behind. Assuredly in this twentieth century we are attempting an over-civilisation, and men have almost come to believe that to walk all day in streets or to sit at ledger and desk is the natural lot. He who so thinks has lived but half a life – he has failed to enjoy the savage in himself. It is hearing and sight, – those most ancient senses in the frame of man, that give in their exercise the fullest joy, and to listen and watch are more than to think.¹⁵⁸

He wanted no part of a world which denied this truth. Words he wrote in 1924 sum up his feelings.

Why should we paint life drab for the unfortunates yet to come? Why should man and the rat possess the face of the habitable globe? Why should the sparrow be the only bird? I don't say we shall quite come to that, but certain it is that with every species eliminated, by so much is the world robbed of light and colour.... Heaven help us poor mortals if an abominable utilitarianism is to chill the world like an eclipse, if what we call civilisation is to mean only the survival of man, if Bread and the Circus is to be the aspiration of all mankind.¹⁵⁹

156. "A Conservative New Zealander, An Aristocrat in a Democratic Land,": *Maoriland, Old Times In a New Country*. N.Z. Booklet Series 3. Christchurch : Whitcombe and Tombs, n.d.

157. *Mutton Birds and Other Birds*, p. 2.

158. *Ibid.*, Preface. Guthrie-Smith's use of the term "over-civilisation" brings to mind a similar expression by John Muir in "The Wild Parks and Forest Reservations of the West" (*Atlantic*, January 1898), where, arguing the case for reserves, he wrote: "tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilised people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wilderness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life." There is no evidence that Guthrie-Smith was familiar with this article.

With these words, Guthrie-Smith captures the essence of what the Society stood for. It was opposed to the total subjugation of nature on sound utilitarian grounds, but what mattered more was that loss of nature meant impoverishment of the human spirit. This might be adjudged anthropocentric by environmentalists of deep ecology persuasion. Yet the key members of the group shared the basic tenets of what is now termed deep ecology; a belief that non-human "life" on earth (including those things biologists classify as "non-living" - watersheds, landscapes, ecosystems) have values independent of their usefulness for human purposes; that richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values; and that humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital human needs.¹⁶⁰ They were certainly not anthropocentric in the sense of viewing humans as the source of all value, the measure of all things, but it would be fair to describe them as more human-oriented, in a positive sense, than most deep ecologists. There was never any suggestion of an underlying misanthropy which one sometimes senses with modern environmentalists. They also took a more optimistic view of the ultimate fate of the planet. Their faith in the restorative powers of nature had not yet been shaken by the grimmer onslaughts against the life sustaining powers of the planet which have characterised the post-World War II years and they had a stronger faith in ability of humankind to improve, to learn from past mistakes. In short, they had not discarded the Victorian belief in the perfectibility of man. They rejected the dominant paradigm which placed humankind as lord of creation, recognising the right of Nature's other offspring to live. But, on the other hand, they could and did celebrate human power to change nature. As Blanche Baughan put it,

does not Nature herself court that interference - having made man? Some of her pictorial effects he may, he does undoubtedly, spoil; but her poetical, her cosmic aspect - that how enormously he enhances.¹⁶¹

Baughan's description of Nature and man as co-partners of the planet, not in a cold business-like sense but with nature viewed rather as a "lifelong comrade" and "fellow-spirit" and each seen as enhancing the other, perhaps best sums up the attitude held by members of the Society.¹⁶²

159. *Bird Life on Island and Shore*, p. x. He went on to say that a sizable minority had now recognised the evils of the past. There was a halt in spoliation, but a positive forward move was needed from "Thou shalt not kill" to "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Thou shalt plant and replant the forests. Thou shalt protect the avifauna so vital to these forest's health and growth." (p. xi)

160. B. Devall & G. Sessions, *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered*. Layton, Utah : Gibbs M. Smith, Inc., 1985, p. 70 -71.

161. *The Summit Road*, p. 12

162. "The Summit Track" in *Poems From the Port Hills*, pp. 32-3



Sir James Wilson. Source: Wild, *The Life and Times of Sir James Wilson of Bulls*.

CHAPTER NINE

The New Zealand Forestry League: "Preservation And Conservation"

The growing strength and sophistication of the conservation movement by the second decade of the twentieth century was signified by the formation of a second national conservation group. This new group, the New Zealand Forestry League, was founded in Wellington on 12 July 1916, less than two years after the formation of the Forest and Bird Protection Society and at a time when the nation's attention was strongly directed towards the war effort. ¹

The two-fold aims of the League were epitomised in the motto it adopted, "Preservation and Conservation." The preservation aspect referred to the concern it shared with the Forest and Bird Protection Society and other earlier groups that adequate areas of indigenous vegetation should be set aside and permanently protected as reserves or national parks. The term "conservation" summarised the belief of members of the League that all remaining indigenous forests on Crown land, reserves and national parks excepted, should be managed wisely for sustained yield according to the principles of scientific forestry, unless or until such time as it was determined that they were better suited for settlement. This latter aspect of the League's aims owed much to the influence of the progressive conservation movement in the United States, which arose in the 1890s and was closely associated with the name of the forester, Gifford Pinchot. "Efficiency" and "wise use of resources" were keynotes of the movement and were encapsulated by the American historian, Samuel P. Hays, in the expression "the gospel of efficiency."² The movement was concerned with the efficient development of natural resources for economic gain and was based on the ideal of rational resource planning under the guidance of disinterested scientific experts. It was a product of growing professionalism in fields such as forestry. Though members of the League espoused the progressive conservation movement's concern with efficient utilization of resources and rational management by experts they did not share Pinchot's opposition to the withdrawal of land from occupation or use, or his assumption that all renewable resources should be approached as crops. This made it possible for them to unite the goals of conservation and preservation and to enjoy a close relationship and in some cases dual membership with the Native Bird Protection Society.

1. *Dominion*, 13 July 1916.

2. S. P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920*. Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 1959.

With its conservation goal the League was dedicated to a radical change in land management policy, one which rejected the assumption which had governed land settlement policy throughout the existence of the colony; that settlement for farming was the highest and best use of the land and that forestry was something to relegate to land too poor for any other use. If the bush could be milled first without unduly hindering settlement, well and good, if not, it was viewed as an obstacle to be removed as expeditiously as possible. Even where individual farmers saw value in retaining areas of bush as sources of future timber supply, the strict conditions relating to improvement of land opened for settlement under the Land Act 1877 and its successors, ensured that most of the bush would have to be removed.

Forestry had not lacked its advocates in the past, but forestry legislation and successive commissions of inquiry into the state of forestry had brought forth only limited results.³ The need to protect upland forests for climatic reasons was fairly widely accepted, in part because of the educational efforts of the earlier groups and in part because climatic reserves posed little threat to settlement objectives. But as the area of Crown Lands available for settlement diminished by the turn of the century, the pressure increased to open up forest reserves to settlement and climatic reserves were not immune from these claims. In 1904 the Secretary for Crown Lands, J. W. Marchant, made clear the priority assigned to settlement.

As Crown lands become scarcer it is found that persons are willing to go further back and select high and rough lands which in former years were not so much in demand. It is therefore necessary to retain for the extension of settlement all areas of bush land suitable for the purpose, and to consider conservation of forests, except where mill timber is involved or special beauty spots to be found, as secondary to the profitable occupation of land.... I think it could be demonstrated that in many cases scenery is not everything, but that the welfare, advancement, and happiness of people should be given first consideration.... I can only say, I have been forced to reach the above conclusion from actual observation and from a conviction that *bona fide* settlement is the first consideration in New Zealand, and that we should do everything in our power to improve the position of settlers and to meet their altered requirements.⁴

Between 1890 and 1919, 623,527 acres of State Forest were revoked, 375,266 of these between 1900 and 1909.⁵ When the League formed in 1916, the settlement of as many people as possible on farmland remained the undisputed goal of the Lands Department, the

3. See Chapter Two, pp. 79-80.

4. *A.J.H.R.*, 1904, C-1, p. xix-xx. Marchant reached this position with obvious reluctance. He had always been one of the foremost advocates of forest conservation within the department, for the purposes of climate, timber and preservation of flora and fauna as witnessed by his report of 1898 and his Circular of 1902 urging that further attention be given to the necessity of reserves for protection of flora and fauna. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1903, C-13). It is an indication of the strength of the belief in the primacy of settlement.

5. Roche (1987) p. 97; (1990) pp. 137-139. Roche records that 78 motions for the revocation of State forest lands came before Parliament between 1889 and 1919. (1990, p. 138)

Government and the nation as a whole, a task which was seen, if anything, as more pressing than ever because of the desire to reward soldiers returning from the First World War for service to their country. The League was aware that it would have to fight for even the poorest land. As Phillips Turner, a member of the League noted in a letter to another supporter, Thomas Cheeseman, "even such poor lands as the Taupo plains (which the settlers claim should be given to them for nothing) the *Auckland Herald* maintains are too valuable to be used for planting."⁶ In challenging the general land settlement policy, the League was more ambitious than previous groups, whose criticism had been confined to specific pieces of land.

The suggestion for the formation of the League came from Alexander Bathgate of Dunedin, whom we have already encountered as the founder of the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society.⁷ He was prompted by concern at the lack of action taken by the Government to implement the recommendations of the 1913 Forestry Commission. Bathgate suggested to his friend, Sir James Wilson, the need for a society to promote properly managed forestry in New Zealand. Based in the Wellington region, Wilson was better placed to organise a new group. He had already demonstrated an interest in forestry by successfully using his influence as President of the Board of Agriculture⁸ to persuade the Prime Minister, William Massey, to procure the services of David Hutchins, a forestry expert with experience in India, South Africa, Kenya, Cyprus and Australia, to report on forestry in New Zealand.⁹ Wilson took up the challenge. An appeal was issued through the press to all interested in establishing a Forestry League. Encouraged by the response, a meeting was convened for the purpose of forming a society, to take place on 12 July 1916 in Wellington, notice of which was inserted in the newspapers of all the main centres.¹⁰

6. Letter, 31 September 1919, Cheeseman Papers, C.52, Auckland Institute and Museum.

7. *Evening Post*, 13 July 1916.

8. The Board of Agriculture was set up by the Government in 1914 to act as an advisory body to the Minister of Agriculture on everything connected with the progress and prosperity of the industry. Wilson was appointed the first president, a position he held until his death in 1929. Eight of the twelve members of the Board were nominated by the Agricultural and Pastoral Associations. Massey outlined the matters on which he expected advice at the first meeting of the Board. Forestry was specifically mentioned. (L. J. Wild, *The Life and Times of Sir James Wilson of Bulls*. Christchurch : Whitcombe & Tombs, 1953, pp. 155-156)

9. Roche (1987) pp. 105-6; Wild (1953) p. 118. Hutchins trained at the École Nationale des Eaux et Forêts in Nancy, France. After his retirement he was one of a group of distinguished members of the British Association to visit Australia in 1914. He stayed on in Australia to advise the Government of Western Australia on forestry. As a result of that work he produced *Australian Forestry*, published in 1916. The book dealt with forestry in all the Australian States and included appendices on forestry in New Zealand and South Africa. Hutchins came to New Zealand in 1916.

10. New Zealand Forestry League, *History of New Zealand Forestry League-A Remarkable Record*. Wellington : Wright & Carmen Ltd, 1935.

The proposed new society was modelled in part on a similarly named organisation in Australia, the Australian Forestry League, formed in 1911 with the purpose of encouraging forestry in that country. David Hutchins, who worked closely with Wilson to promote the League until his death in 1920, had been present at the inaugural meeting of the Australian society and also received literature from similar organisations in other parts of the world.¹¹ It is possible that Wilson also had in mind an organisation much closer to home, the Rangitikei Society for the Preservation and Growth of New Zealand Flora, one of whose goals was to "interest the public in planting New Zealand timber trees and securing reservation of all forest trees on public land not being for settlement."¹²

Wilson presided over the inaugural meeting and was unanimously elected the first president of the new organisation, a position he held until poor health forced his retirement in 1924.¹³ He continued to take an active interest as Patron of the Society until his death in May 1929. A council of 11 was elected to serve alongside him. This included three men who would subsequently become presidents of the League, James Deans of the pioneering Canterbury family, A. Leigh Hunt, a Wellington businessman who had founded the New Zealand Farmers Co-operative Distribution Company in 1903 with backing from Wilson,¹⁴ and E. Phillips Turner. At the time of the formation of the League, Phillips Turner was still the Inspector of Scenic Reserves. In 1918 he was appointed Chief Officer of the Forest Branch of the Lands Department. When a separate Forestry Department was established he was appointed Secretary, becoming Director in 1928 upon the retirement of the first Director, L. MacIntosh Ellis. However, his tenure as Director was short lived as he retired in 1931.¹⁵ The remaining members of the original council were the Hon. D. Buddo, MHR for Kaiapoi;¹⁶ William Ferguson, chairman of the National Efficiency Board;¹⁷

11. Roche (1897) p. 108; D. E. Hutchins, "Scientific National Forestry for New Zealand," *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*. 13(4) : 295-317; 13(5) : 375-396, 1916. Forestry promotion organisations were found in the United States, Canada, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Spain and Italy.

12. See Chapter Five, pp. 157-159.

13. *New Zealand Life*, 15 August 1924. The name of the publication varied from time to time. It was sometimes called *New Zealand Forest Magazine*, *Forest Magazine*, *New Zealand Life*, and *New Zealand Magazine*. For convenience I will refer to it as *New Zealand Life*. For a discussion of the origins of the magazine see below p. 256.

14. Leigh Hunt was born in Wellington in 1876 but grew up on a farm in Taranaki and later Piako. For more on Leigh Hunt see his autobiography, *Confessions of A. Leigh Hunt*, Wellington : A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1951.

15. Edward Phillips Turner (1864-1937) was born in the United Kingdom and emigrated to New Zealand with his parents at the age of six. The family moved on to Tasmania but he returned to New Zealand in 1884. In 1887 he took up surveying, working both here and in Tasmania. He was appointed to the Auckland Survey Department in 1894, spending eight years in the field. He became Inspector of Scenic Reserves in 1908. (Scholefield, 1940, Vol. 2, p. 405)

William D. Hunt, a member of the Board of Agriculture and the National Efficiency Board;¹⁸ Walter C. Buchanan, MLC;¹⁹ Edwin Hall of Auckland, another of Wilson's colleagues on the Board of Agriculture;²⁰ A. H. Cockayne, Department of Agriculture biologist and son of Leonard Cockayne;²¹ R. Reynolds and B. Chambers. Although Bathgate was not a member of the first executive, he later became a councillor. Others who served on the council from time to time included G. M. Thomson, L.O.H. Tripp, Thomas Cheeseman, who had been a member of the Auckland Scenery Conservation Society; Val Sanderson, who would play a dominant role in the Native Bird Protection Society; E. C. Jack, secretary of the Farmers' Union;²² F. W. Furkert, Engineer-in-Chief and Secretary of the Public Works Department;²³ the Hon. Apirana Ngata, MHR for Eastern Maori;²⁴

16. David Buddo was born in Edinburgh and trained as an engineer before emigrating to Canterbury in 1877. He was active in local body politics before entering Parliament in 1893, serving continuously in the House of Representatives until 1928 with the exception of two years. In 1930 he became a member of the Legislative Council. He died in 1937. (Scholefield, 1940, Vol. 1, pp. 116-7)

17. Ferguson was born in London in 1852, emigrating to New Zealand in 1884, where he became engineer-secretary and treasurer to the Wellington Harbour Board. He was chairman of the National Efficiency Board from 1916 to 1920 and was a founding member of the New Zealand Society of Civil Engineers. (Scholefield, 1940, Vol. 1, pp. 247-248) The National Efficiency Board was a body set up during the war years to "enquire into provisions to enforce economy and increase efficiency."

18. Hunt was born in Auckland in 1864. In 1885 he went farming in Otago before joining the firm of stock and station agents, Wright Stephenson, in 1891, rising to become managing director. Apart from his membership of the two Boards mentioned above, he had headed a commission of inquiry into the public service in 1912 and was also a Taxation Commissioner in 1922 and 1924.

19. Buchanan was born in Argyllshire in 1838. He emigrated to the Otago goldfields in 1862 after six years in Australia. In 1871 he took up farming in the Wairarapa and became active in farming organisations. He entered Parliament in 1881, representing Wairarapa South (1881-87) then Wairarapa (1887-89, 1902-1905 and 1908-1914). He was knighted in 1912 and appointed to the Legislative Council in 1915. He died in 1924. (*DNZB*, Vol II, pp. 63-64)

20. Hall was born in Lincolnshire about 1850. He qualified as a chemist before emigrating to Australia and then New Zealand. He took up farming near Auckland in 1891 and was secretary of the Auckland Agricultural and Pastoral Association from 1892-1912. He became a member of the Board of Agriculture from the time of its formation in 1914 and was a friend of Wilson's. Both were ardent advocates of improved agricultural education. Hall died in June 1928. (Wild, 1953, pp. 122 & 127)

21. In 1923 Cockayne became director of the Field Division of the Department. He was became assistant Director of Agriculture in 1929 and Director from 1937-1947. He was recognised as an authority on agricultural botany as well as on land development for agriculture.

22. The Farmers' Union was founded in 1902, with Wilson as president. Its aim was to represent farmers' interests but it drew most of its support from the large landowners who were opposed to Seddon's Liberal Government, with its graduated Land Tax aimed at breaking up the larger estates. Wilson was seen as an ideal person to bridge the differences between the large landowners and the small farmers, many of whom owed their occupation of land to the Government's policy, because although a large landholder himself, he was sincerely committed to closer settlement of land by increasing the number of independent small farmers. (Wild, 1953, Chapter Three)

23. Furkert was born in Westland in 1876. His work as an engineer gave him a wide knowledge of the country. He was involved with road surveys and construction in Westland and work on the main trunk railway before becoming head of Public Works for Taranaki, then inspecting engineer for the South Island. He was appointed Engineer-in-Chief and Secretary for Public Works in 1920. (*Who's Who in New Zealand*, 1924, p. 81)

and three men who also promoted the cause of conservation through the Tararua Tramping Club,²⁵ W. H. Field, H. F. von Haast and D. R. Hoggard. Former Premier, R. J Seddon, was the chairman of a Greymouth branch of the League.²⁶ ?

Wilson was the driving force behind the formation of the League and the mainstay of the organisation during its early and most successful years, a success in no small measure attributable to him. He was a man of standing and influence in the community which helped to give the new organisation a public profile. At the time of the formation of the League he was the president of both the New Zealand Farmers Union and the Board of Agriculture and served as a member of the Manawatu County Council.²⁷ He had been the member of Parliament for Foxton and the Palmerston electorate which replaced it from 1881 to 1893 and for Otaki from 1893 to 1896. He was in a position to lobby effectively at the highest levels of government. Perhaps more importantly, his well established commitment to agriculture meant that he could not readily be dismissed as a mere forestry fanatic.

David Hutchins was more vulnerable on this point. His ardent enthusiasm for the cause sometimes proved more of a liability than an asset. Moderation and tact were not features of his character. Although he played an important role in promoting the new society,

24. When Ngata graduated B.A. (Hons) from Canterbury College in 1894 he had the distinction of being the first Maori university graduate. He entered Parliament in 1905 and served until 1943. He was a member of Sir Joseph Ward's executive between 1909 and 1912 and Native Minister from 1928 to 1935 under the United Government of Ward and Forbes and the Forbes Coalition Government (1931-5). Ngata was a leader of the Maori renaissance and was knighted in 1927.

25. The Tararua Tramping Club was founded in July 1919 by W. H. Field and F. W. Vosseler. The objects of the club were the encouragement of tramping, skiing, climbing and mountaineering and camping in New Zealand, the fostering and developing generally of a greater love of the out-doors and the creation of an interest in the protection of the flora and fauna and natural features of the country. Its general aim was to make beautiful features of the outdoors more accessible, to train young people to visit and enjoy the mountains and forests, particularly the Tararuas, without risk. It was the first tramping club in the country, although it was preceded by two more specialised clubs, the New Zealand Alpine Club (1891) and the Ruapehu Ski Club (1914). (M. M. Davidson, "Formation of the Club," *Tararua*, 1971, pp. 4-7) The club was particularly active in campaigning for reserves in the Tararua Range. It also advocated a complete ring of reserves around Wellington and was involved in the campaigns to extend the boundaries of Tongariro National Park and oppose the introduction of heather and grouse.

26. Report of 1926 AGM of New Zealand Forestry League, McKinnon Papers, Folder 4.

27. Wilson held the presidency of the Farmers Union from 1902 until 1920, that of the Board of Agriculture from 1914 until 1929 and served on the County Council from 1894 to 1925. His other public activities included a term as chairman of the Palmerston North Hospital Board and of the private Commission for the establishment of the Cawthron Institute. He was an active member of the Conference of Agricultural and Pastoral Societies. Wilson was born in Scotland in 1849, emigrating to New Zealand in 1873, thus swelling the ranks of Scots among the pioneer conservationists of the country. He took up a run near Bulls and proved an innovative farmer, introducing new grasses and fodder crops, pioneering drainage in the Rangitikei and being possibly the first to import superphosphate in the North Island. For more see Wild (1953); *DNZB*, Vol. II, pp. 585-6.

travelling throughout the country speaking to groups and individuals, encouraging them to join the League and persuading them of the importance of scientific management of indigenous forests, he often stepped on the toes of others, not maliciously but with the blindness of enthusiasm and professional arrogance.²⁸ Even before he came to New Zealand he had caused ill will in some quarters with criticisms of the 1913 Forestry Commission's emphasis on exotic planting, written without first-hand knowledge of New Zealand forest conditions. Intemperate statements such as that in which he likened the Commission's general advocacy of replacing indigenous forests with exotics as being akin to "expressing today a belief in witchcraft" were not well calculated to win over supporters of exotic afforestation to the cause of indigenous management.²⁹ One of those he offended was Leonard Cockayne, who had been a member of the Commission.³⁰

Hutchins' lack of moderation caused disquiet among key members of the League, with good reason, for he soon alienated Premier Massey.³¹ Wilson acknowledged that his advent to New Zealand "had made it both possible to start a League and somewhat difficult to get a start."³² Phillips Turner, one of the most active supporters of the League, also had misgivings which he confided to Wilson. Although he did not doubt the truth of what Hutchins had to say, he recognised from letters he received from aggrieved forestry

28. Grove draws attention to a different form of insensitivity displayed by Hutchins during his time as Conservator of Forests in Cape Colony. Indigenous farmers and fuel-wood gatherers, forced to work on lands in or adjacent to forests by European settlement, were transformed into poachers by laws resulting from reports by Hutchins in which he equated veld-burning and tree-felling by Africans with moral degeneration and criminality. Grove notes that desiccation theory (the idea that forest clearance led to drying of the climate) was selectively applied. There was little concern about veld-burning by the European settlers. (Richard Grove, "Scottish Missionaries, Evangelical Discourses and the Origins of Conservation Thinking in Southern Africa, 1820-1900," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15(2) : 163-187, 1984, p. 184.

29. Hutchins, "Scientific National Forestry for New Zealand." Hutchins, however, was not the only forestry expert to question the findings of the Commission. Sir William Schlich also urged the management of indigenous forests on a sustained yield basis. (W. Schlich, "Forestry in the Dominion of New Zealand" *New Zealand Journal of Science and Technology*, 1(4) : 201-210, 1918) Schlich also put forward suggestions for the administrative structure of a forest department in New Zealand, based on departments in Canada, France and Germany. When the Forest Service was established, the structure was modelled on his suggestions. (Roche, 1990, p. 181)

30. Antagonism towards Hutchins probably explains why Leonard Cockayne does not appear to have been a supporter of the group. A letter from Phillips Turner to Thomas Cheeseman indicates that Cockayne was "continuing a war against Hutchins." (5 December 1916, Cheeseman MS Papers, C.52, Auckland Institute and Museum)

31. "The fact is (strictly confidentially) that Hutchins has sickened Massey with his exaggerated figures." (Letter, 3 January 1918, Newman to Wilson, L. McKinnon MS Papers Acc 81. 159, Folder 3, Alexander Turnbull Library, hereafter referred to as McKinnon Papers) Massey found it impossible to accept the figures Hutchins presented on the cost of destroying indigenous forests which he based on a calculated cost of £13 per acre for planting new forests. (Letter, 23 October 1916, Hutchins to Wilson, McKinnon Papers, Folder 1)

32. Letter, 21 February 1917, Wilson to Simmonds, McKinnon Papers, Folder 2.

supporters that Hutchins criticisms had stirred up animosity which he feared might split forestry advocates in the country into two parties.³³

Whatever Hutchins shortcomings as an advocate of the cause, he exercised a strong influence over the policy of the group. He convinced Wilson and other key members of the League that it would be a mistake to rely upon exotic plantings for the future of New Zealand forestry. He persuaded them that what was needed was the management of the remaining indigenous forests according to the principles of scientific forestry under the control of a separate forestry department, staffed by trained foresters. His views contrasted with those of the Forestry Commission not only on the issue of management but also on the issue of administrative reform. The Commission had recognised that there was a general lack of interest in forestry at the upper levels of Government and that the existing form of administration was so fragmented and confused that it resulted in much waste. Its solution to this problem had been to recommend the strengthening of the Forestry Branch of the Lands Department, conferring upon it a greater degree of autonomy, rather than the creation of a separate department.

Before Wilson met Hutchins, he believed, in common with most New Zealanders and the Forestry Commission, that indigenous forests were too slow growing to provide a sound basis for future forestry and that to secure adequate supplies of timber to replace the dwindling indigenous resource it would be necessary to place emphasis on a vigorous exotic planting scheme. A month before the formation of the League Wilson wrote to Edwin Hall,

I must say, Hutchins has greatly altered one's opinion, or rather pointed out the necessity of continuing planting, and at the same time conserving the forest that we have. One's whole thought has been towards planting as a remedy for the scarcity of timber which must occur in the future, but his advocacy of a Forestry Department, with a trained Forester at its head for the purpose of conserving our native bush is one which was ignored previously. I can see, however, that even with the present bush that we have we can with a proper system indefinitely lengthen its life.³⁴

Influenced by Hutchins, the League argued that the expenses of establishing a new department would be offset by the savings that would soon follow through scientific management of the resource and that it was much cheaper to manage existing forests properly than to plant new forests. It rejected the usual claims that indigenous trees were too slow in growth to form the basis of a forestry industry, pointing out that recent research by Cheeseman had established that indigenous forests were not as slow in growth as

33. Letter, 20 December 1916, Phillips Turner to Wilson, McKinnon Papers, Folder 1.

34. Wild (1953) p. 119.

popularly believed. The League did not claim that indigenous trees grew as quickly as exotics. What it did argue was that New Zealand timber trees grew as fast as the standard forest trees in Europe and the United States. If these countries considered it worth preserving their native forests, there was no reason why New Zealand should not do the same. The League was not opposed to exotics. It did not doubt that to meet future timber needs the remaining indigenous forests would have to be supplemented by further planting and that in the main exotics should be used for this purpose. But the first and immediate priority, it believed, was to halt any further alienation of indigenous forest lands until their land use suitability had been investigated. Until such an investigation had been undertaken, all Crown-owned timber-bearing land should be held by the proposed forestry department. It advocated the appointment of a small commission to carry out the task of demarcation, to use the term favoured by the League, comprising one expert in evaluating farmland, one expert in scientific forestry, and a chairman conversant with both. To be effective, demarcation needed to be carried out in the field and land found unsuited for farming should be designated permanent forest under the control of a forests department. Generally speaking, it considered that in most cases forestry would prove the more profitable land use on any land with a carrying capacity of three or less sheep per acre. It envisaged that land suited for farming which carried a valuable tree crop would also be administered by the proposed forestry department until the crop was removed.³⁵

Establishment of an independent department and the demarcation of land were the key points of League policy. Other reforms it wished to see introduced were the establishment of a forestry school, the preparation of working plans, the production of selected strains of forest seed, changes in the tax law to encourage forestry, the establishment of a forest products laboratory to seek uses for species at present wasted and the passing of new forestry legislation to give effect to the reforms it advocated.³⁶ It also wished to see all indigenous forests, including scenic reserves, national parks, Endowment land and Native land, administered by the Forest Service.³⁷ The League believed the Forest Service provided the best hope of protection against fire and damage caused by grazing animals.³⁸

35. Letter from the Secretary of the League to the Minister of Lands, 24 October 1918; Report by Phillips Turner to Sir Francis Bell, June 1918; Letters, Hutchins to Wilson, 26 February 1918 & 4 January 1919. (McKinnon Papers, Folder 3)

36. Report of the fourth Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Forestry League, 7 July 1920, p. 7.

37. Letter, Turner to Wilson, 24 February 1918, McKinnon Papers, Folder 3.

38. Seventh AGM, *New Zealand Life*, 10 September 1923; council meeting, 25 March 1925, *New Zealand Life*, 4 May 1925.

Although members of the League were convinced by Hutchins' arguments, they were under no illusions that it would be a difficult task to convince the public and the Government of the necessity to manage indigenous forests on a sustained yield basis under the control of a separate department staffed by experts. It was an inauspicious time to launch an organisation, as the experience of the shortlived Rangitikei Society for the Preservation and Growth of New Zealand Flora and the Forest and Bird Protection Society had demonstrated. The attention of the public and Government alike were diverted to the war cause and the financial stringencies produced by the war effort boded ill for the establishment of a new department. Wilson acknowledged in a letter written in July 1917 to Sir Thomas Mackenzie, then High Commissioner for New Zealand in London, that the League's efforts were being handicapped by the effects of war.³⁹ But the problems caused by the war were not all negative. Hutchins and the League were quick to point out the opportunities that development of the forestry industry could provide for employing returned soldiers. Despite the adverse conditions, they launched into a vigorous publicity campaign, acting through the press and farming journals, organising public meetings and speaking engagements and directly lobbying members of Parliament. They also contacted known forestry enthusiasts throughout the country, encouraging them to put pressure upon the Government. Links between members of the League, the Board of Agriculture and the National Efficiency Board proved useful. Both Boards lent support to the cause.⁴⁰

War time conditions and public apathy were not the only obstacles confronting the League. The Prime Minister, William Massey, with his commitment to the small farmer, was not very interested in forestry and the Lands Department was strongly opposed to the creation of a separate department which would deprive it of jurisdiction over a large area of land it currently administered. The Department maintained that it would be cheaper and preferable to retain control of forests in the hands of the Commissioners of Crown Lands who had the benefit of local knowledge, rather than under the control of a director of forests unacquainted with local conditions. Phillips Turner, as an employee of the Lands Department, found himself in an awkward position. He did his best to influence departmental policy in favour of accepting a separate forestry department. When he found he could not he kept Wilson confidentially informed of the Department's position, believing himself justified in doing so because "the benefit of the State should not be subordinated to

39. Ibid., pp. 119-120.

40. In 1918 the Board of Agriculture and the National Efficiency Board jointly approached Massey in support of the cause. The National Efficiency Board's initial interest in forestry arose from the possibility of involving returned servicemen in planting schemes, an idea suggested to it by the League, but it also came to support the idea of a separate department and scientific management of existing forests. (Roche, 1987, p. 113)

considerations of loyalty to a department of State."⁴¹ In private he was scathing of his Department's view that control should remain with the Commissioners of Crown Land: "How can officers ignorant of the very ABC of silviculture and modern forest management manage forests to the best advantage." These same people had been responsible for the "criminal mismanagement" of the past. The expense of new staff, he believed, would soon be met by savings from improved management as had been demonstrated in Australia.⁴² Phillips Turner's failure to influence the policy of the Lands Department gave the League all the more reason to keep up pressure on Parliament. An important breakthrough came when it convinced Sir Francis Dillon Bell, who had great influence with Massey, of the need for a separate department under the control of a trained forester. With the support of Bell, the Government was persuaded to authorise the formation of a separate forestry department. In November 1918 Bell was appointed the first independent Commissioner of State Forests. The new department subsequently came into effect on 1 September 1919.

The League had every reason to be pleased with the appointment of Bell as Commissioner of State Forests. He was fully committed to the policy of sustained yield management of indigenous forests suitable for timber production and the maintenance of protection forests for conservation of soil and water and regulation of stream flow. He had publicly declared: "The forestry I want to initiate consists first and foremost of conservation and use of existing forests, and secondly, and far behind, plantations."⁴³ It had even greater reason to be pleased with the subsequent appointment of Phillips Turner as the first Secretary of the new Department. Yet neither appointment gave it any reason to rest on its laurels. The League was aware that Bell lacked substantial support in Cabinet and would need as much backing as it could provide to ensure that he would not be starved of the funds necessary to undertake a proper demarcation exercise and to set up a department with a well qualified staff.⁴⁴ Its victory could only be viewed as partial so long as large areas of indigenous forest remained outside Bell's control in the hands of Goldfields' Wardens, including practically all the forests of Westland, Nelson and South Otago and demarcation had not been achieved. To support Bell, the League kept him well supplied with the latest literature on scientific forestry, kept the press supplied with articles promoting forestry, continued to hold public meetings to promote the cause and actively lobbied the Government, all the while doing its best to ensure that the issue was kept free of party politics.⁴⁵

41. Letter, Phillips Turner to Wilson, 24 February 1918, McKinnon Papers, Folder 3.

42. Letters, Phillips Turner to Wilson, 24 February 1918 & 25 April 1918, McKinnon Papers, Folder 3.

43. W. Downie Stewart, *Sir Francis H. D. Bell: His Life and Times*. Wellington : Butterworth & Co, 1937, p. 192.

44. Letter, Phillips Turner to Wilson, 6 October 1918, McKinnon Papers, Folder 3.

Bell took a first step towards demarcation in 1918 when he secured legislation which empowered the Governor-General to set aside Crown Lands as provisional State forests, which for all purposes were the same as permanent State forests unless or until the Governor-General in Council by further proclamation declared the land required for settlement.⁴⁶ Phillips Turner, in his first report as Secretary of Forestry, explained the rationale behind the measure. Continuous alienation and rapid depletion made it imperative that speedy action be taken to conserve as much indigenous forest as possible. The power to set aside provisional state forests was introduced as a matter of short term expediency because regular demarcation would take too long.⁴⁷ This did not represent abandonment of the policy of demarcation. In 1920 L. MacIntosh Ellis, a Canadian trained in scientific forestry, was appointed Director of Forestry and the policy proposals he put to the Government soon after his appointment called for the establishment of a forest development fund to be used for the purpose of demarcation and development.⁴⁸ This aspect of the policy was not accepted by the Government, despite strong lobbying in support by the League. As a result, the progress of demarcation was constrained by the limitations of the Department's resources. In these circumstances, Bell's provision would take on greater importance. It helped a little to redress the imbalance of power between agricultural and forestry interests. Henceforth, if Lands Department required land designated provisional forest for settlement purposes it must establish that the area was more suitable for farming than forestry, a change from the situation which had prevailed up until then, with advocates of forestry compelled to plead with Lands Department for land. The effectiveness of the provision in stemming the destruction of forests pending demarcation depended, of course, upon how much land was actually designated provisional forest.

The League was disappointed to learn in January 1919 that Bell had informed Hutchins that he intended to allow the Minister of Lands "the responsibility of saying what he requires for agricultural purposes, leaving what is left for Forestry,"⁴⁹ a decision which threatened to undermine the usefulness of the provision. Hutchins was understandably concerned and commented to Wilson that Bell "was nursing a delusion if he thinks he can get the forest properly demarcated by Mr Guthrie. I could not help thinking it was like setting a butcher to physic a flock of very sick sheep."⁵⁰ Bell's statement to Hutchins was

45. AGM, 2 July 1925, *New Zealand Life*, 15 July 1925.

46. War Legislation and Statutes Law Amendment Act 1918, s. 34 (3).

47. *A.J.H.R.*, 1919, C-3.

48. The policy is found in *A.J.H.R.*, 1920, C-3A.

49. Letter, 4 January 1919, Hutchins to Wilson, McKinnon Papers, Folder 3.

confirmed in a speech he gave to the 1919 Annual General Meeting of the League, in which he stated that it "had been his aim to secure as many forests as his colleague Mr Guthrie would let him have."⁵¹ In fairness to Bell, this was probably the best he could achieve in the political climate of the time. An indication of the dominance of the farming lobby can be gauged from the fact that the hand of the Minister of Lands was strengthened further in the provisional state forest section of the Forest Act 1921-22. Revocation of provisional forest no longer required a proclamation of the Governor-General in Council. He was now able to act simply on the recommendation of the Minister of Lands.⁵²

This was profoundly unsatisfactory to the League. It argued that the consensus of both the Minister of Forests and the Minister of Lands, or preferably a committee, should be obtained before land was withdrawn from provisional State forest.⁵³ Despite the shortcomings of the manner of implementing the measure, it proved its usefulness. In 1919 the Forest Service was responsible for 1,650,000 acres of forest, of which only 364,000 acres was millable.⁵⁴ Up to 31 March 1929 a further 6,114,908 acres had been dedicated to the Forest Service, 5,641,511 of these being provisional State forest.⁵⁵ Progress with demarcation was slow, with only 14% of State forests completed.⁵⁶ This was far short of the League's goal of seeing "every remaining acre of bush left in New Zealand" demarcated. Had full-scale demarcation as envisaged by the League been carried out, many subsequent mistakes in the development of marginal land for farming might have been avoided, but that was not to be. The country continued with its agriculturally-minded development policy and though forestry was now afforded growing recognition, it

50. Ibid.

51. Report of the third Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Forestry League, 16 October 1919, p. 14.

52. Forest Act 1921-22, s. 20(1). On the other hand, permanent State forests were made more secure, a resolution passed by both Houses of Parliament being required to revoke a designation.

53. The Government's response to a League deputation in that year met with the reply that under the present Minister of Lands there was no need for a committee or the consensus of both Ministers. The League was not prepared to accept this answer and determined to continue with its lobbying. (*New Zealand Life*, 15 August 1924)

54. *New Zealand Official Year-book*, 1919, p. 569. This compared with 2,817,389 acres in national park and 389,065 acres in scenic reserve. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1919, C-3) The figure given for millable timber in the Report of the Director for the same year was 494,400 acres, which Phillips Turner pointed out represented only 2.08% of New Zealand, compared with the 17% of France and 26% of Germany devoted to commercial forests. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1919, C-3)

55. *New Zealand Official Year-book*, 1930, p. 502. The Department had given priority to reconnaissance of forests occupying good settlement land and all timber sales were made from these areas so that they could be released for settlement as soon as possible in accordance with Government policy. (*New Zealand Life*, 15 August 1924, pp. 9-10)

56. Ibid, p. 505.

continued to be viewed as secondary to farming, an industry to be relegated to lands unsuited for agriculture.

If the League had reservations about the manner of implementing the provisional State forests policy, nevertheless, the prevailing mood was one of optimism that in the Commissioner of Forests it had found a supporter with a missionary zeal for the cause of managing indigenous forests for sustained yield almost as determined as its own. The appointment of a Director of Forests in 1920 had given further grounds for optimism. Ellis was committed to sustained yield management of indigenous forests and became a member of the council of the League. The forest policy he proposed for New Zealand fully met the goals of the League. He sought to have all forests in New Zealand, including scenic reserves and national parks, placed under the control of the Forest Service and he believed that the Forest Service should be responsible for administering fish, bird and game resources. The latter he considered particularly important in view of the deer problem, which he was concerned would lead to serious forest damage. He also stressed the importance of forests for protecting water supply and indicated the need for the Service to develop a water protection plan for the Dominion.⁵⁷

During the initial years of the Forest Service there was a close and co-operative relationship between the League and the fledgling department. The League gave moral support to the forest policy and campaigned vigorously for recognition of those elements of the policy which had not been accepted by the Government, the two main elements being the proposal for establishment of a Forest Development Fund as a means of financing demarcation and the proposal to place all Crown-owned forested lands, including national parks and reserves, educational endowments and Native land under the control of the Forest Service. Neither policy was ever achieved.

However, as early as 1926 there were signs that the League was beginning to feel disquiet at the gap between the Forest Service's stated commitment to sustained yield forestry and its actual practice. An article in *New Zealand Life*, which functioned as the official magazine of the group, scarcely veiled its criticism of the Department: "Many bush-lovers think that, even today, the native forests are not being sufficiently safeguarded. The State Forest Service, for instance, receives its main income out of profits derived from converting virgin forests into timber."⁵⁸ The author went on to enumerate the values other

57. A.J.H.R., 1920, C-3A. He indicated that the development of a plan would involve gathering of information on the sources, amounts and uses of water arising in public forests and an investigation of the special measures necessary to maintain the protective value of the cover.

58. *New Zealand Life*, 1 December 1926.

than timber which made it important to protect native forests; soil and water values, maintenance of the balance of nature and wilderness values, the nurturing of human health, both mental and physical, as a necessary antidote to civilization. Here was a first hint of the potential for disharmony between conservationists and the Forest Service in their interpretation of multiple-use forestry which would become a source of open conflict with later environmental groups. As the first decade of the Forest Service came to a close, the League became increasingly critical of the energy being placed into exotic afforestation and of the steady destruction of indigenous forests without any attempt at perpetuation. In 1931 a League supporter and lecturer in Forestry at Canterbury University College, F. E. Hutchinson, bluntly accused the Forest Service of negligence in regard to its statutory duty to manage the native forests.⁵⁹

The League was justified in perceiving that the bulk of the resources and energy of the department were being directed towards afforestation at the expense of indigenous management. For example, the 1921 Annual Report revealed that 80.1% of the budget had been allocated to general afforestation; in comparison with 17.88% for general development (which included administration, demarcation, forest protection and management of indigenous forests) and 13% for acquisition of indigenous forests.⁶⁰ The commitment to afforestation became greater after 1923. Soon after his appointment as Director, Ellis had implemented an inventory of indigenous resources, which was completed that year. The results of the inventory convinced him that the remaining indigenous resource would not be sufficient to meet the future needs of the country without vastly increasing the planting of the faster growing exotics.⁶¹ It revealed, as he reported to the 1924 Annual General Meeting of the League, that "the annual consumption of forest produce is greater than its annual increment growth by many million feet."⁶² His conviction that the only real solution to the supply problem lay with exotics was reinforced by research on the kauri forests and Westland rimu forests, which indicated that they would

59. F. E. Hutchinson, "An approach to the Management of the Rimu Forest," *New Zealand Journal of Forestry*. 3(1) : 17-24, 1931, p. 22.

60. A.J.H.R., 1921, C-3. The following year the budget still disproportionately favoured afforestation, but not quite to the same extent. Afforestation accounted for 55% of the budget and general development 36.4%, but the share allocated to acquisition of indigenous forests fell to only 6.7%. (A.J.H.R., 1922, C-3)

61. F. Allsop, *The First Fifty Year's of New Zealand's Forest Service*. Wellington : Government Printer, 1973, pp. 12-14; Roche (1990) pp. 189-191. The forest service continued to officially adhere to the policy of indigenous management until 1938, though by this time it amounted to little more than lip-service. In that year it announced a programme of re-afforesting of indigenous forests with exotics, thus finally acknowledging the failure of the indigenous management policy. (A.J.H.R., 1938, C-3)

62. *New Zealand Life*, 15 August 1924.

be more difficult to manage than had been anticipated.⁶³ In 1924 an area of 7,207 acres was planted with exotics; more than double the area of 2,863 acres planted the previous year. The figure jumped again in 1925 to an area of 11,051 acres and Ellis announced the intention of boosting planting from the present total of 13,000 acres to a total of 300,000 acres by 1935.⁶⁴ Ellis's initial reluctance to turn to exotic afforestation was in time replaced by enthusiasm about the possibilities it offered, though he did not abandon indigenous research.⁶⁵

Despite the League's disillusionment with the Forest Service over the issue of indigenous management, it continued to believe it would provide better administration of parks and reserves. The Service had demonstrated its commitment to the importance of protection forests, the protection of scenic and recreation values, the control of browsing animals, the establishment of efficient fire control measures and the introduction of measures to reduce waste, matters which were all of vital concern to the League. In his 1921 Annual Report Ellis stated that plans were being made to ensure that in all timber sales the natural beauty of the forest scenery would be preserved where the areas for sale were situated along highways, or bordered on rivers, streams or lakes and recognised the recreational value of forests.⁶⁶ The following year he reported that Circular No. 26 had been issued to all conservators and field officers, reminding them of the recreational value of forests and instructing them to consider the aesthetic values of any areas offered for timber-sales. It was suggested that trees of outstanding size or magnificence might be protected as well as road, river and lake margins.⁶⁷ Game protection was made a regular activity of all field officers and all forest rangers were appointed rangers under the Animals Protection Act 1908 and the Fisheries Act. Shooting was prohibited in certain areas that were particularly sensitive for wildlife.⁶⁸

Ellis acted quickly to instigate research into the impact of browsing animals. The 1921 Annual Report indicated that research was under way into the effect of deer on the forests. The results of that work, by A.N. Perham, were presented the following year and as a consequence a conference on deer was held in April 1923 in an effort to get the responsible

63. Roche (1990) p. 90.

64. *A.J.H.R.*, 1925, C-3.

65. Roche (1990) pp. 190-196.

66. *A.J.H.R.*, 1921, C-3.

67. *A.J.H.R.*, 1922, C-3.

68. *A.J.H.R.*, 1921, C-3; 1922, C-3.

Government Departments and the acclimatization societies to agree on measures for control.⁶⁹ However, opossums were treated as a source of potential revenue on the basis of H.B. Kirk's report that they did little serious damage to the bush.⁷⁰

Shocked at the loss of 50,000 acres to fire in 1921 alone, Ellis also acted quickly to establish fire districts. Five were gazetted in 1922 and by 1930 there were 40, with the result that fire losses were successfully curtailed during the rest of the decade.⁷¹ As a measure to reduce waste of another sort, Ellis substituted block timber sales for royalty payment on output. This encouraged greater utilization of all grades of timber. It was a move that was pleasing to the League which, at its 1919 Annual General Meeting, had pinpointed the policy of charging low royalties on sawn output as a major disincentive to waste reduction.⁷² The importance of the reform was highlighted in an obituary of Ellis in the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry*, where it was described "as having done more than all other administrative measures combined since the establishment of the Colony in 1840, to conserve the country's timber supplies and forest wealth."⁷³

Following the formation of an independent Forest Service, the League increasingly directed its attention to the second aspect of its motto, preservation. Its advocacy of the establishment of a Forest Service committed to the preservation of protection forests, the control of fire and grazing animals and prevention of waste was directed as much to the goal of preservation as conservation, but action to protect specific sites took a definite second place to the campaign for an independent department until that goal was achieved. Nevertheless, the 1919 Annual General Meeting, for example, referred to the successful preservation of a small kohekohe forest at Waikanae on the representations of the League, as well as various other enquiries into the protection of small areas of forest on private land, the location and outcome of which were not specified. It also referred to a proposal

69. *A.J.H.R.*, 1921, C-3; 1922, C-3A; 1924, C-3.

70. H. B. Kirk, "Report on Australian Opossums in New Zealand," *A.J.H.R.*, 1920, H-28; *A.J.H.R.*, 1921, C-3. Kirk advocated extermination of opossums in plant or animal sanctuaries but he believed that the expense of fencing scenic reserves to keep out cattle and deer and of appointing rangers to destroy trespassing animals where fencing was not feasible, could be met, in part, by revenue from possum fur.

71. *Ibid.*, pp. 185-187.

72. W. J. Butler, "Economic Utilization As A Factor In Forest Conservation," Forestry League AGM, 1919.

73. "Obituary; Leon Mackintosh Ellis," *New Zealand Journal of Forestry*, 5(1) : 6-8.1941.

to establish a small sub-committee to consult with the Wellington City Council Director of Reserves, an offer which it seems was turned down.⁷⁴

The League's endeavours in the cause of preservation were strengthened in 1922, when it became the first New Zealand conservation organisation to produce its own magazine, *Forest and River*, sometimes also called *The Forest Magazine of New Zealand*. This was edited on behalf of the League by Mr Will Lawson who, prior to taking up this position, had been one of the League's key organisers. In 1923 Lawson shifted to Sydney. The magazine amalgamated with an existing journal published by Maurice Hurst, *New Zealand Life*, to become known as *New Zealand Life and Forest Magazine*.⁷⁵ The new official magazine, edited by Hurst, was also distributed to the Dominion Federated Sawmillers Association, which supported the League. In July 1923 it became the official journal of the Tararua Tramping Club as well.⁷⁶

The magazine articulated the policies and reported the activities of the organisations which supported it. In addition, it carried articles on "forestry, birdlife, scenery and nature-lore generally" intended to appeal to all those "who find pleasure out of doors and who desire to see bush and birds protected and preserved."⁷⁷ It regularly carried articles expounding the principles and importance of scientific forestry. Other recurrent topics included articles stressing the link between deforestation, flooding, alteration of stream flows, silting of rivers and soil deterioration; articles emphasising the importance of native birds for the continued health and vitality of the indigenous forests because of their role as pollinators, seed distributors and insect predators; articles outlining the reasons for the decline of birds and the measures which might be taken to counter the problem; and articles stressing the harm caused by grazing and browsing animals in the forest. Though the new magazine does not appear to have been as directly under the control of the League as that edited by Lawson, it seems reasonable to treat the beliefs put forward by Hurst in an article entitled "Our Heritage of Bush and Beauty," which appeared in the first issue of the combined magazine, as representative of the values of most League supporters.

Like earlier conservation groups, he saw the protection of nature as a safeguard against over-civilization and one of the main reasons why we should strive to save our heritage of natural beauty for future generations.

74. Report of the third AGM of the New Zealand Forestry League, pp. 21-22.

75. AGM 18 July 1923, *New Zealand Life*, 1 August 1923.

76. *New Zealand Life*, 2 July 1923.

77. *Ibid.*, No 7, 1 June 1923.

Nature is the great healer and purifier. The people of the towns should be within easy reach of some wilderness where they may build up their bodies and refresh their brains and spirits.... We want New Zealander's to know the peace of the forest... the swift flow of streams far from the contamination of civilisation.... For we live not only by the thoughts and deeds of men, but also by our appreciation of Nature as artist and physician.⁷⁸

He elaborated further on this point in a later article. He considered the reconciliation of civilisation and the wild, business and beauty to be one of the chief problems of the age. Those "whole-hog civilisers who would spoil everything that does not conduce to financial gain" were "foes of a people's happiness and welfare" but he had no more sympathy with those who would seek total withdrawal from man into the wilderness. He believed that in striving to strike the balance, we should keep in mind the ancient rural myth of the "brownies' portion," which recognises the need to keep a corner of the garden uncultivated for the fairy people. "There can be too much of cultivation and efficiency," he asserts. "On a country wide scale we need a brownies' portion too."⁷⁹ The concept of the "brownies' portion" provides no practical guidance as to where to draw the line between civilisation and wilderness but in stating the principle that we should set apart a portion of the country for our fellow inhabitants of the earth, it signals a clear rejection of an exclusively anthropocentric view of the world.

At a council meeting on 18 September 1924 the League reassessed its priorities with a view to concentrating its efforts "on the most vital matters in connection with the objects to be attained."⁸⁰ Preservation issues dominated the matters to be stressed. They were:

- 1) The efficient preservation of a sufficiency of our native forests, in their natural state, for the adequate conservation of our rainfall and for the prevention of erosion etc.
- 2) The preservation intact of all scenic reserves, national parks, sanctuaries etc. in their natural state, and the planting of native trees and shrubs wherever possible and desirable, and that the introduction of exotics be restricted to use only where absolutely necessary to conserve the native areas.
- 3) The planting of exotics wherever more desirable or economical than our native flora.⁸¹

These points were endorsed at the 1925 Annual General Meeting and it was determined that they should be stressed in the League's magazine, with the addition of one further matter:

- 4) Co-ordination of the control of all wildlife under a wild life commissioner, with the appointment of a chief game warden, and such other personnel as necessary to carry out an active policy of control and protection.⁸²

78. Ibid.

79. *New Zealand Life*, 1 August 1923.

80. *New Zealand Life*, 15 October 1924.

81. Ibid.

82. Report of the 1925 AGM of the New Zealand Forestry League, McKinnon Papers, Folder 4; *New Zealand Life*, 15 May 1925.

Any ambiguity as to whether the presence of exotics in national parks was acceptable to the League under some circumstances, arising from the reference to exotics in (2), was removed by a resolution passed at a meeting of the council on 22 July 1926. This affirmed that it was League policy that all National Parks should be preserved inviolate against the introduction of foreign plants, birds, or animals so that future generations may see these parks in their natural beauty and as evidence in the future of the pristine beauty of the New Zealand forest.⁸³ Consistent with this position, it opposed the further introduction of heather and the introduction of grouse to Tongariro National Park and it joined with the Native Bird Protection Society, the New Zealand Institute, the Tararua Tramping Club, and the Horticultural Society to campaign for its removal.⁸⁴

In pursuit of the above goals, the League continued to urge, as it had in the past, the establishment of a State Forest Purchase Fund to extend the areas of State Forest for conservation and scenic purposes as well as for commercial purposes and advocated an increase in the Scenery Preservation Account.⁸⁵ Forest Service control of scenic reserves and national parks remained an important concern.⁸⁶ It continued a long-standing campaign for the removal of deer and goats from scenic reserves, sanctuaries, national parks and water catchment reserves.⁸⁷ For example, at "The Deer Menace Conference" called in 1930 by the Department of Internal Affairs, representatives of the League advocated the need to set up a Board representing the various interests involved to deal with the issue of deer control.⁸⁸ Although the Conference resulted in the removal of protection on all deer, chamois and thar, the League remained dissatisfied with the situation. In 1933 it passed a resolution urging the Government to set up a Royal Commission to investigate the effect of deer on forests. No action having been taken upon the resolution, the League organised a deputation to the Government in 1935, requesting that it take adequate steps to

83. *New Zealand Life*, 2 August 1926.

84. Annual Report of the New Zealand Forestry League, 1925, McKinnon Papers, Folder 4;

85. *New Zealand Life*, 15 August 1924, 15 May 1925 & 15 July 1925.

86. *New Zealand Life*, 15 May 1925 & 15 July 1925.

87. The League had lobbied the Government and the Egmont Park Board for removal of goats from the park over a number of years. Other areas which caused it particular concern were Kapiti, reserves in the Marlborough Sounds and Nelson area and the Wellington water catchment areas. (*New Zealand Life*, 15 August 1924, 15 July 1924, 2 August 1926 & July 1929; McKinnon Papers Folder 4)

88. *The Press*, 8 May 1930. Following the Conference it was agreed to remove protection from deer chamois and thar except for short seasons when protection would be reimposed and a licence would be required to hunt in order to protect the interests of the acclimatisation societies. A.J.H.R., H-22, 1931.

guard reserves against browsing animals.⁸⁹ It also advocated the need for research into the best means of control and into the changes being brought about through browsing pressure.⁹⁰ Another area of concern was the need for tax exemption for land on which forest trees were reserved or planted in order to encourage land owners to conserve small areas of native forest and plant waste places. The secretary, E. C. Jack, made a submission on behalf of the League to the 1924 Royal Commission on Land and Income Tax, seeking deferment of tax on standing timber until such time as a crop was harvested. The Commission accepted that relief from land tax should be given to land devoted to plantations and to areas not exceeding 25 acres of native bush.⁹¹ Similarly, when a Bill was brought before the House which had the effect of making all native standing timber subject to local rates, the League protested strenuously to the Prime Minister.⁹²

Among the League's achievements were the protection of Mayor Island and Tiri Tiri Island in the Hauraki Gulf; the declaration of scenic reserves at Bulwer in Marlborough and at Lakes Guyon and Tennyson; protection of a stand of kohekohe at Waikanae, protection of forests at Puketitiri in Hawke's Bay, Ohai in Southland, Taumaranui, and along the coastal Kaikoura Road; the appointment of a caretaker to Stewart Island; the appointment of League supporters as honorary inspectors of scenic reserves; the inauguration of official shooting parties to reduce herds of deer; and the creation of Ward Island in Wellington Harbour as a recreational reserve.⁹³ The League also instigated prosecutions against persons taking timber from reserves and in 1926 it established a competition among school children for the best collection of leaves, flowers and fruit of New Zealand flora.⁹⁴ It could not claim the sole credit for all of these achievements. Many were attained in co-operation with other organisations, especially the Native Bird Protection Society whose relationship with the League will be discussed below. It added its voice to the campaigns for extension of the boundaries of Tongariro, the creation of sanctuaries on the subantarctic islands, better control over bird collecting for museum purposes, and it supported local groups or individuals campaigning for further reserves on the Wanganui, a Waitakere

89. *Evening Post*, 5 August 1933; Federated Mountain Club Minutes, 30 November 1935, Federated Mountain Club Papers, M.S.y 891, Alexander Turnbull Library.

90. *New Zealand Life*, September 1930.

91. *A.J.H.R.*, 1924, B-5, pp. 7 & 202-204. It no doubt helped that W. D. Hunt, a member of the League, was one of the Commissioners.

92. *New Zealand Life*, October 1926.

93. McKinnon Papers, Folder 4. The League's interest in Ward Island was long-standing. Before lobbying for its creation as a recreation reserve it had been concerned about erosion from the island into Wellington Harbour and had tried to persuade the Minister of Marine to take steps to prevent this before itself undertaking a planting project on the Island.

94. McKinnon Papers, Folder 4; *New Zealand Life*, 1 June 1926.

National Park, the prevention of roading through Waipoua Forest, opposing the clearance of the Ureweras for farmland and opposing the establishment of baches at Lake Waikaremoana.⁹⁵

From July 1923 the League agreed to work in co-operation with the newly formed Native Bird Protection Society.⁹⁶ The League would continue to emphasise forests as it had always done but it would support the new Society in its campaigns to protect birds. The Native Bird Protection Society would, in return, support the League in its campaigns. The division of labour offered a sensible means of maximising the efforts of volunteer personnel operating with scarce resources of time and money while at the same time giving an apparent sense of greater breadth to the conservation movement than was perhaps the case, given that many of the same people supported both groups.

There were no significant differences in policy between the two organisations on preservation issues. The Bird Society supported the goal of forest demarcation and sustained yield management of indigenous forests. It was not opposed to exotic planting provided this was not at the expense of indigenous forests. Like the League, it developed a good working relationship with the Forest Service to begin with (a relationship which would similarly come under increasing strain) and it was in favour of placing all indigenous forests, including national parks, under the administrative control of the Service. The League, for its part, supported the Bird Society's campaign for more sanctuaries and unified control of wildlife. In fact, it took the initiative in organising a meeting of representatives from the Bird Society, the acclimatisation societies, the Institute of Horticulture, and the New Zealand Institute, held in November 1930, to form a "Wild Life Council" to promote an effective system for the control of wildlife in New Zealand.⁹⁷ This functioned unofficially for about three years. Although the League was primarily concerned with forest preservation, it had taken some interest in bird preservation before the formation of the Native Bird Protection Society. For example, it commissioned a report on steps to prevent the depletion of birds. This was prepared by L.O.H. Tripp in collaboration with Mr J. Orchiston and presented to a meeting of the League on 18 April 1923.⁹⁸ The formation of the new Society would help to meet one of the key

95. *New Zealand Life*, 1 August 1923, 15 May 1924, 16 February 1926, & 1 December 1926,

96. AGM 18 July 1923, *New Zealand Life*, 1 August 1923.

97. Forest and Bird MS Papers 444, folders 425 & 426, Alexander Turnbull Library.

98. *New Zealand Life*, 1 June 1923.

recommendations of that report, the necessity of influencing public opinion in favour of protection to give substance to the legislative protection which was already in place.⁹⁹

Initially the relationship worked to the mutual benefit of both groups, but ultimately it contributed to the demise of the League. The crisis came in the thirties as the affects of the Depression began to influence membership numbers. It was perhaps inevitable that the League would be the society to suffer most. Its dual focus on conservation and preservation was already the source of some strain. A certain amount of conflict was unavoidable between those emphasising wise and efficient resource use in the Gifford Pinchot tradition and those who emphasised the less tangible values of nature for humankind, generally referred to as preservationists.¹⁰⁰

After the establishment of the Forest Service the League had already experienced some decline in membership among those who had been more interested in promotion of commercial forestry than in preservation, a loss which was exacerbated as professional foresters turned to the emerging professional forestry organisations.¹⁰¹ Further tension between the preservationists and conservationists emerged in 1925 with the proposal to harness power from the Bowen Falls in Milford Sound to produce nitrate fertiliser from atmospheric nitrogen by electro-chemical means. The plan involved drawing off water from the Bowen River and conveying it by underground pipeline to the power-plant which would supply energy for the manufacturing plant and associated workers' village, all to be located in the Sound and linked to the outside world by the development of port facilities.¹⁰² Three of the key promoters of the scheme were Joseph Orchiston, Leigh Hunt and W. D. Hunt, all active members of the League. Opposition to the proposal was spearheaded from Dunedin by two League supporters, G. M. Thomson and Alexander

99. The report also recommended the proclamation of all off-shore islands as sanctuaries; the appointment as rangers of government and local body officials whose work took them into the countryside; efforts to destroy predators; and widespread planting of trees which provide food for birds, especially on farms and in all plantations.

100. In America the divisions between the two groups, which had initially been united in the cause of conservation against the "whole-hog developers," emerged most clearly in the controversy over the damming of the Hetch Hetchy River in Yosemite National Park.

101. Annual Report for year ending 31 March, 1924, McKinnon Papers, Folder 4.

102. *New Zealand Life*, 15 June 1925. For a more detailed history of the Bowen Falls controversy see A. P. Thomson, *The Battle for Bowen Falls, or Fertiliser from Fiordland: A Chapter in the History of Fiordland National Park*. Wellington, 1988. Thomson expresses the opinion that this was probably the first New Zealand debate over the sanctity of national parks. In fact Fiordland was not officially designated a national park at this time, although it was widely treated as one. That point aside, the issue of the sanctity of national parks seems to have arisen earlier in the debate over the introduction of heather to Tongariro. Protest was first voiced as early as 1914 but major public debate dates from 1921, led by the Tararua Tramping Club. (See A. G. Bagnall, 1982)

Bathgate. The proposal was inconsistent with the policy of keeping scenic reserves in their natural state adopted at the council meeting of 18 September 1924. The League magazine devoted space to both sides of the issue, though weighted in favour of the opposition. Readers were left in no doubt that the editor stood by the principle that national parks and reserves should be preserved in their natural state. Nevertheless, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the League's pronouncements on the issue were somewhat muted compared with its strong and unanimous opposition to heather at Tongariro National Park.¹⁰³

Advocates of the scheme argued that the power-plant, nitrate-works and village would add to the "human interest" of Fiordland and that the necessary creation of sea-transport, improvement in the track from Lake Te Anau and the erection of a hostel at Milford Sound would enhance accessibility to this remote area. Beside the grandeur of the scenery "even the largest of power-houses would appear toy-like and insignificant," they claimed, and "the wilderness in its most pristine mood" would still "extend in all directions for those who wish to commune with Nature, apart from the human scene." They believed that the development posed negligible risk of fire to the surrounding forest because of its general dampness and because of the use of electricity for the scheme. "Should mere sentimental considerations be allowed to hold sway," they asked, "when great economic wealth can be secured at such slight disadvantage."¹⁰⁴ In the minds of the advocates Bowen Falls was only a beginning. They viewed much of the high level country embracing Lakes Te Anau, Manapouri and Hauroko as "capable of producing more wealth, acre for acre, than the best dairy-land in the Dominion," on account of their water resources.¹⁰⁵

It does not require a fanciful seer to visualise the linking of powers of our Western Fiords to the chariot of progress within the space of a few years. The potential wealth from these powers should range from £20,000,000 to £30,000,000 per annum, ranking in importance with the great Agricultural Industries of our Dominion.¹⁰⁶

Because of the distance of this region from centres of population, they foresaw the development of on-site industries, such as the nitrate proposal, rather than generation of electricity for transmission elsewhere. Opponents of the scheme objected to the violation of a national park by industrial development as a matter of principle, arguing that it was contrary to their purpose which was "to provide the public with pleasure and to display Nature 'as she is'." They feared that if the scheme were permitted it would set a precedent

103. The League failed to specifically address the issue at its 1925 AGM, though it confirmed the policy put forward by council on preserving intact all scenic reserves, national parks and sanctuaries.

104. *New Zealand Life*, 15 June 1925.

105. *New Zealand Life*, 15 July 1925.

106. *Ibid.*

for those wishing to exploit the wealth of national parks.¹⁰⁷ More specifically, the development would mean, in their view, the "desecration" of one of the "beauty spots" of Milford Sound.¹⁰⁸ Apart from that, they believed it would destroy the primitive nature of the unique flora and fauna. The amateur botanist, William Martin, president of the Dunedin Naturalist's Field Club, very clearly summarised the concerns of the opponents on this issue.

It is idle to suggest no spoliation will take place.... With the workman comes the axe, the rifle, the match, the foreign plants and animals and in the course of time each impresses its influence on the area causing inevitable adjustments... and thus destroying the very primitiveness... which it is our sacred duty to preserve.¹⁰⁹

Opponents also challenged the technical and economic viability of the proposal and the need for nitrate-based as opposed to phosphatic fertilisers.¹¹⁰ The controversy was a replay of the sort of issues which had divided followers of John Muir and Gifford Pinchot respectively in the debate over the construction of Hetch Hetchy dam in Yosemite National Park, with the difference that this time the outcome favoured the conservation lobby.¹¹¹ Just as that case had done, it highlighted the conflicts inherent in the dual goals of preservation and conservation in the sense of wise use.

The vulnerability of the League was compounded when in 1935 the Bird Society added "Forest" to its name. The League was conscious of the redundancy of having two groups devoted to the same preservation policy at a time of falling membership for both organisations and certain members of the council favoured amalgamation of the two. This move was opposed by the president at that time, Phillips Turner. Though his commitment to the preservation goals of the society was never in doubt, he believed that the prime function of the League must be to see indigenous and planted forests competently managed,

107. *New Zealand Life*, 15 June 1925.

108. Blanche Baughan was one of those who wrote letters to *New Zealand Life* opposing the scheme. She emphasised the religious overtones of the term "desecration" by likening the proposal to the desecration of Westminster Abbey by hordes of rats. This also emphasised the role of natural monuments as New Zealand's equivalent to a cultural monument such as Westminster Abbey. She stressed that preservation of scenery was a patriotic duty. (*New Zealand Life*, 15 June 1925, p. 2) Poems and articles by Baughan featured from time to time in the magazine.

109. Cited in A. P Thomson (1988) p. 11.

110. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

111. The unfavourable outcome in the Hetch Hetchy case had much to do with the circumstances surrounding the decision to build the dam, which was intended to supply San Francisco with water. Initial applications made in 1903 were turned down as inappropriate because the dam was in a national park. However, the violent earthquake which hit the city in 1906 and the devastating fires which followed as a consequence, drew attention to the serious inadequacy of the city's water supply. In these circumstances the case for a dam became more pressing and perhaps not surprisingly, it was widely accepted that the security of San Francisco's water supply ought to take precedence over the sanctity of a national park. See T. Turner (1991) p. 67.

an issue which was not of central importance to the Native Bird Protection Society.¹¹² Turner's view prevailed but when the Bird Society changed its name a year later, he was in no doubt that it had been done with the "express purpose of forcing the League to amalgamate with the Society."¹¹³ He feared that the change of name would attract many who might otherwise have joined the League "as the average person won't join two societies when he can join one which undertakes care of both forests and birds."¹¹⁴ Phillips Turner was disappointed at the decision of the Bird Society which was contrary to the agreement between them, but he was determined not to quarrel over the issue "as harm would result and the deer people would rejoice."¹¹⁵ However, his fears proved amply justified. Forest and Bird went from strength to strength, while the League, which adhered to its decision not to amalgamate, continued to decline. It was still operating until at least 1950, being amongst the organisations represented at a conference organised by Forest and Bird which resulted in the formation of the Nature Conservation Council. However, by this time it was no longer a force to be contended with.

Despite its decline in later years and its failure to achieve the goal of scientific indigenous forestry, the League achieved major success against the odds. Starting out in war time when conservation spending was being deliberately curtailed to help meet costs of the war effort, it nevertheless attained one of its main goals, the establishment of an independent forest service, within a few years of its formation. This was a noteworthy achievement by any standards and one of great significance for conservation in New Zealand. Though the Forest Service did not fully live up to the League's hopes and expectations, the importance of its contributions to the cause of conservation cannot be denied, whatever the differences which subsequently arose between it and the conservation movement. At the height of its influence in the 1920s, the League was an organisation to be respected. It had the ear of influential Ministers; it had active branches operating in Christchurch, Wellington, Waimate, Marton, Greymouth, and Marlborough,¹¹⁶ as well as 110 honorary agents scattered throughout the country who could report on issues requiring attention in their

112. Letter, Phillips Turner to Leigh Hunt, 20 June 1934, McKinnon Papers, Folder 3

113. Letter, Phillips Turner to Leigh Hunt, 24 June 1936, McKinnon Papers, Folder 3.

114. Ibid.

115. Ibid.

116. Reports of 1925 AGM & 1926 AGM of New Zealand Forestry League, McKinnon Papers, Folder 4; *New Zealand Life*, 1 December 1926. A leading figure in the Marlborough branch was R. F. Goulter, son of the Nelson pioneer and explorer, Cyrus Goulter, after whom the Goulter River in the Richmond Range is named. Goulter was born at Wairau in 1857 and was yet another member of these early groups with surveying experience. He worked as a surveyor from 1875 to 1892, when he took up farming. (*Who's Who in New Zealand*, 1925, p. 87.)

districts;¹¹⁷ it had broken new ground with the publication of a magazine specifically directed at conservation issues and with the publication of a conservation policy.¹¹⁸ In its alliance with Dominion Federated Sawmillers Association,¹¹⁹ the League anticipated recent developments towards co-operation between environmental groups and industry such as the 1989 Tasman Accord agreed between the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and the Tasman Pulp and Paper Company or the 1991 New Zealand Forest Accord between the major conservation groups and the New Zealand Forest Owners Association and other timber industry organisations.¹²⁰

Ultimately the League's inability to reconcile the conflicts between the dual aims of conservation and preservation led to the demise of the group. Paradoxically, it was also the source of what may have been its most important achievement. Its insistent lobbying for a separate forestry department to manage all indigenous forests was never fully attained but it did result in the designation of large areas of bushland as provisional State forest, areas which would otherwise have been lost to settlement. From the areas thus saved, subsequent groups have been able to push for the establishment of forest parks, ecological reserves and additional national parks. The contribution of members of the Forest and Bird Protection Society to the development of conservation policy and philosophy were at least as important as those of the League conservation policy, but arguably, of all the early groups, the League had the most significant influence on the areas of land protected.

117. New Zealand Forestry League, *History of New Zealand Forestry League-A Remarkable Record*. Wellington : Wright & Carmen Ltd, 1935.

118. Although the individual writings of members of the first Forest and Bird Protection Society revealed a clear conservation policy, which can be assumed to have guided the actions of that group, there is no surviving evidence of a consistent policy articulated and published by the organisation itself.

119. The League considered that assisting sawmillers in legitimate trade was within the proper sphere of its work. Amongst its objects were the encouragement of the planting of trees by public and local bodies and private individuals, the collection of data on the results of planting and the dissemination of information as to the commercial value of the exotic species which have been found the most suitable for growing in various districts. The league and the Sawmillers Association were in agreement over issues bearing on the improvement of efficiency and prevention of waste. These included the need to improve logging and transport facilities and marketing opportunities to allow greater use of low grade or presently unutilised timbers and opposition to importation of timbers which rendered local sap-wood unsaleable, resulting in huge waste and a larger number of trees felled annually (for their heart wood). (*New Zealand Life*, 1 September 1923, 1 February 1924, 15 September 1924 & 2 August 1924)

120. *Forest and Bird*, 269 : 16-22, 1993. Under the terms of the accords the conservation groups acknowledge the importance of plantation forestry and the industry groups agree to exclude areas of indigenous vegetation meeting specified criteria (relating to area or ecological importance) from clearance when establishing new plantations.



Left. Sir Thomas Mackenzie. Source: Thom, *Heritage: The Parks of the People*, p. 103

Right. Val Sanderson. Source: *Forest and Bird*, No. 267, p.17.

CHAPTER TEN

The First of the Modern Conservation Groups: Val Sanderson and the Native Bird Protection Society, 1923-1935

It seems fitting to end this account of the of the origins of the nature conservation movement in New Zealand with a discussion of the early years of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society ¹ from 1923, when it was founded as the Native Bird Protection Society, to 1935, when it changed its name to the one by which is now known.² The formation and continued success of the group marks a watershed in the history of nature conservation in this country. In changing its name to reflect the growing importance of forest conservation issues amongst its activities, it demonstrated the adaptability to adjust its objectives to meet changing social and environmental conditions. It also demonstrated a sure sense of the sort of measures necessary to continue to succeed in difficult times such as it was confronting during the Depression of the thirties when many organisations found it hard to retain members.³ As Phillips Turners had forecast all too accurately, this move encouraged many who belonged to both the Native Bird Protection Society and the Forestry League to transfer allegiance to the newly named Forest and Bird Protection Society. These characteristics allowed the Society to survive and prosper.

Despite the significant achievements of the earlier groups, their successes were marred by a lack of staying power.⁴ In retrospect, the formation of the Native Bird Protection Society can be seen as the dawn of a new era, the movement's coming of age as it were, in which it achieved a sufficient level of maturity to produce a group which was capable of continuing to grow and adapt right up to the present. The new Society was linked to the earlier groups

1. In 1963, 40 years after its formation, Queen Elizabeth II granted the Society the right to add the prefix "Royal".

2. The new name began to be used on the Society's journal from February 1935 (No. 35). The journal itself was renamed *Forest and Bird* from October 1933 (No. 31).

3. Herbert Guthrie-Smith was one of the casualties of the Depression. Though an ardent supporter of the Society, he was forced to resign his membership on grounds of financial hardship. (Letter, Sanderson to McCaskill, 19 May 1933, Royal Forest and Bird Society of New Zealand, MS Papers 444, Folder 183, Alexander Turnbull Library, hereafter called *Forest & Bird Papers*) Another key supporter, W.W. Smith, was also forced to resign on grounds of financial hardship. (Letter, 2 February 1931, W. W. Smith to Sanderson, *Forest & Bird Papers*, Folder 317) Both men were made honorary life members.

4. Two of those earlier groups, the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society and the Christchurch Beautifying Society, are still in existence but they no longer function as nature conservation organisations, although they can be considered environmental organisations in the broadest sense of the term.

through continuity of personnel and ideas and was able to build upon their achievements. The determination and energy of the Society's founding members was a crucial factor in its success but notwithstanding this, it is doubtful whether it could have accomplished all that it did without the groundwork laid by those earlier groups. The ultimate success of the Society also owed something to the growing sense of nationalism and patriotism, a feeling which the earlier groups had helped to foster. The experience of the First World War gave added impetus to the sense of national identity with the result that by the 1920s, as Keith Sinclair has pointed out in his study of the rise of nationalist feeling in New Zealand, most New Zealanders were very clear that they were New Zealanders rather than English, Irish, or Scots.⁵ The formation of the Society was timely in the sense that it was able to capitalise on the developing sense of national identity and throughout its early years it repeatedly stressed the patriotic aspect of nature conservation. The Society's first Circular, for example, explained that its work would help to inculcate among children "that love of country which is so essential to any nation, it would encourage observation and play a large part in the formation of the very best of individual characteristics in the future citizens of New Zealand, thus raising the nation to higher ideals and standards." A later article on the "abominable practice" of introducing foreign species into parks and reserves implicitly contrasted the "real" patriotism of conservationists, for whom this constituted a "sin against posterity," with the "flawed" patriotism of those who allowed or actively encouraged such introductions, which, "scorning those natural glories which embody the very spirit of our country, rises no higher than a desire to create in New Zealand a paltry replica of other lands."⁶

The Native Bird Protection Society represented a realization of the hopes and aspirations of the founders of the first conservation groups to establish a lasting movement on a nationwide basis. It is a measure of the Society's success that it has not only survived but has continued to thrive in the face of competition from the many new organisations, several with international links, which sprang up in 1970s as part of a world-wide growth in environmental concern. By 1993, the year of its 70th anniversary, Forest and Bird had become a large professional organisation with a full-time staff of 15, over 55,000 members, 48 branches and 10 sections.⁷ A survey of the Society's journal for that

5. K. Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart. New Zealand's Search for National Identity*. Wellington : Allen & Unwin in association with Port Nicholson Press, 1986, p. 107. Raising consciousness of national identity might not have been the only nature conservation legacy of the War experience. It is probable that the experience of fighting in areas which had been deforested would have impressed upon some returning soldiers the importance of retaining forest cover. It is surely no coincidence that the Society's secretary, Sanderson, who was involved in the Boer War and was also a veteran of Gallipoli always stressed the danger of desertification. if the deer menace were to be allowed to continue unchecked. See for example *Birds*, 11 : 1-4 [n.d.].

6. *Birds*, 6 : 1 [n.d.].

7. I. Close, "Forest and Bird: the beginnings," *Forest and Bird*, 267 : 17, 1993.

anniversary year reveals the extent to which it had broadened its scope beyond its traditional concerns with the protection of forest and birds. Issues addressed included advocacy of marine reserves and better protection of marine life, conservation of whales, aquaculture, river protection, resource recovery from landfills, plastics recycling, and protection of the ozone layer. The Society can certainly stake no claim to being "the pioneers of the New Zealand environment movement"⁸ in the sense of being the first nature conservation group. It does not even have the distinction of being the first nationally based conservation organisation, which belongs to its earlier namesake. However, the Society was the group which played the major role in raising the environmental consciousness of New Zealanders to a sufficient pitch to sustain the sudden flowering of the many new groups forming part of wider environmental movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. In that sense they were indeed "the pioneers of the environment movement."

The Native Bird Protection Society was founded in Wellington on 28 March 1923 at a meeting organised by Ernest Valentine Sanderson,⁹ the dominant force behind the organisation until his death in 1945, and chaired by Sir Thomas Mackenzie, M.L.C.¹⁰ Both men had an established record of conservation activity. Sanderson, as we have seen, was an active member of the executive of the Forestry League. He also took a particular interest in the proper administration of Kapiti Island sanctuary. In 1914 he participated in a campaign for improved management of the reserve which was overrun by goats and lacked an adequate boundary fence to prevent the spread of stock from the adjoining Maori-owned farmland on the northern end of the island.¹¹ As a result of that campaign the Department of Internal Affairs undertook to erect a boundary fence and make an effort to destroy all

8. R. Wilson, *From Manapouri to Aramoana: The Battle for New Zealand's Environment*. Earthworks Press : Waiwera, 1982, p. 171.

9. Sanderson was born in Dunedin in 1866 but was educated in Wellington. He developed a love of tramping in his teenage years. Sanderson served in the Boer War and World War II.

10. Mackenzie was born in Edinburgh in 1854 and came to Dunedin with his parents in 1858. From 1874 to 1877 he worked in the Survey Department. His experience as a surveyor left him with a love of wildlife and the outdoors. This later led to explore a number of the more remote areas of the South Island: Lake Wakatipu to Martin's Bay (1881); Tautuku Forest in the Catlins (1885); Milford to Te Anau (1888); Manapouri to Dusky Sound (1894, 1896); Te Anau to Wakatipu (1907). In 1887 he entered Parliament and retained his seat until 1896. After a period of three years in Britain he entered Parliament again in 1900 and served as Prime Minister for a brief time in 1912. Following the defeat of his "caretaker" Government, he resigned his seat and took up the position of High Commissioner in London from August 1912 to 1920. He was knighted in 1916 and on his return to New Zealand he was appointed to the Legislative Council. (*Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 2, pp. 366-367)

11. R. Galbreath, "Forest and Bird: where we came from," *Forest and Bird*, 268 : 23-26, 1993. The earlier Forest and Bird Protection Society was involved with this same campaign but there is no evidence as to whether or not Sanderson was a member of the earlier group.

cats and goats within the reserve.¹² Sanderson revisited the island in 1922 with a small party which included E. V. Hall, a leader writer for the *Evening Post*. They found the promised improvements had not been carried out. Innumerable goats and up to 3000 head of sheep roamed freely through the reserve, as a consequence of which there was serious loss of undergrowth and humus. Damage was also found to have been caused by opossums. The three day visit disclosed large areas of decaying forest and a dearth of birdlife.¹³ Following the visit Sanderson waged a vigorous and successful campaign through the press to force the Government to take more effective action against damage by sheep and goats on the island.¹⁴ In 1924 the Government appointed A. S. Wilkinson, a foundation member of the Society, as curator of the reserve.

Mackenzie's involvement with conservation issues was of longer standing. In 1888 he sought an amendment to the Animals Protection Bill to prevent slaughter of native game by market hunters, proposing that those involved in shooting native game for sale be required to obtain a licence.¹⁵ This was the first of many pleas for the protection of native birds throughout his parliamentary career. In 1900 he pressed more strongly for prohibition of the sale of native game altogether and for the introduction a limit to the number of native birds sportsmen could take.¹⁶ His concern was not confined to game birds. In 1893 he initiated a debate in the House on the preservation of forest and birds with a motion that "the Government should without delay appoint reliable local residents to act as rangers and conservators; and that the clauses of the Land Act relating to cutting and firing native bush, and the clauses of the Animals Protection Acts for the preservation of our native birds, be stringently enforced."¹⁷ In 1900, having seen kiwi and kakapo skins up for sale, he

12. N. E. Dalmer, *Birds, Forests, and Natural Features of New Zealand: Including the Growth of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand Incorporated*. Levin : Kerslake, Billens and Humphrey Ltd., 1983, p. 1.

13. *New Zealand Life*, 1 February 1922.

14. Dalmer (1983) pp. 1-2.

15. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 61, 1888, pp. 371-2. He had no immediate success with his plea but the measure was introduced the following year. It is difficult to gain an accurate assessment of the numbers of birds destroyed by market hunters. Mackenzie spoke of innumerable sacks of native game being sent to market, aside from the many birds which were shot and wasted. He also referred to the fact that many bush-settlers depended upon native birds for meals. (*N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 65, 1889, p. 478) After his return from London in 1900 he reported having seen tuis served at the table in Britain while he was there. (*N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 113, p 27)

16. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 113, p. 26. Mackenzie saw nothing sportsmanlike in slaughtering native birds "by the hundreds" and saw no reason why a bag limit should not apply as it did for deer.

17. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 79, 1893, pp. 262-3. In the end Mackenzie withdrew the motion because it had served its purpose. The Minister promised "to consult with him and arrange for the appointment of some persons to preserve and look after our forests." (p.267) The following year, Richard Henry was appointed the caretaker of Resolution Island. Mackenzie was one of the earliest to recognise the importance of rangers. It should be recalled that when he put the motion, the Taranaki Scenery Preservation Society had only just formed and there were very few advocates for conservation.

sought to make this punishable by law and in 1904 he sought to have all forest reserves and Crown lands declared sanctuaries for birds.¹⁸ By that same year he was calling for the protection of all native birds.¹⁹ Scenery preservation and forest conservation also attracted his attention. He viewed the removal of lands from forest reserves as a retrogressive step, believing there was a need for more not less of them.²⁰ The introduction of a system for protecting forests, particularly from damage by fire was one of his concerns.²¹ He also recognised that the colony had a great asset in its scenery and was keen to see it opened to tourism through the development of roads to some of the more isolated scenic areas. In 1891 he moved the development of a tourist route between Milford and Te Anau and thence to Lake Wakatipu and through to Mt Cook via Wanaka and Hawea.²² As a result of explorations of the Fiordland area, the creation of a West Coast Sounds public park was a project especially dear to his heart. He took every possible opportunity to raise the issue until his dream was finally achieved in 1904.²³ However, he was equally aware of the need for reserves in the vicinity of areas where most people dwelt.²⁴ Mackenzie was a supportive Minister of Scenery Preservation from 1910 till 1912, when he became the High Commissioner in London. In 1914 he represented New Zealand at the first major international conservation conference in Berne.

The formation of the Society resulted indirectly from a Bill promoted by Mackenzie in 1922, which he introduced with the aim of protecting paradise duck and pukeko. Sanderson wrote to Mackenzie expressing his support for the Bill. In the letter he bemoaned the lack of an organisation to protect birds, "except some at present inadequate efforts by the Forest Service in State forests,"²⁵ adding that he saw little to be hoped from

18. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 113, p 27; *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 128, 1904, p.146. Later, as Minister of Scenery Preservation, he recognised that there were some practical difficulties in the way of enforcing a policy of making all reserves sanctuaries, because of the need to remove rabbits and deer (*N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 152, p. 325)

19. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 131, 1904, p. 440. The Animals Protection Act 1907 gave the Governor General power to notify prohibition of taking or killing native birds on penalty of a fine but he appears not to have acted upon this power. The same act also made it an offence to collect the eggs of specified native game and non-game species. An amending act in 1910 introduced a general prohibition on injuring, capturing indigenous birds or taking nests.

20. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 74, 1891, p. 819.

21. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 81, 1893, p.628.

22. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 72, 1891, p. 399. As a result of his motion plans were put forward for a road from Milford to Te Anau. Nevertheless, as I have noted previously, there was a great deal of resistance to spending money on a tourist routes unless they could also be shown to benefit settlement. (See Chapter Three, note 51)

23. See for example *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 79, 1893. pp.262, 269, & 310; Vol. 113, 1900. p. 37.

24. *N.Z.P.D.* Vol. 132, 1905, p.685.

the acclimatisation societies because they got no return from natives except ducks, which left matters in the hands of the Internal Affairs Department "who have no organisation for protecting." Acts of Parliament, he argued, will not be effective alone, "there must be administration."²⁶ At this stage Sanderson does not appear to have had a voluntary organisation in mind. He expressed the view that a branch of the Forest Service was needed to undertake preservation in all sanctuaries.²⁷ However, Mackenzie, having failed to get his Bill passed on account of pressure from sportsmen, saw the need for some form of organisation to help counter the opposition of the sporting lobby. He replied to Sanderson, suggesting that they organise a meeting of bird lovers in Wellington to come to some decision on what action should be taken to protect birds. He asked whether Sanderson would convene a meeting, indicating that he was prepared to take an active role.²⁸ Sanderson sprang into action. Two weeks later he reported back to Mackenzie that he had obtained the support of the Tararua Tramping Club and that the assistance of the Forestry League was nearly assured.²⁹ A combination of publicity in the press and personal invitations resulted in a well attended public meeting on 23 March 1923. The meeting passed a unanimous motion to form a society "to co-operate with the New Zealand Forestry League with the object of advocating and obtaining unity of control in all matters affecting wildlife and also advocating a birds day for our schools."³⁰

Mackenzie was named president, a post he held until his death in 1930. Sanderson was appointed honorary secretary. In 1933 he relinquished that position to become president, a function he likewise held until his death. An additional six officers were elected, three designated vice-presidents and three as committee members. The three vice-presidents were H Guthrie-Smith, Joseph Firth, an ardent advocate of nature study who was headmaster of Wellington College,³¹ and Sir George Fenwick, the manager and former editor of the Otago Daily Times and Witness Co and a foundation member of the Dunedin

25. Letter, Sanderson to Mackenzie, 31 October 1922, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 116.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Letter, Mackenzie to Sanderson, 14 November 1922, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 116.

29. Letter, Sanderson to Mackenzie, 27 November 1922, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 116. Co-operation with the League was secured after persuading it that the fate of the birds and the forests was interdependent.

30. Circular letter from Sanderson to supporters, 16 April 1923.

31. J. P. Firth (1859-1931) was born in Wellington and educated at Nelson College. He began his teaching career in 1881 as a junior master at Wellington College, returning in 1891 as headmaster. He retired in 1920, having been a popular headmaster who treated his pupils as extended family. He had no children of his own. (*DNZB*, Vol 2, pp. 142-143)

and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society.³² The committee members were H. F. von Haast, R. Douglas McLean, a sheepfarmer from Maraekakaho in Hawke's Bay,³³ and A. H. Messenger, a keen ornithologist, who was later responsible for introducing a children's page to the society's magazine. These initial executive officers have been described by Roche as "extremely respectable, elderly and conservative."³⁴ The first two adjectives unquestionably apply to the majority and to many of the Society's subsequent vice-presidents and regional representatives. However, I believe that the history of the early years of the Society, recounted below, will reveal that the term "conservative" is not apposite.

The Society was linked to the very earliest conservation group not only by Fenwick but also by a subsequent vice-president, G. M. Thomson. Links to the Forestry League were maintained by Sanderson himself, von Haast, Phillips Turner, A. Leigh Hunt and MacIntosh Ellis, all of whom were active in both organisations. It had links to the earlier Forest and Bird Protection Society through Guthrie-Smith, James Drummond, Leonard Cockayne, G. M. Thomson, B. C. Aston, and Phillips Turner, all of whom served as vice-presidents of the new organisation.³⁵ It is possible that the Native Bird Protection Society may also have inherited the remaining funds of the Forest and Bird Protection Society. In February 1928 Sanderson referred to a promise made eighteen months earlier by the "defunct New Zealand Flora and Fauna Society" to donate the balance of its funds to the new society.³⁶ There appears to be no record of group by this name, which suggests he

32. Fenwick was born in Sunderland in 1847. He emigrated with his parents to Victoria in 1853 and then to Otago in 1856. His career in the newspaper business began at the age of 12 when he was apprenticed as a printer to the *Otago Witness*. Fenwick founded the Otago Daily Times and Witness Co. in 1878. From 1890 to 1909 he acted as both editor and managing director. He continued as managing director until his death in September 1929. Under his direction the Otago Daily Times became one of the most respected and influential newspapers in the country. Fenwick had a keen concern for social justice and was involved in many organisations including the Otago S.P.C.A., which he founded, and the Patients' and Prisoners' Aid Society. He served on the Prisons Board and the governing bodies of the Hocken Library, the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, to name but a few. Fenwick was a keen trapper and amateur botanist. His enthusiasm for the cause of nature conservation was evidenced not only through the editorials and articles he himself wrote but also in his support of writers like G. M. Thomson. (*An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, pp. 640-641; *DNZB*, Vol 2, p. 140)

33. Robert Douglas McLean was born in Wellington in 1852, the son of Sir Donald McLean, Land Purchase Commissioner and Native Minister. Douglas McLean was MHR for Napier from 1897 to 1899. He was active in local body affairs.

34. M. M. Roche, "Evolving Attitudes Towards New Zealand's Protected Area System," pp. 226-242 in Department of Lands and Survey, *Seminar on People and Parks: The Human Side of Managing New Zealand's Parks and Protected Areas*. Wellington : Department of Lands and Survey, [1985] p. 337.

35. Cockayne and Aston also served as presidents from 1930-1931 and 1946-48 respectively.

36. Letter, Sanderson to Moncrieff, 17 February 1928, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 192.

may have meant the Forest and Bird Protection Society.³⁷ Until such time as the identity of the New Zealand Flora and Fauna Society can be clarified this is purely speculative. However, if the two groups are the same, the possibility arises that the Forest and Bird Protection Society may have continued longer than has been suggested previously. It is perhaps unlikely that remaining funds of a defunct group would be held from 1919 to 1926, especially when they might have been given to the Forestry League or even the Summit Road Association.

The Native Bird Protection Society was the first New Zealand conservation New Zealand organisation formed to deal specifically with the issue of preserving native birds.³⁸ Bird protection had not been completely ignored by earlier groups, as we have seen, but it had never before been the dominant focus of attention. Even the earlier Forest and Bird Society, which was the first group to expressly include the goal of bird protection in its objects, seems, on the surviving evidence, to have confined its concern, by and large, to campaigns for off-shore island sanctuaries and the Cape Kidnappers sanctuary. There is no evidence that any of the earlier groups seriously addressed the issue of the inadequacies of the bird protection legislation or administration of that legislation.³⁹

The Society was consciously modelled on the Audubon Societies of the United States, which particularly emphasised the importance of education, especially the education of children and the necessity for well-managed sanctuaries.⁴⁰ Sanderson corresponded with

37. The Society was sometimes referred to as the Birds and Forest Protection Society so it is not improbable that it was also referred to as the Flora and Fauna Society. There is no indication of a group by this name among the Native Bird Protection Society's papers relating to kindred organisations.

38. Until the Ornithological Society began taking an interest in conservation issues in 1973, the Society was the only New Zealand conservation organisation to have formed specifically to deal with protection of birds. More recently Ducks Unlimited has also been established. Strictly speaking, the Ornithological Society, formed in 1939, cannot be considered a conservation organisation. Prior to 1973 it was opposed to any involvement in conservation issues. In 1968, a motion proposing an amendment to the constitution of the Society to allow it to offer advice on matters concerning the conservation of birds was lost. Pressure from some members caused the council to reconsider the matter in 1973, resulting in a policy statement which declared that though the Society would not normally take independent action on conservation matters, it could associate itself with, and lend full support to, voluntary and governmental conservation organisations. (*Notornis*, 15(2) : 126-139, 1968; 20 : 298-299, 1973) Even before the Bird Society's change of name it was concerned with forest conservation (easily justified as integral to bird protection) and with water and soil conservation (which did not necessarily have any bearing upon preservation of birds). In this respect it differed from bird protection societies overseas, which did not tend to broaden their focus away from birds until the 1960s. See for example, C. W. Buchheister & F. Graham, "From the Swamps and Back: A Concise and Candid History of the Audubon Movement," *Audubon*, 75 : 4-29, 1973.

39. However, the philosophical societies did on occasion address the issue. See the Appendix.

40. Letter, Sanderson to A. G. Simpson, 8 December 1924, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 53. The first Audubon Society was formed in 1886 by George Bird Grinnell, editor of *Forest and Stream*, the leading sportsman's magazine of its time, who though a big-game hunter himself, was appalled at the massive slaughter of game and non-game species alike. He named the Society after the great bird painter, John James Audubon, near whose home he had grown up as a child, attending a school run by Lucy Audubon.

T. Gilbert Pearson, president of the National Association of Audubon Societies and also of the the International Committee for Bird Preservation, who shared his zeal for bird protection. In 1924/25 the Society joined the International Committee.⁴¹ The Society saw itself as part of an international movement to protect birds. It looked to the example of other groups as well, including the Gould League of Bird Lovers in Australia, an organisation which in itself was strongly modelled on the Audubon Societies,⁴² and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in Britain. It received literature from kindred organisations overseas, extracts from which frequently appeared in the Society's journal.⁴³ Wide use was also made of extracts relevant to conservation from foreign books, scientific journals, newspapers and government reports, thus keeping members of the Society well informed on international trends in conservation thinking and the issues and problems confronting wildlife protectors overseas. These included extracts from the writings of Aldo Leopold, long before he had gained international acclaim as a conservationist.⁴⁴ The Society's international links were further reinforced in 1929 when it joined the International Union for the Protection of Nature (now I.U.C. N.) the first New Zealand organisation to

Grinnell's organisation was relatively shortlived. The movement did not become widespread until the foundation of the Massachusetts Audubon Society in 1896 by Mrs Hemenway and a small group of men and women who were particularly concerned about the impact of the plumage trade. This was quickly followed by groups in other States. By 1898 there were 16 groups. (See C. W. Buchheister & F. Graham, 1973)

41. *Birds*, 7 : 10 [n.d.]. Early issues of *Birds* were undated so it is not possible to be precise about the date. The International Committee was promoted by Pearson, probably the best known bird protector of his time, and was launched at a conference held in London in June 1922. Its object was to act as an association of all bird protection societies in order to unify and strengthen their effort to protect birds and stimulate interest in all countries for a more adequate protection of wildlife. The Committee dealt particularly with issues relating to migratory birds and others problems transcending national boundaries including the plumage trade and the growing menace of oil pollution of navigable waters and its impact upon water birds. It included societies from Britain , the United States, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany , Sweden, Japan, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Norway, Australia and South Africa.

42. Circular Number Four. The Gould League was named after the English zoologist and ornithologist and illustrator, John Gould (1804-1881), who produced many illustrated books on birds, including a book of Australian birds. The League formed around 1910 in New South Wales and spread to other States.

43. The Society also sent copies of its journal to organisations associated with the International Committee for the Protection of Birds, to Audubon, the Nature Association of America, the Canadian National Forest Association and the Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the British Empire. (Letter, Sanderson to Myers, 21 July 1928, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 188)

44. These included an article in March 1931 on changing ideas about game management in the American National Forests from *American Forests and Forest Life* and Leopold's earliest comprehensive statement of the ecological viewpoint, "A Biotic View Of the Land," a speech delivered by Leopold to the Ecological Society of America and the Society of American Foresters in June 1939. He later drew on this piece for his best known article, "The Land Ethic." The Society published "A Biotic View of the Land" as special pamphlet in 1940.

do so.⁴⁵ The June 1933 issue of *Forest and Bird* recorded that it had also become affiliated to the Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the British Empire.

Sanderson was very much the guiding mind behind the Society. From the time of its formation until his death he was synonymous with the Society. Its success owed much to his great organisational ability and his flair for generating publicity. He was indefatigable in his efforts to promote the cause, driven by a strong optimism that the Society must in time prevail. That optimism only occasionally wavered when confronted with evidence of compromise by the Society's own supporters.⁴⁶

What makes me faint-hearted sometimes is when we find our own men talking 'all is lovely in the garden style' and evading the disagreeable things in order to bring themselves forward for a possible Government job.

So single-minded was his own commitment to the cause that he was not always tolerant of the pressures upon other supporters who, unlike him, needed to find employment. Sanderson was not excessively wealthy but he was in a position to devote almost all of his time to the Society and to subsidise its finances over a number of years out of his own pocket.⁴⁷

Sanderson's organisational and publicity skills were complemented by Mackenzie's standing in the community and his political knowledge, which made him an invaluable president. He was a highly respected member of the Legislative Council. His parliamentary and ministerial experience enabled him to advise and guide Sanderson on political matters and keep him well-informed about what was going on in Parliament, as well as raising issues in Parliament on the Society's behalf. It also enabled him to exercise some influence with the Government and Government Departments. For example, he was able to obtain and supply the Society with copies of permits for collecting native birds, which allowed it to mount more effective publicity campaigns against this practice.⁴⁸

45. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources is a major international forum for dealing with every aspect of conservation. The New Zealand Government joined it in 1974.

46. Letter, Sanderson to W. W. Smith, 16 March 1926, W. W. Smith Papers, M.S. 046 2, Taranaki Museum.

47. He informed W.W. Smith in a letter dated 23 January 1930 that his work for the Society cost him £100 per annum. (W. W. Smith Papers, M.S. 046 2, Taranaki Museum) This was a substantial sum of money at a time when the average income of wage and salary earners was only £407 per annum. (New Zealand Official Year-book, 1931, p. 764)

48. Letters, Sanderson to Mackenzie, 13 April 1926 & 11 March 1927, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 191.

Sanderson valued Mackenzie's contribution and felt the lack of it when it was no longer available.⁴⁹

Despite the importance of Mackenzie's contribution, the Society did not primarily follow the model of English conservation societies and rely upon the influence of "the old boys network" to achieve their aims, as Roche has suggested.⁵⁰ Naturally enough they used such connections wherever possible, particularly to promote the cause in Parliament or to gain financial backing,⁵¹ but the Society's main thrust was to win the hearts and the minds of the public. The way to get bird protection, in Sanderson's view, did not lie

in getting Government to do anything whatever.... It lies in the obtaining of the interests of the masses in our birds. Bird protection is only obtainable by steady plugging work in the direction indicated and there is no short cut.⁵²

The appointment of an educator and a newspaper man as initial vice-presidents reflected Sanderson's belief in the importance of education as a means of achieving the aims of the Society and in the power of the press as a tool for education. His experience with the Kapiti campaign had convinced him of the importance of obtaining the backing of the press. During that campaign D. H. Guthrie, Minister of Lands, was reported to have said in exasperation, "I do not know who this Sanderson is, but he is not going to dictate to me." Upon hearing this Sanderson responded: "I am going to dictate to him because the press is at my back and they can influence the votes which put ministers into power."⁵³ Following 43 feet of press publicity the Minister was indeed forced to capitulate and meet Sanderson's demands.⁵⁴ He always placed greater faith in press campaigns than direct appeal to authorities, because the authorities, he believed, were fearful of press exposure.⁵⁵

49. Letters, Sanderson to W. W. Smith, 22 & 27 May 1926, W. W. Smith Papers, M.S. 046 2, Taranaki Museum; Sanderson to Mackenzie, 10 December 1925, 2 April 1927 & 20 February 1929, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 191.

50. M. M. Roche (1985) p. 337.

51. For example, Mackenzie was instrumental in obtaining funds to get the Society started from the R. C. Bruce Trustees. (Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 53) Robert Cunningham Bruce (1843-1917) was born in Scotland. In 1877 he emigrated to New Zealand and took up land near Hunterville. He was MHR for Rangitikei from 1884 to 1890 and again in 1892, retiring in 1893. He was a consistent supporter of the need to conserve our flora and fauna in the House. When he died he left a bush reserve at Hunterville and a Trust Fund to be used for the promotion of forestry and protection of native flora and fauna. (Scholefield, 1940, Vol. 1, pp. 107)

52. Letter, Sanderson to Moncrieff, 31 July 1928, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 192.

53. N. E. Dalmer (1983) p. 2.

54. Letter, Sanderson to Mackenzie, 27 November 1922, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 116.

55. Letter, Sanderson to W. W. Smith, 6 May 1929, W. W. Smith MS Papers 046/2, Taranaki Museum.

He was aware that government departments employed people to watch the press. Hence, by exploiting the press it was possible to reach government officials just as effectively as writing directly to them while at the same time reaching the public.⁵⁶ The press, he believed, could awaken public opinion to the importance of the values the Society represented in a way that "governments, parliaments, and politicians" could not. Sanderson had great faith in what could be achieved once popular opinion was awakened to the the cause. "The people represented by the great 'Press' of the country can accomplish everything."⁵⁷ He firmly believed that if the conservation message were repeated often enough it would eventually get across to the public and that once the public accepted the need for conservation, decision-makers would be forced to take note.

Earlier groups had not been slow to recognise the importance of the press but none, I think, exploited it as effectively as Sanderson. One of his earliest actions was to distribute 6000 circulars to the press and supporters setting out the aims of the society.⁵⁸ He kept up a steady stream of letters to the press, press releases and articles, including a number drawn from overseas publications.⁵⁹ In order to maximise the effect of the press campaign, many of the letters and articles originating from the Society were published without identifying the Society as the source so that the breadth of support for the cause would appear to be wider than it in fact was.⁶⁰ Sanderson explained the tactic colourfully in a letter to one of the Society's most enthusiastic workers, Lance McCaskill: "our propaganda must dominate like gunfire but it can't all emanate from the same source."⁶¹ Apart from the many letters or articles originating from Sanderson, whether in the name of the Society, in his own name or using one of his numerous aliases, he could also draw upon a reliable group of correspondents to back up his press campaigns with letters and articles. Amongst these were Sir Thomas Mackenzie;⁶² the veteran field naturalist, W. W. Smith, an ardent advocate of sanctuaries and bird protection since the 1890s and a former Scenery

56. Letter, Sanderson to Moncrieff, 3 November 1927, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 192.

57. Initial Circular to supporters.

58. Circular letter to members, September 1923.

59. Lists of contributions to the press were itemised in the early circulars to the members, the more important articles being reproduced in full or summary form.

60. A similar policy was adopted with the many statements made on behalf of the Society by Cockayne. His authorship was often withheld so the opinions would not simply be dismissed as yet more comments from Cockayne, whose views on conservation were already well known.

61. Letter, 14 April 1929, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 179. This tactic was also adopted from time to time by Ell in relation to the Summit Road scheme.

62. Mackenzie's devotion to the cause was such that even when lying ill from a second heart attack and near death he made sure that certain articles appeared in the *Otago Daily Times*. (Letter, Sanderson to W.W. Smith, 23 January 1930, W. W. Smith MS Papers 046/2, Taranaki Museum)

Preservation Commissioner;⁶³ the young Lance McCaskill, who later became very well known as an advocate of soil conservation and the protector of the Castle Hill buttercup;⁶⁴ R. H. D. Stidolph, a young journalist and amateur field naturalist;⁶⁵ and Perrine Moncrieff who is best known for her efforts to establish Abel Tasman National Park.⁶⁶ In 1932 the Society hired its own journalist, Mr L. S. Fanning, to supply newspapers with articles. Nor did it ignore the rapidly developing medium of radio.⁶⁷ A letter from Sanderson to McCaskill reveals that fortnightly radio broadcasts were planned to begin on 25 August 1927.⁶⁸ By 1934 the Society was broadcasting nationally on the YA stations whenever it had the opportunity.

63. William Walter Smith (1852-1942) was born in Hawick, Scotland. After immigrating to New Zealand he became curator of the Ashburton Domain, then the Palmerston North Gardens, and finally Pukekura Park in New Plymouth, where he planted native trees to attract the birds and pioneered the captive breeding of Kiwis. He was a significant and respected amateur field naturalist, knowledgeable in botany, ornithology and entomology and cited by Buller and by Hutton and Drummond in their works. He was one of the regular contributors to Drummond's nature column. His opinions were sought by men such as G. M. Thomson and Guthrie-Smith and he was generous in sharing knowledge with the younger generation of nature lovers. (W. W. Smith MS Papers 046/2, Taranaki Museum)

64. Lancelot William McCaskill (1900 -1986) was born in Winchester, South Canterbury. After graduating from Canterbury Agricultural College (Lincoln) and Canterbury University College he became an Agricultural Inspector for the Auckland Education Board from 1923-27. After a brief spell as Agriculture Teacher at Timaru Boy's High School he went on to lecture at Dunedin Christchurch Teacher's Training College. In 1944 he was appointed to the Rural Education department at Lincoln and in 1961 he became Foundation Director of the Tussock Grasslands and Mountain Lands Institute at Lincoln until his retirement in 1965. His service in the cause of conservation included terms on the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council (1952-7), the National Parks Authority (1953-68), the North Canterbury Catchment Board, the New Zealand Catchment Authorities Executive and the Forestry Development Council. (I. D. Blair, *The Seed They Sowed: Centennial Story of Lincoln College*. Christchurch : Whitcoulls Limited, 1978, p. 121)

65. Robert Hector Donal Stidolph (1900-1979) was born in Wellington. He began his career in journalism with the *Evening Post* and in 1926 joined the staff of the *Wairarapa Times-Age*, retiring from the position of sub-editor in 1965. Stidolph was a foundation member of the Native Bird Protection Society, he wrote extensively on natural history and conservation topics not only for the Society's own magazine but also the *School Journal* and the *New Zealand Life and Forest Magazine*. After the formation of the Ornithological Society he made frequent contributions to its publication which, for a time, he edited. From 1926 to 1940 he had his own weekly nature column, "Nature Notes," published in the *Evening Post*. War-time shortage of newsprint brought the column to an end. He was undoubtedly inspired by the example of Drummond and possessed a complete set of his columns covering the period 1910 to 1934. Stidolph was on very friendly terms with W. W. Smith, exchanging books and information with him. In 1933 he married the daughter of A. S. Wilkinson, curator of Kapiti Island Reserve. He served for 14 years on the Fauna Advisory Council. (*Notornis*, 27(2) : 160-164, 1890)

66. Perrine Moncrieff was born in England in 1873. She was well-connected, a grand-daughter of Sir John Millais, and well-educated. When she came to Nelson with her husband Captain Malcolm Moncrieff in 1921, she already had a love of the outdoors and was an enthusiastic amateur ornithologist. In the mid-twenties she published a very popular book called *New Zealand Birds and How to Identify Them*, which went through several editions. (J. McCallum, "Perrine Moncrieff: Champion of Birds and Bush," pp. 48-65 in C. Dann & P. Lynch, *Wilderness Women: Stories of New Zealand Women at Home in the Wilderness*. Auckland : Penguin Books, 1989)

67. At 31 March 1925 there were only 5,000 radio licence holders in New Zealand. This had grown rapidly to 70,000 by December 1931, trebling to 210,000 by 1936. (*An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 1, p. 248)

68. Letter, 3 August 1927, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 179.

Sanderson's readiness to adopt the new medium of radio was typical of the innovative and resourceful approach he took to promoting the cause. His response to the Justice Department's failure to deal with what it perceived as the inadequacy of the fines imposed by Magistrates for breaches of the bird protection legislation provides another example of his resourcefulness and refusal to be put off by negative responses. Representations made to the Department arguing the need to increase the level of fines in order to deter reoffending were fobbed off with the explanation that the Department could not interfere with the discretion of Magistrates.⁶⁹ Sanderson's answer to this was to try directly influencing the Magistrates themselves by regularly sending them copies of the Society's magazine in the belief that "water wears down stone in the end."⁷⁰ This was also a further example of his belief that constant repetition of the conservation message would eventually bring results.

The tactic of free distribution of the Society's magazine as a means of promoting the cause was one that Sanderson adopted on many occasions. Sanderson viewed the magazine as an important means of education. He also saw its potential for attracting new members and was, therefore, prepared to bear the short term costs of distributing without charge in the hope of longer term gains in membership numbers. Many magazines were distributed by the Society's regional workers to schools and groups or individuals likely to take an interest in the work of the Society. But the main function of the magazine was to establish regular communication with supporters in order to maintain their interest, a function which could not be as satisfactorily carried out through reliance on a shared publication as the Forestry League had done. Hence, although the publication of a journal was a considerable drain on the societies resources, it was an expense which Sanderson viewed as vital.⁷¹

His initial communications took the form of circular letters keeping supporters informed about the activities of the Society and presenting the reasons why bird protection was essential. The patriotic value of protecting our unique fauna was stressed, as we have already seen, and it was emphasised that their extinction was not inevitable, despite widespread belief to the contrary, so long as there was efficient care for the forests and

69. While it was quite true that the Department could not intervene in a Magistrate's exercise of his judicial powers in particular cases, by introducing legislation which set a minimum fine or increased the maximum penalty, the Government could have clearly signalled to the judiciary a need to impose stricter penalties.

70. Letter, Sanderson to W. W. Smith, 5 August 1927, W. W. Smith Papers, M.S. 046 2, Taranaki Museum.

71. However, by 21 August 1928 he was able to report to Myers that although the last bulletin had cost £50 to produce it had returned more than that in subscriptions. Letter, Sanderson to Myers, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 188.

control of their natural enemies. Considerable emphasis was also placed on the utility of birds, stressing especially the close relationship between the welfare of native birds and that of the forests which depended heavily upon native fauna for seed-distribution, cross-pollination and insect control. Within two years the circulars had evolved into a proper magazine named *Birds* which not only reported on the Society's activities but also contained a range of articles designed to keep members well-informed about conservation issues, including, as previously mentioned, developments overseas. To enhance the appeal of the magazine it began to appear with a coloured cover from August 1933. This reproduced the painting of a Kaka by English artist, Lily Daff, whom Sanderson had commissioned in 1927 to produce a series of albums of forest birds and then seashore birds. Her paintings regularly appeared on the cover over the next 20 years.⁷² Sanderson was almost single-handedly responsible for editing the magazine, as well as contributing a great many of the articles, up to issue number 78.⁷³

The distribution of magazines to encourage membership of the Society revealed plainly that Sanderson would not be content to passively await the impact of press, and later, radio propaganda to bring in new members. The task of attracting new members was pursued with his characteristic vigour. Taking a lead from the example set by the Forestry League, Sanderson also directly approached individuals and organisations he believed would support the cause, seeking their membership. Amongst those he approached were the tramping clubs, field clubs, and women's institutes.

Sanderson was particularly active in his efforts to enlist the support of children for the cause. He firmly believed that engaging the interest of children provided the best long term guarantee for the preservation of native fauna and flora and believed that "no effort should be spared to see that the children have reliable information placed before them regarding the value to this country of our native birds and bush."⁷⁴ By April 1924, a year after the Society's formation, 2,300 schools were receiving its circulars as well as posters outlining the Animals Protection Act, which it had persuaded the Department of Internal Affairs to have printed and distributed to all Post Offices and Police Stations.⁷⁵ Children were offered the opportunity to join the society for 1/- or to group together in a club to nominate

72. I. Close, "Seventy Years of Forest and Bird," *Forest and Bird*, 270 : 36-37, 1993. The first colour photographic cover appeared on the 50th jubilee issue in March 1973.

73. Obituary, *Forest and Bird*, No. 79, February 1946.

74. *Birds*, 30 : 10, 1933.

75. The Society also arranged for a further 300 of these posters to be put up at railway stations and other suitable places (Circular, September 1923) and the following year succeeded in persuading the Tourist Department to place them in huts and hotels (Circular, April 1924).

one person to represent the members.⁷⁶ An important innovation in 1926 was the introduction of a section for children in the journal.⁷⁷ This has continued to be a feature of the journal until the recent development of a separate Kiwi Conservation Club publication for children. In 1932 the Society undertook an ambitious project towards the education of children with the preparation of a bird album and films showing birds in the wild. Sanderson believed that there was no more effective medium for conveying information than film.⁷⁸ The Education Department provided financial support for these undertakings.

Sanderson, in spite of his own vigour in promoting the cause, did not fall into the trap of attempting to spread the Society's energy too widely. He firmly resisted calls from some members for the Society to undertake the transfer of birds to localities where they were known to have formerly existed. Although it was Society policy to support such transfers provided conditions were favourable for reintroduction and the species in question were definitely known to have existed in the area before, Sanderson believed it would unduly drain the Society's limited funds to undertake this work itself.⁷⁹ Similarly, he opposed calls for the Society to purchase sanctuaries,⁸⁰ to attempt to eradicate the German Owl or to undertake ranger work.⁸¹ With an income of only around £600 per annum to work with, he was convinced that the Society's best strategy was to concentrate on public education, which he saw as giving the best return for money spent.⁸² It was the desire not to overstretch the resources of the Society which weighed most heavily with Sanderson in opposing moves made in 1928 to include forest protection as an object, rather than his sense of obligation to honour the agreement with the Forestry League to confine the

76. Circular letter to Head Teachers, 31 July 1928, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 73.

77. *Birds*, 9 : 12-15 [n.d.]. The children's page usually consisted of a story in this early years, but sometimes included contribution from children. Although A. H. Messenger started the children's section, R. A. Falla, who was then a lecturer in nature study at Auckland Training College, contributed some of the early stories.

78. *Birds*, 30 : 10, 1933.

79. Letter, Sanderson to McCaskill, 29 June 1934, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 183.

80. However, in February 1936 the Society began to encourage the bequest of sanctuaries, provided an annuity was added for the payment of a caretaker to administer the sanctuary on the Society's behalf. (*Forest and Bird*, 39 : 16, 1936)

81. In spite of Sanderson's belief that funds should not be used to attempt to eradicate the German Owl, in 1933 the Society offered to share costs with the acclimatisation societies and the Department of Internal Affairs of paying a bounty or some other method of controlling these birds. Both declined to participate. The Society's ability to pay bounties or to undertake ranging were severely curtailed by the fact that it was unable to use its trust funds for these purposes. In the early years the Government provided the Society a grant of £50 per annum to be used for certain purposes agreed upon with the Minister of Internal Affairs. The Society desired to include ranging amongst its activities, the expenses to be met out of the trust fund but the Department opposed this. (*Birds*, 29 : 6 & 13, 1933)

82. Letter, Sanderson to McCaskill, 29 June 1934, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 183.

group's activities to bird protection.⁸³ When pressure to broaden the objects became so strong that he gave up his opposition, the agreement with the League was not viewed as an insuperable impediment.

Though it was undoubtedly Sanderson who held the Society together in its early years, it could not have prospered as it did without the support and hard work of members in the regions. The great volume of correspondence between Sanderson and his most important regional helpers reveals the significance of their contribution while at the same time attesting to Sanderson's unflinching energy. W. W. Smith, although in his seventies when the Society formed, was one of its most active regional workers.⁸⁴ He regularly corresponded with Sanderson, keeping him informed of conservation issues arising in Taranaki and other parts of the country. He maintained a watching brief for items relating to conservation in a number of the main newspapers apart from the *Taranaki Herald*, including the *New Zealand Herald*, the *Weekly News*, the *Lyttelton Times*, and the *Evening Post*. He was always ready to respond to issues with letters or articles, especially where he felt correspondence or an article to be foolish or uninformed. Smith was strong in his criticism of collectors, all the more so for having in his early days been a supplier of the now extinct laughing owl for Buller. He was a particularly staunch opponent of the opossum, which he believed did much harm, despite Kirk's finding to the contrary. His views helped to determine the Society's strong stand against the opossum. Smith shared Sanderson's interest in promoting conservation among the young. He gave lectures in local schools on the aims of the Society. As a speaker he had the gift of conveying his enthusiasm for nature, of communicating to his listeners the experience of great joy and love he derived from nature. His obituarist in the *Taranaki Herald* noted that it was a great privilege to hear him speak.⁸⁵ Smith also wrote regular articles for the young in the local newspaper, contributed to the Young Citizen's League magazine, and maintained correspondence with a large number of young people who were interested in natural history, always encouraging them in a love of native flora and fauna. In spite of his efforts to promote the Society in Taranaki, he found progress in interesting the community was slow. He attributed this to the preoccupation of the community with the slump in butter prices and the infantile paralysis epidemic.

83. Letter, Sanderson to Moncrieff, 17 February 1928, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 192.

84. The following information on Smith comes from the W. W. Smith Papers, M.S. 046 2, Taranaki Museum and the Forest and Bird Papers, Folders 316 and 317.

85. *Taranaki Herald*, 7 March 1942. "Coldly scientific as he could be when necessary, Mr Smith really loved birds and beasts and all creeping things, and in plant life he found great joy. He could see the beauty of form and colour, could hear the beauty of bird-song, could feel the peace and serenity of grass and trees, the majesty of deep gorges and mountain heights." He was able to communicate his sense of joy and love to his listeners.

Lance McCaskill joined the Society in 1924 and quickly became one of its most hardworking members. At that time he an Agricultural Instructor in schools, based in Te Aroha. He attempted to raise interest for the cause in the schools, depositing copies of the Society's magazine and discussing membership. He found teachers "hopelessly ignorant" on the subject of bird protection and his fellow Instructors "uninterested." He reported to Sanderson that he gave talks on birds in every school and, whenever possible, he tried to get out into the bush with the children."⁸⁶ His letters to Sanderson were accompanied by a small but steady stream of subscriptions from children. A change of function to Supervisor of Nature Study allowed him, in 1926, to introduce a scheme for primary schools involving over a dozen compulsory lectures on birds, which required investigative work on the part of the children and teachers.⁸⁷ He did his utmost to raise the interest of teachers in native flora and fauna. One means he adopted was to devote much of his spare time in taking teachers on expeditions. This strategy evidently succeeded because he was able to report by December 1926 that several schools now granted him one day a year for "bush and bird excursions" and the interest aroused was "encouraging." Furthermore, schools now frequently sought help and information from him and the posters and information supplied by the Society were of great assistance in meeting these demands.⁸⁸ Yet another career shift to Dunedin Training College in 1928, gave McCaskill new opportunities to promote the Society's cause. He aimed to turn out every student teacher a bird protector. It is doubtful whether this ambitious aspiration was ever realised, nevertheless, his lectures met with an enthusiastic response and seem to have resulted in new members for the Society.⁸⁹ In 1930, with the assistance of Geo. C. Thomson, he was successful in forming a branch of the Society in Dunedin, the first of the 48 branches and nine sections that now exist.⁹⁰ He also gained the interest of executive of the Boy Scouts and obtained their consent to give a series of lectures to Scout groups.⁹¹ In 1932 he transferred to Christchurch Teacher's Training College, where he once again did his best

86. Letter, McCaskill to Sanderson, 12 May 1925, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 179.

87. Letter, McCaskill to Sanderson, 19 February 1926, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 179.

88. Letter, McCaskill to Sanderson, 24 December 1926, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 179.

89. Letters, McCaskill to Sanderson, 1 February 1928 & 3 December 1928, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 179. Sanderson replied to the second letter ten days later, reporting that they had seen membership results from his activities in Dunedin. His efforts through the training college also paid off indirectly. In 1934 Sanderson informed him that the Society was gaining many new members through the work of school agricultural instructors.

90. Letter, McCaskill to Sanderson, 4 March 1930, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 180. McCaskill also helped establish a branch in Southland, which formed shortly after the Dunedin one, by giving many lectures with slide shows.

91. Letters, 17 & 26 March 1930, McCaskill to Sanderson, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 180.

to encourage an interest in conservation amongst student teachers and worked to get bird study established on a proper basis in all schools. He also continued a very active program of lectures promoting the Society and its cause to community groups and school children within and beyond Canterbury.⁹² However, an attempt in 1933 to form a Christchurch Branch met with no success. It was not until 1946 that he was able to inaugurate a Christchurch Section.⁹³ McCaskill remained a stalwart supporter of the Society after 1934, lecturing, contributing articles to the journal, keeping Sanderson informed of matters requiring action on the part of the Society. After 1929 he became increasingly interested in soil erosion and sought the Society's assistance in obtaining a Carnegie Travel Grant to study this and other aspects of conservation and rural education in the United States and Canada.⁹⁴ His application was successful and he visited those countries in 1939. He returned with a determination to raise consciousness of the problems of erosion, a project in which he was fully backed by the Society.

Perrine Moncrieff was another of the most energetic supporters of the Society.⁹⁵ She actively canvassed for members in the Nelson area and in 1928 formed her own group, the Nelson Bush and Bird Society, which was affiliated to both the Native Bird Protection Society and the Forestry League. In 1958 this became the Nelson section of Forest and Bird. Like Sanderson, Moncrieff knew how to use the media to advantage and was a skilled publicist. She took advantage of all possible opportunities to promote the cause. She wrote weekly nature notes for *The Press* and contributed articles to *Nelson Evening Mail*, the *Weekly News* as well as the Society's own journal. Moncrieff shared the belief of Sanderson, Smith, and McCaskill in the vital importance of education and used her position as Commissioner of Girl Guides to encourage a love of native birds amongst the girls. She also gave lectures in schools and persuaded the Nelson Women's Club to form a committee to take on the role of encouraging children to appreciate birds. This committee, which became a women's section of the Nelson Bush and Bird Society, was active in lobbying Government and the local council on environmental issues and also wrote to other Women's Clubs throughout the country, encouraging them to form similar sub-committees. Moncrieff found this group particularly useful for speaking out on issues which the Bush and Bird Society was reluctant to tackle because most of its committee

92. Correspondence between Sanderson and McCaskill, 1933-1934, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 183. McCaskill did not rely solely on lectures and slide shows to promote the cause at Training College. He also established a teaching garden of over 400 specimens.

93. Dalmer (1983) p. 14.

94. Correspondence between Sanderson and McCaskill, 1935-1938, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 184.

95. Information on Moncrieff's activity on behalf of the Society comes from Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 192 and McCallum (1989).

were public servants who sometimes felt constrained to keep silent on certain issues on account of their jobs. The Women's Club committee also sponsored a competition for schools on bush and birds, though Moncrieff seems to have been the main organiser.

Smith, McCaskill, and Moncrieff were among the most active in recruiting new members. Others helped in different ways. Guthrie-Smith, Cockayne, and Phillips Turner did much work behind the scenes. Sanderson greatly valued their advice on conservation issues, a fact which he acknowledged on more than one occasion.⁹⁶ Extracts from the writings of Guthrie-Smith and Cockayne appeared frequently in the journal and their opinions on conservation issues were often cited, though not always with due acknowledgement for the reasons already referred to above. The young scientist J. G. Myers was another whose help Sanderson appreciated.⁹⁷ He contributed a number of articles to the Society's magazine and served on the executive in 1923, although not elected at the initial meeting. In 1924 he went overseas to obtain work but he continued to support the Society until his untimely death from a car accident in the Sudan in 1942. He kept Sanderson well supplied with information relevant to the cause from overseas sources and represented the Society at the 1928 meeting of the International Committee for Bird Protection in Geneva. Sanderson valued Myers so highly that he lobbied, without success, to have him appointed Head of Wildlife.⁹⁸

It was Myers who drew Sanderson's attention to the importance of protecting gene pools and not producing hybrids as a result of ill-considered transfers of birds when so little was known about the races of birds in New Zealand.⁹⁹ After being alerted to this issue, the Society firmly opposed the decision of Internal Affairs to obtain South Island robins and yellowheads for Kapiti reserve, which was the home of the North Island robin. The move was instigated by the National Museum and had the active support or passive acquiescence of the majority of New Zealand scientists. Perrine Moncrieff lobbied both the Nelson Philosophical Society, of which she was a member, and the New Zealand Institute to support the Society's stand, but without success. She found that many members of the Institute thought the mixing of North Island and South Island robins "would be a good

96. For example, after Cockayne's death Sanderson wrote to W. W. Smith stating that he had been a staunch helper and adviser to the Society and was scarcely to be replaced. (18 January 1929, W. W. Smith Papers, M.S. 046 2, Taranaki Museum) See also Letters, Sanderson to Smith, 18 January 1929, W. W. Smith Papers; Sanderson to McCaskill, 20 April 1934, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 183; Sanderson to Moncrieff, 31 July 1928, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 192.

97. The correspondence between Sanderson and Myers is located in Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 188.

98. Letter, Sanderson to McCaskill, 10 July 1942, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 186.

99. Letter, Myers to Sanderson, 15 January 1925, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 188. The content of this letter was reproduced in the magazine.

experiment."¹⁰⁰ An offer by the Society to establish an advisory committee to assist the Department on the issue of transfers was turned down, however, Sanderson had satisfaction in reporting to Myers that Wilkinson, who had been sent by the Department to obtain the birds, "did a great act and came back saying he couldn't catch any."¹⁰¹

The Society found itself opposed to many in the scientific community over the issue of collecting as well. Scientists working in the museums were the main applicants for permits and it was felt by the Society that little was to be gained by continued collecting, given the vast numbers of skins already collected in the past, the great need being for research into behaviour, habitat requirements and other work requiring field observation. It recognised that museums used the skins of our rare birds as a means of barter with foreign institutions and thus treated the so-called scientific justifications put forward for collecting further skins with some scepticism. The Society opposed the granting of permits unless necessary scientific purposes could be demonstrated. Dissatisfaction with the manner in which the Department of Internal Affairs exercised its power to grant permits was a source of continuing conflict between the Society and the Department. The Society exploited the situation provided by the grant of a permit to the Whitney expedition of American scientists in order to arouse public disapproval of collecting. A successful publicity campaign gained the concession that in future permits would only be granted for museum purposes or to private collectors whose collections were available for museum purposes; that no collecting would be permitted in public reserves; that the locality from which birds could be taken must be specified; that permits would only be issued to named individuals; and that all foreign collectors would be accompanied by a Government officer, this officer's expenses to be borne by the collector.¹⁰² This did not resolve the issue as far as the Society was concerned. It continued to lobby strenuously to overcome the inadequacies of what it described as the "secret system" operated by the Department. There was no system of consultation with interested bodies such as the Society and no effective system in place to ensure adherence to the terms of the permit. The Society believed it should be furnished with a copy of all permits issued, that the permit should be gazetted and that a ranger should be required to accompany the collector at the latter's expense in every case, not just where foreign collectors were concerned. However, the best the Society was able to achieve in response to these demands was an assurance that permits would be issued "very sparingly," an assurance it did not find very convincing in the light of statements by a well-

100. Letter, Moncrieff to Sanderson, 14 June 1927, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 192.

101. Letter, Sanderson to Myers, 21 July 1928, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 188.

102. *Birds*, 10 : 12 [n. d.].

known private collector "that the trouble with him had never been to get permits but to get the birds his permit authorised him to take."¹⁰³

During the early years of the Society, relations between it and the Department of Internal Affairs were often strained on account of the Society's frequent criticism of the poor administration of the Animals Protection Act and its publicly expressed support of the Forest Service's bid to gain control of wildlife administration. The Society believed that Internal Affairs was too greatly influenced by the hunting lobby within the acclimatization societies. The Forest Service, on the other hand, which was an endowment member of the Society, shared its belief in the importance of unity of administration for reserves and wildlife,¹⁰⁴ recognised the close interrelationship between birds and forests, and shared its concern over the problem of deer and other grazing animals. As in the case of the Forestry League, discord would eventually develop between the Forest Service and the Society but in the years up to 1935 the relationship remained cordial.

The issue of unity of control of wildlife and reserves was a key concern of the Society. It acknowledged that on paper New Zealand bird protection laws were satisfactory but believed they were rendered almost worthless through failure of administration. The failure was recognized as being just as much the fault of a disjointed and inefficient system of divided control as of any ignorance, indifference, or mismanagement on the part of the responsible agencies. The Departments of Lands and Survey, the Tourist Department, and the Forest Service were all responsible for the administration of different reserves, others such as Egmont and Tongariro National Parks were under the control of Boards, while acclimatisation societies were responsible for the administration of some aspects of the Animals Protection Act under the over-all administration of Internal Affairs. There was a clear and pressing need for consistency of approach to issues such as control of deer, opossums, rodents, and mustelids, or the acclimatisation of new exotic species, which were no respecters of artificial administrative boundaries. The Society proposed, as one possible solution to this unsatisfactory problem, the establishment of a small supervisory Board of Control, modelled on the State Wildlife Commissions in the United States, to oversee the administration of wildlife and reserves and develop a common policy.¹⁰⁵ Sanderson was clear that all members should be skilled in forest and bird life and conservation, with at least one member also expert in organisation and business methods

103. *Birds*, 29 : 15-16, 1933.

104. However, from around 1928 the Forest Service abandoned its claim to take over the control of all wildlife, probably for pragmatic reasons; and restricted its claim to control within its own forest areas. (Galbreath, 1993, p. 18)

105. *Birds*, 6 : 7-8 [n.d.]; 8 : 11-12 [n.d.]; 11 : 3-4 & 7-8 [n.d.]; 20 : 8-9, 1930.

but seem to vary in his opinion as to whether the Board should comprise mainly representatives of conservation organisations or whether it should also include representatives of the main administrative agencies involved.¹⁰⁶ It was envisaged that the Board would be supported by a small research and publicity section and a field inspector would be appointed for each island. By 1929 the Society had succeeded in raising an interest in unity of control amongst the acclimatisation societies and the scientific societies, aided by the growing concern about the deer menace which it had done so much to bring to public notice. This led to the establishment of an unofficial Wildlife Council in 1930, as we saw in the previous chapter. The inevitable failure of this unofficial group perhaps caused the Society to rethink the idea of a Board of Control. By 1933 it seems to have abandoned the idea of a Board and favoured vesting control in one Department with assistance from local committees throughout the country, which would include interested volunteers with local knowledge.¹⁰⁷ The precise nature of these committees is not made clear but the Society seems to have had in mind something similar to the later Forest Park advisory committees. By 1937 Sanderson was advocating a Department of Conservation, whose administration would include all protected forests, reserves, sanctuaries, national parks, and wildlife.¹⁰⁸

Gaining support for the reform of administration from the various Departments involved proved a more difficult task than gaining the support of the non-governmental organisations. The reluctance of Departments to let go their existing administrative responsibilities in the interests of a more unified system ensured that there would be no quick solution to the problems of unco-ordinated administration. The establishment of a separate Wildlife Service within the Department of Internal Affairs in 1945 went some way towards meeting the Society's demand for unified control of wildlife. However, it took the major public debate of the 1980s on the role of the public service and the reforms that followed to achieve the Society's long advocated goal of a unified administration of reserves and wildlife, with the establishment of the Department of Conservation on 1 April 1987. These reforms, driven by economic ideology, are already beginning to reveal that unity of administration *per se* is not the solution that Sanderson and his fellow advocates imagined it to be. Not that they were naive enough to pin all their hopes on this sort of reform. They were fully aware that unity of administration could not in itself remedy poor administration or administrative indifference to the importance of conservation, hence the Society's ultimate stress on education. What they perhaps failed to perceive was the greater

106. In *Birds*, 6 : 7-8 [n.d.] he favoured the latter, in *Birds*, 11 : 7-8 [n.d.] he seems to favour the former.

107. *Birds*, 30 : 9, 1933.

108. *Forest and Bird*, 44 : , 1937. It is undoubtedly no coincidence that around the same time an increasing number of articles begin to appear which are critical of Forest Service policy.

vulnerability of a unified administration to cuts in funding, or even more unimaginable, possible privatisation of national assets, because they operated within a framework of belief which assumed that governments were duty-bound to take an active role in protecting a nation's natural heritage and resolutely refused to accept that conservation was merely an optional extra to be taken on board when economic conditions allowed. They certainly did not believe that responsibility for conservation rested solely with government. By their very existence they proved otherwise. They believed in shared responsibility between Government and citizen. Thus the Society's education was not only directed towards putting public pressure on the Government to act with responsibility on conservation issues but also towards instilling a sense of duty in each individual to exercise personal responsibility in ensuring the protection of the nation's natural heritage and natural resources.

The main key to effective conservation of native birds, the Society argued, was an extensive network of sanctuaries. New Zealand already had a number of important off-shore island sanctuaries by the time the Society formed, and it recognized the great importance of these but it considered that the majority of New Zealand sanctuaries were sanctuaries in name only because there were no effective measures in place to manage them. All important sanctuaries, it believed, required a skilled curator to prevent poaching and collecting, to destroy exotic intruders, especially deer, goat, wild cats, opossums, stoats, weasels, and rats, and to carry out artificial breeding, if necessary, to build up the population.¹⁰⁹ But the reality was that only two sanctuaries had wardens and there were very few paid rangers. Society members, as honorary rangers, made it their business to visit the most important off-shore sanctuaries from time to time to check conditions but this was no substitute for a full-time caretaker or regular visits by rangers in the case of the smaller sanctuaries. Although the Society supported the idea of honorary rangers, Sanderson believed it was quite unrealistic to rely on them. He considered that most honorary rangers were understandably reluctant to prosecute poachers, making enemies of people and being out of pocket at the same time. He argued that paid rangers were necessary for effective enforcement of the law.¹¹⁰

The Society never underestimated the vital importance of island sanctuaries, especially as secure havens for our most endangered species, and advocated the establishment of many more, but it attached equal importance to the provision of adequate mainland sanctuaries. It had serious reservations about the policy of transferring birds, in addition to its previously

109. *Birds*, 8 : 11-12 [n.d.]

110. Letter, Sanderson to McCaskill, 11 March 1930, Forest & Bird Papers, Folder 180.

mentioned concern about the mixing of races. Many of the transfers, it believed, had been ill-advised, instigated without adequate research into the the food and habitat requirements of the species concerned or whether the new homes would meet those requirements. The possible impact of the territorial behaviour of existing bird populations upon the immigrants had been equally disregarded. The potential problems caused by this were illustrated by the fate of the saddlebacks introduced to Kapiti Island, which had disappeared after being harried by the existing tui population. The Society was critical of the continual "thrusting" of more species onto the island sanctuaries, especially Kapiti and Little Barrier which, it felt, were already fully stocked. "Failure, with loss of effort and money, is the usual result of experiments in transferring birds," claimed Sanderson.¹¹¹ Reassessment of the policy was needed, based on adequate follow-up studies of transfers which had already been undertaken. The soundest policy, he believed, was to create sanctuaries where the birds actually lived and then to ensure that they were properly managed. The Society was confident that mainland sanctuaries could be adequately protected with proper management and so long as the bird protection laws were adequately enforced to deter would-be poachers. Mainland sanctuaries were also better placed for fulfilling what the Society perceived as one of the essential roles of a sanctuary, providing a base from which to repopulate surrounding areas. They had one further important advantage. They provided much more accessible opportunities for New Zealanders to observe their native birds in their natural surroundings, which was an important requirement for building a constituency of bird-lovers.

Other concerns which dominated the early years of the Society included campaigns to ensure that the bird protection laws were upheld, campaigns to gain protection for birds such as the shag, the hawk, the kea and the pukeko which were subject to bounty by the acclimatisation societies,¹¹² and agitation for action to be taken against "the deer menace", erosion, and opossums. The Society also advocated the need for more field-based research on our native fauna, especially research into the habits and enemies of our birds, the reasons why the rarest species occur in some districts and not others and the means that might be taken to ensure their protection and investigation into the alleged harm caused by birds such as the kea and the pukeko.¹¹³

111. *Birds*, 27 : 11, 1932.

112. The Society reproduced articles from overseas journals which showed the important contribution of predatory birds to "the balance of nature," emphasising that the harm they caused to game species was outweighed by their usefulness in keeping down "vermin." Extracts from the works of New Zealand observers such as Guthrie-Smith and Edgar Stead were also used.

113. *Birds*, 16 : 2-3, 1928.

During the 1920s the Society's highest profile campaign was its agitation against deer. It had long been recognised that deer damaged forests as my examination of earlier groups has shown, but lacking a journal or effective national publicity campaigns they had not succeeded in drawing widespread public attention to the issue. Sanderson, using his saturation technique succeeded where the earlier groups had failed. The Society did not act in isolation. The Forest Service and the Forestry League shared its concern, but the Native Bird Protection Society was undoubtedly the most vociferous in its campaign. By 1930 there was general agreement that something needed to be done. Protection was lifted and the "war" against deer began in earnest. Under the direction of Captain Yerex, Department of Internal Affairs deer cullers undertook a strategically planned campaign of destruction, aimed at exterminating the deer population, which had destroyed 100,000 by 1934.¹¹⁴

The Society had good cause to be concerned with the effect of deer especially in reserves but the evidence of modern research suggests that their fears were exaggerated. Populations of ungulates typically browse selectively until preferred foods are exhausted causing population growth to slow down then cease until a readjustment is made to the reduced food supply. Eventually a state of equilibrium between population levels and available food will be reached at a lower density than previously.¹¹⁵ It needs to be remembered that in the 1920s there was not yet any understanding of the population ecology of deer. Even if studies had been available, the question of whether the normal pattern would apply in the New Zealand environment, where deer were not a natural part of the ecosystem, would have remained something of an imponderable. Sanderson believed that if deer were allowed to continue in our forests, "we must consider our forests doomed."¹¹⁶ The recently reported example of habitat destruction caused by naturally occurring populations of deer on the Kaibab Plateau in Arizona was not encouraging. Here the misguided destruction of the deers' major predators in the the interests of deer hunters had resulted in a destructive population explosion, with devastating impact upon the habitat and eventually, once the food supply had ceased, upon the deer population itself. This case

114. G. Caughley, *The Deer Wars*. Auckland : Heinemann, 1983, p. 30.

115. J. A. Gibb & J. E. C. Flux, "Mammals," pp. 334-371 in Williams, G. R. ed., *The Natural History of New Zealand*. Wellington : A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1973, p. 352.

116. *Birds*, 17 : 10, 1929. Cockayne painted a similar picture in his *Monograph on the New Zealand Beech Forests*. If deer were not exterminated, he argued, our forests would be transformed into "debris - fields and waste ground, and the water which they controlled become the master, pouring down the naked slopes after each rainstorm, bearing with it heavy loads of stone, gravel and clay to bury the fertile arable lands below and occasion floods in the rivers." Cited in *Birds*, 19 : 9, 1929. He had become much more intransigent in his opposition to deer since his days on the Forestry Commission, when he was prepared to accept the possibility of deer-parks.

had been noted by those concerned about deer in New Zealand and reported in *Birds*.¹¹⁷ It seemed to offer a foretaste of what was in store for New Zealand, where the deer also faced no other predator than man, but the equilibrium phase of the population cycle had not yet occurred. If, with the benefit of hind-sight, the anti-deer feeling generated by the Society and others sometimes seemed to verge on hysteria, it was perhaps understandable given the strong evidence of serious forest depletion amply illustrated in the many photographs the Society used to argue its case. They were witnessing the destructive eruptive phase of population growth. In fact, in some districts of both the North and South Island the cycle of increase and eventual stability has been completed in the absence of significant human intervention and without the predicted ecological disaster.¹¹⁸ However, such was the strength of feeling generated by the deer campaign that even when research in the 1950s by Thane Riney, a young American scientist¹¹⁹ showed that deer populations eventually reach a state of equilibrium with the environment and raised questions about the directions and effectiveness of the destruction campaign,¹²⁰ the Society still clung to the demand for extermination rather than control.

The Society's campaign against deer was closely linked to its campaign against erosion though it also recognised the danger of erosion not only from deer induced deforestation but also from burning and overgrazing of pastoral lands and the clearance of naturally unstable hill country ill-adapted to pastoralism. The Society's statements on erosion were often sensational in nature, drawing an image of country that risked turning into another Sahara desert or of mountainsides sliding into the sea.¹²¹ Awareness of topsoil erosion has become a part of our national consciousness but when the Society began to draw attention this issue from around 1928 there was little public awareness of the problem. Although the relationship between deforestation and erosion had been an important theme of the conservation movement from its beginnings in New Zealand, earlier conservation groups tended to emphasise the impact of deforestation upon downstream flooding rather

117. *Birds*, 25 : 11-12, 1931. The Kaibab disaster helped to bring about recognition of the vital function of large predator species in the ecosystem.

118. J. A. Gibb & J. E. C. Flux (1973) p. 352.

119. Before coming to New Zealand Riney had completed a masters thesis on deer ecology under Starker Leopold, son of Aldo Leopold.

120. For example, his research showed that the areas of high deer density where deer control efforts were concentrated did not coincide with the areas classified by the Forest Service as at greatest risk of erosion, suggesting that these areas should be the priority for control operations. Even before Riney began his work the evidence that annual tallies kept rising (without additional hunting effort) should have suggested the possibility that total extermination was an untenable goal and that a sounder strategy might be to target key areas, national parks, major reserves and sanctuaries and areas particularly susceptible to erosion.

121. See for example *Birds*, 29 : 2-3, 1933. The Society's concern with erosion began in *Birds*, 11 : 2-3, circa 1926-27.

than soil depletion. This had produced an awareness at an official level of the need to protect mountain tops and river banks but there had been no effective administrative response to the problems of soil erosion induced by overgrazing, repeated burning, and loss of plant cover. Concern with erosion was a dominant theme of the Society's journal throughout the 1930s, the first sustained campaign of public education on the issue. This campaign helped to raise public consciousness of the problem, leading to the adoption of comprehensive administrative measures to address the issue in the early 1940s with the establishment of a Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council and District Catchment Boards.

The Society and the scientific establishment were united in their concern over deer. The case of opossums was different. A study by Kirk in 1920 argued that opossums were harmless and were capable of providing an important source of revenue.¹²² Cockayne supported Kirk's finding.¹²³ Sanderson and certain other leading members of the Society, including W.W. Smith were firmly convinced, notwithstanding the findings of Kirk and Cockayne, that they were harmful to both forests and birds. They believed that repeated browsing of favoured species caused the eventual death of many trees. They also argued that many of the trees especially favoured by possums were important sources of berries for birds so therefore, possums were competing with native birds for food. It was claimed, too, that possums directly killed many of the smaller species of birds by raiding nests for eggs.¹²⁴ The society opposed the grant of licences to liberate possums in new areas and consistently stressed the harm they caused. As a result of the Society's agitation, the Minister of Internal Affairs agreed to institute a survey of the eating habits of the opossum by stomach analysis before permitting further distribution.¹²⁵ However it was not until 1942 that unease about the possible damage being caused by possums began to be felt at an administrative level. Studies undertaken for the Wildlife service in 1946 vindicated the Society's stance, showing that possums, by selective feeding, would eventually alter the composition of the bush. This, together with growing pressure from orchardists, nurserymen, beekeepers and others, led to the removal of all protection in 1949 and the institution of a bounty scheme in 1951.¹²⁶

122. Kirks' report was published in *A.J.H.R.*, 1920, H-28.

123. L. Cockayne, *Monograph on the New Zealand Beech Forests. Part I.* Wellington : Government Printer, 1926, pp, 11-12.

124. *Birds*, 7 : 9 & 11-12 [n.d.]; 9 : 7-8 [n.d.]; 13 : 6-7 [n.d.]

125. *Birds*, 20 : 4-5, 1930.

126. Galbreath (1993) pp. 50-58.

Between 1935 when the Society changed its name and 29 December 1945, when Sanderson died, the issues addressed by the Society remained much the same as the preceding years, though with increasing emphasis placed on the problem of erosion. Today the concerns of Society, in the words of its president, Gordon Ell, "encompass the whole of the natural world, and active members monitor the effects of many of the threats to it."¹²⁷ At the time of Sanderson's death membership was a comparatively modest 800 compared with the membership in excess of 55,000 today but in comparison with the known membership levels of earlier groups, it was a substantial achievement. Moreover the Society's influence was much wider than suggested by the membership figure alone. The group membership of tramping clubs, field clubs and womens' institutes extended the range of its influence. The Society also maintained close contact with horticultural societies throughout the country and the Auckland Zoological Society. These organisations were able to provide the Society with a valuable source of information on local conservation threats and to back up the its campaigns at a local level. As interest in conservation grew and more local societies formed, they tended to look to the Society for leadership and advice, many subsequently being formally incorporated into the Society as branches or sections.

Sustained repetition of the Society's message that our native flora and fauna are an important part of our heritage which should be cherished and protected for all present and future generations to enjoy has helped to transform the way New Zealanders regard nature. Part of that transformation involves the way we view the presence of exotic species in our natural areas. The change of attitude is signified in the expression "alien intruders." These intruders, whose importation was greeted with enthusiasm by earlier generations of New Zealanders and were in some cases still being actively spread throughout the country well into 1940s, are now regarded by many with moral abhorrence. Ironically, as more and more people came to accept the view of the early conservation advocates that such species have no place in our forests and reserves, there was a growing body of scientific evidence which suggested their threat to native flora and fauna, the basis of the reversal in attitude towards them, was not as serious as had been supposed.

The success of the Society's efforts over the years to publicise the harm caused by these animals was illustrated by public reaction to a research project in 1980 which involved live-trapping, ear-tagging then release of stoats in parts of Fiordland National Park in order to

127. *Forest and Bird*, 272 : 1, 1994.

better understand the effect of control operations.¹²⁸ Announcement of the project brought forth letters expressing outrage, including strong reproach of the Forest and Bird Society for its failure to condemn the research. One correspondent went so far as to suggest that the Society should be fined! The moral indignation raised by the "release" of these predators in 1980 was a far cry from the general clamour for their introduction in the 1880s, though even then, the proposal did not meet with universal approbation.¹²⁹

This case is of even greater interest for what it reveals about public attitudes towards the Society. It indicates a widespread acceptance by the public of the Society's self-appointed role as a guardian of New Zealand wildlife, a role which in this instance, it was perceived by many as failing to perform. In a sense, on this occasion, the Society was the victim of the success of its own propaganda, which had simplified what were, in reality, more complex issues in order to more effectively raise public concern. Such simplification is a legitimate tactic, perhaps even inevitable in the case of the most complex issues of ecological and conservation science, but it is not without pitfalls as the above case illustrates. A more serious danger is the possibility that a group will begin to accept its own propaganda as reality and close its mind to new perceptions which threaten its long-held beliefs. Such a situation is detrimental to the long term interests of nature conservation. On the whole, the Society has always shown a healthy willingness to learn from developments in science which it exhibited in relation to the stoat research, though it has never blindly followed scientific opinion as its independent stance on possums, for example, illustrated. This willingness to learn and adapt its policy has helped to ensure the Society's on-going viability and make it the successful, thriving organisation which it remains today.

128. The reaction to this research, which was carried out by Carolyn King, was cited in her important study of the effect of introduced predators on New Zealand fauna, *Immigrant Killers*. Auckland : Oxford University Press, 1984, pp. 123-125.

129. The Reverend Walsh, Andreas Reischek and Walter Buller were amongst those who protested against the proposed introduction.

CONCLUSION

The four and a half decades from 1888 to 1935 can now be seen as a period of vital importance for the history of nature conservation in New Zealand. This period saw the emergence of a flourishing, organised conservation movement, of a depth and breadth which has hitherto been unsuspected. Beginning with the Dunedin and Suburban Reserves Conservation Society in 1888, the groups which arose during this time established a firm foundation for continued growth of the movement right up to the present. A clear link between the earliest of the groups and modern organisations is provided by the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. The members of these groups were not the earliest to speak out on nature conservation. There were others before them, including William Fox, who introduced the idea of national parks to New Zealand from America and Thomas Potts, who was a consistent early advocate of the need to conserve forests and to provide sanctuaries for birds. Their contributions have been recognized by other writers but their influence was circumscribed by lack of organisational backing. It was the perceived limitations of acting alone which prompted liked-minded people to form the first groups to promote the cause of conservation. The discernible shift towards greater conservation consciousness which occurred during the decades under discussion cannot be attributed solely to the influence of the groups discussed but it is now clear that the role they played was very much greater than has previously been recognised.

It is easy to underestimate the importance of the contribution made by these groups to raising the nature consciousness of New Zealanders unless we can recapture something of the all-pervasive ethos of subjugating nature which dominated settler society in nineteenth-century New Zealand. For the majority, civilization was seen to depend on mastery over nature by science and technology. In the face of the earnest Victorian quest to grow corn where formerly forests grew,¹ the conservationists offered an alternative vision of civilization which did not deny man's need to utilize the products of nature and turn them to his use, but which challenged the assumption of total mastery. They defined civilization on those terms as over-civilization. They were convinced that it was vital to preserve what one of their number, Maurice Hurst, called a "'brownies' portion," that is, to leave space for nature to be herself and to carry out her processes unaffected by man and his needs. They did not talk about preserving bio-diversity though they wanted to avoid the extinction of species regardless of whether they had utilitarian value to man. By the beginning of the

1. This is an allusion to an injunction by the Reverend Charles Kingsley to those farmers of England who grew rushes where they might grow corn, that to do so was to sin against God's blessing. ("North Devon," pp. 237-308 in *Miscellanies*, Vol. II. London : John W. Parker & Son, 1859)

twentieth century they were talking about representativeness. They rarely used the term intrinsic, though they understood that nature had value beyond man and his needs. Most often they put their arguments in the utilitarian terms that their contemporaries would understand. They did not see the relationship between man and nature as that of master and slave but rather as one of partners. It needs to be stressed that the leaders of the movement were not fundamentally opposed to development but were trying to maintain a balance between conservation and development. They shared this in common with preservationists in America and in Britain.

Although the New Zealand movement formed part of an international trend towards nature conservation at the end of the nineteenth century, there is little evidence of a strong dependence on overseas role models. The Dunedin Society did model itself directly on an overseas group but that was an exception. Succeeding groups, though influenced by the Dunedin example, formulated their own responses to local needs and conditions. Parallels between developments here and overseas, particularly the United States, can be seen as deriving more from shared land use experience and a shared intellectual culture rather than from conscious imitation. The similarities between the Taranaki Society and the Sierra Club in California, which formed a year later, provide an example. The precedence in time of the New Zealand group need not, of course, preclude subsequent influence, but there is no evidence whatever of contact or even knowledge of the American group. The nature conservation philosophy developed by members of the first Forest and Bird Protection Society, which provided an important intellectual legacy for subsequent groups, was firmly grounded in the New Zealand experience of its creators.

Divergence between the New Zealand movement and the overseas movement was evident in relation to the the protection of birds. There were no parallels here to the bird protection organisations which formed in Britain and the United States in opposition to cruelty and feather fashions. New Zealand's insular biogeography with its highly endemic fauna, particularly vulnerable to habitat change and the incursions of introduced predators, led to an early emphasis on the provision of sanctuaries. When the Native Bird Protection Society in 1923 consciously looked to overseas groups, by then those groups had also come to emphasise the importance of sanctuaries. Similarly, there was no New Zealand parallel for the role of sports and gun clubs in America, which advocated conservation of indigenous species. With minor exceptions, the acclimatization societies, the equivalent here of sporting associations, were concerned not with indigenous species but with the importation and protection of exotic game species. Their relationship with conservation organisations was fraught with tension. Finally, the split which occurred in the United States between the preservationists on the one hand, who wanted to exempt areas of land

from development, and the progressive conservationists on the other, who were concerned with the wise use of resources for economic gain and did not favour "locking land away," was not a significant feature of the movement here.

The movement was dominated by well-educated, relatively well-to-do male urban dwellers. Typically, they were men with a strong social commitment, actively involved with a range of causes for the betterment of the community and their fellow humans. They were neither elitists nor misanthropes. Lawyers, former surveyors or explorers, newspaper men, those involved in the teaching profession and amateur naturalists were prominent amongst the active members in the movement. As the character of the movement changed from an initial concern with urban amenity as well as conservation to an exclusive focus on nature conservation, lawyers took a less prominent role and the role of naturalists became more dominant. Even then, active involvement came primarily from enthusiastic amateurs such as Guthrie-Smith, Drummond, Bathgate, Sanderson, W. W. Smith, and Moncrieff, rather than from professional scientists working within the scientific establishment. There were exceptions, the most notable being Thomson and Cockayne. Yet Thomson was first and foremost an educationalist despite his record of research and involvement with scientific institutions and Cockayne, too, retained something of the character of an amateur, being self-taught and self-employed for most of his career as a scientist apart from occasional contract work for the Government.

The relationship between the movement and scientists was not always easy as the developing tensions with forestry scientists and the conflict between the Native Bird Protection Society and professional ornithologists over issues such as collecting and transfer of species reveals. The evolving relationship between the conservation movement and scientists and the concomitant rise of professionalism in science merits further research. Because so much science in New Zealand has, until very recently, fallen largely within the province of Government departments, this might well form part of a broader study which examines the changing relationship between the conservation movement and the bureaucracy and its consequences for nature conservation. The close interrelationship between prominent public servants and the movement in its early years was already beginning to change by 1935 as ideas about the duties and obligations of public servants evolved. There began to develop a stronger sense of loyalty to the department one served than to an over-riding but more abstract ideal of the public interest. This trend has been reinforced by the application of the Official Secrets Act 1951 to public servants. In the social climate of restructured government departments since 1984, the role and obligations of the public servant has been redefined yet again. Active, high-profile membership of

conservation organisations is viewed from within the bureaucracy as unacceptable for public servants.

The story recounted here has had little to say about Maori or women. The one known Maori member of the early groups was Apirana Ngata, who belonged to the Forestry League. The relationship between the conservation movement and the Maori was ambivalent. In Taranaki and Nelson the local Maori community co-operated with the movement to seek protection of pa sites and the forests of the Rai valley respectively. Relations were not always so amicable. The Taranaki group displayed a sensitivity over Maori land issues which was the exception rather than the rule but the major source of conflict was the issue of poaching. The movement did not accept that the Treaty of Waitangi conferred immunity from enforcement of the bird protection laws and poaching remained a continuing source of discord. There does not appear to have been an effort to enlist the support of Maori community groups in the same way as the support of women's groups was being sought by the 1920s.

Notable exceptions to the absence of women were Blanche Baughan and Mrs H. M. Campbell, who served on the executive of the first Forest and Bird Protection Society and Perrine Moncrieff who was active in the Native Bird Protection Society and formed her own organisation. Her contributions to nature conservation have been recognised for some time. Mrs Campbell remains a shadowy figure deserving of further research. Blanche Baughan has emerged as a significant and much under-rated conservation philosopher who has interesting parallels with the well-known American nature prophet, John Muir.

The absence of women as leaders or indeed members of the early movement contrasts with the situation in Britain and the United States, where women were prominent in the formation and support of bird protection societies. This perhaps helps to explain why two of the three women known to have been active in the movement in New Zealand were women who came from England as adults. It is worth observing that women's organisations played an important role in promoting nature conservation in the United States in the early decades of the twentieth century. The support which the movement has received from the Women's Institute since the 1920s deserves further investigation and may well add a significant new dimension to our understanding of the role of women in nature conservation in New Zealand. The great difficulty in assessing the role of women in the movement is that they are almost invisible in the historical record. Little enough is known of the conservation activities of the men who were otherwise prominent, because this aspect of their activities was seldom considered noteworthy by biographers or obituary writers. What is certain is that men such as Harry Ell or G. M. Thomson, with their large

families, varied interests and extremely active lives could not have achieved all they did without the backing of supportive wives, whose contributions are so seldom acknowledged.

Our new awareness of the active involvement in the conservation movement of a number of prominent New Zealanders emphasises that the contributions of Harry Ell must now be seen from a new perspective. The movement pre-dates his years of active involvement by a decade. Although Ell's influence as a parliamentary advocate of the scenery preservation needs to be reassessed in the context of the widening base of support provided by the scenery preservation groups and his importance as a promoter of the Scenery Preservation Act has perhaps been overstated. Nevertheless, his role as an effective publicist and motivator remains his most important contribution to the cause. The Society he formed in 1914, the first Forest and Bird Protection Society, proved to be a pivotal one, providing a much needed philosophical basis for the developing movement. If its philosophical strength derived less from Ell than its other key members, Guthrie-Smith, Thomson, Baughan, Drummond, and especially Cockayne, the key role he played in forming and holding the Society together can be judged from its collapse once he left Wellington and devoted his energies to his long-standing Summit Road scheme. In 1923 Ell's role as lynch pin of the movement was taken over by Val Sanderson, a man of extraordinary commitment, more single-minded in his devotion to the cause than any one before him. Both men illustrate the important contribution of charismatic leadership, energy and commitment to the success of a movement.

For most conservationists in New Zealand the history of nature conservation in this country dates back no further than the 1960s. It must by now be clear that the movement has a long and distinguished history. As modern conservationists face the challenge of new and continuing threats to the environment they may take encouragement from the achievements of their predecessors. They may also draw strength from belonging to an on-going tradition that has roots stretching back to the earliest period of European colonisation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to my supervisors, Professor Kevin O'Connor and Dr Harvey Perkins for their valuable criticism and advice and for their generous support and encouragement for this undertaking. Before his untimely death, I also received much invaluable advice and encouragement from Dr Angus MacIntyre, and I have missed the benefit of his criticisms during the writing stages of the thesis.

I am grateful for the assistance of the librarians and archivists of the following institutions: the University of Canterbury Library, the Canterbury Public Library, the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch College of Education, and National Archives in Christchurch; the Alexander Turnbull Library and National Archives in Wellington; the Auckland Public Library and the Auckland Institute and Museum; the Hocken Library, Dunedin; Landcare Research, Lincoln; the Hamilton Public Library; the Hunterville District Settlers' Museum; the Napier Public Library and the Hawke's Bay Museum, Napier; the Nelson Provincial Museum, Stoke; the Taranaki Museum, New Plymouth; the Palmerston North Public Library; the Timaru Public Library; the Wanganui Regional Museum; and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Archives.

The following individuals have been helpful in giving advice or information: Mr A. P. Thomson; Mr John Nicholls; Mr Paul Melody; Dr Geoff Park of the Department of Conservation; Dr Thomas Dunlap of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; Dr Geoffrey Wandesford-Smith of the University of California, Davis; and Ms Eris Parker of the Cambridge Historical Society. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance of Evelyn Knibb in the preparation of the maps.

I wish to thank the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and the Federated Mountain Clubs for permission to consult their archives held in the Alexander Turnbull Library.

For financial support during the research and writing this thesis I am indebted to the Department of Conservation for awarding me a Department of Conservation Science Scholarship.

Finally, I wish to thank my parents, Nola and Kay Taylor, for encouraging me in my love of nature, my husband, Ian, for his moral support and all his greatly valued help and my children, Elizabeth and James, for their forbearance and understanding in giving me the time to write.

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APPENDIX

Conservation Initiatives by the New Zealand Institute or its Constituent Societies, 1868 - 1934

- 1870 Otago Institute (OI) Resolved (11 January) to obtain information from old whalers and others as to the calving time of whales and to communicate with other societies as to the best method of discouraging **coastal whaling**, which tends to exterminate these animals. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 3 : 56) Report presented 12 July 1870. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 3 : 68-70) Act passed August) 1873.?
- 1879 Wellington Philosophical Society (WPS) Moved (9 that the Council of WPS be requested to consider the advisability of representing to Government the necessity for **forest conservation** and of obtaining the co-operation of the affiliated societies of the NZI for furthering the object. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 12 : 425-426)
- 1884 Nelson Philosophical Society (NPS) Resolved (7 July) that a **list of native birds** that are now **protected by law** should be printed and the Education Board be requested to give facilities for making them known to boys attending the Public Schools. List presented at following meeting and Secretary instructed to communicate with the Acclimatisation Society regarding publication and distribution. (Minute Books)
- 1885 OI Resolved (10 June) that the Institute draw the attention of the Government to the recent wholesale **deportation of tuatara** lizards which has taken place from this colony, and respectfully suggest that steps be taken to preserve these animals in the localities in which they still occur. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 18 : 427)
- 1886 Auckland Institute (AI) Letter (16 December) to Government advising the purchase of **Little Barrier** as preserve for native birds. (*A.J.H.R.*, 1896, H-2)
- 1887 NPS Resolved (4 October) that the secretary communicate with the secretaries of the united societies and seek their support in drawing the attention of the Government to the suggestion by Reischek for a **bird preserve on Hauturu**. (Minute Book)
- 1888 OI Resolved (11 September) that a committee be appointed to draw up a memorial to the Mayor, asking him to convene a public meeting with the object of forming an **association to conserve and extend the amenities of Dunedin** and its neighbourhood. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 21 : 522)
- 1889 AI Resolved (11 November) to press the Government to constitute **Little Barrier Island** a reserve for preserving the native flora and fauna of New Zealand. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 22 : 543)
- 1893 OI Acting on a letter from G. M. Thomson, Council to confer with Acclimatisation Society as to the best means of forwarding the matter of **Resolution Island**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 26 : 676) A joint deputation was made to Mr Ward.

- 1894 AI Motion (19 February) urging the desirability of bringing the purchase of **Little Barrier** to an early resolution. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 26 : 670-672) Following a deputation from the Institute, a Bill was introduced providing for compulsory purchase.
- 1902 OI Resolved (10 June) to urge on the Government the necessity for adequate measures to **protect Mt Cook reserve** from the depredations of stock and injury by fire and to make and protect further reserves in the locality. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 36 : 566)
- 1905 Philosophical Institute of Canterbury (PIC) Council corresponded with the Government and other branches of the NZI on the subject of **preservation of the outlying islands** with special reference to the Campbell and Auckland Group. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 38 : 598)
- 1906 OI The attention of the Government of Tasmania to be drawn to the **destruction of penguins and elephant seals** on Macquarie Island. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 39 : 546)
- 1907 OI Resolved (11 June) that in order to preserve our native birds from extinction **absolute protection** is required for **all land-birds** and most swimming-birds, with the exception of shags, grey ducks, pukeko and paradise ducks. That island sanctuaries and **sanctuaries** of swamps, river-beds and lagoons be set aside in every county. That a conference be arranged in an earnest endeavour to get some workable laws for the protection of birds. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 40 : 577) Following the conference, representations were made to the Colonial Secretary and the Attorney General on the necessity of providing by law for the further protection of birds. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 40 : 581)
- 1909 PIC Committee appointed to suggest **amendments to the Animals Protection Act** resulting in a conference with the Acclimatisation Society at which recommendations were drawn up. These to be submitted to other branches, members of Parliament and the Minister of Internal Affairs (*T.N.Z.I.*, 42, Pt II, p.108) Supported by OI. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 42, Pt II, p. 114) As a result amendments were made to the Act.
- 1910 Board of NZI Sub-committee appointed to inquire into the conditions of **leases for outlying islands**. The president communicated the Institute's opposition to leasing to members of Parliament. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 43, Pt II, pp. 73 & 75)
- OI Co-operated with Canterbury branch to protest to Prime Minister against the **destruction of seals** on the outlying southern islands. Protested to Government concerning the **destruction of penguins and sea-elephants** on Macquarie Island. (Government refused to interfere with latter because the island was under the jurisdiction of Tasmania but promised to look into the seal issue) Protested to Southern Lands Board and Minister of Lands concerning a **whaling** enterprise on Auckland Island because such enterprises are very destructive of native flora and fauna. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 43, Pt II, p. 96)
- 1911 WPS Society to strongly urge Government to reserve the whole of **Kapiti Island**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 44, Pt II, p. 8)

- PIC Resolved (2 August) to approve the reservation of **Kapiti Island** as a sanctuary but protest its proposed use as a holiday resort, which would negate the policy of protecting flora and fauna. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 44, Pt II, p. 47)
- 1912 WPS Council communicated with other branches about **extending the boundaries of Tongariro National Park** and making a photo-topographical survey of it. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 45 : 430)
- 1913 OI Resolved (2 September) to protest to the Minister of Marine concerning removal of protection from **fur seal** and to seek its reinstatement at an early date before numbers diminish. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 46 : 383) Supported by Canterbury branch. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 46 : 380) Minister agreed to investigate the effect of the open season. (p. 384) Council approached Government to obtain more effective enforcement of **bird protection on Stewart Island Sanctuary**. (p.384)
- 1914 Board of NZI Resolved (~~28~~ January) to urge Government to introduce a **Plumage Bill** similar to that before the British Parliament and to impress upon it the importance of **extending Tongariro National Park**. The Institute to take up the issue of **preserving the gannets** at Cape Kidnappers. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 46 : 361-2)
- Manawatu Philosophical Society (MPS) Advocates **extension of Tongariro** (supported by Hawke's Bay and Otago branches) and **reservation of Mt Wharite**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 47 : 654 & 647)
- 1916 MPS Deputation to Government to urge the importance of **bush preservation**, especially extension to Tongariro and reservation of Manawatu Gorge. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 49 : 566)
- 1917 Board of NZI The attention of the Minister of Lands was drawn to the **destruction of fur seals** in Sounds National Park. Prosecution of the offenders sought and an amendment to the law urged to prohibit sealing in sanctuaries and national parks. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 49 : 536-7) Protest endorsed by Wellington branch. (p. 549)
- MPS Representation made to Government on **bird protection** including extension of protection to islets off Stewart Island. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 50 : 352-3)
- 1918 Board of NZI Resolved (29 January) to co-operate with Forest and Bird Protection Society over **protection of birds** and to form a sub-committee to report on **Kapiti Island**. Further demands for protection of fur seal. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 50 : 334-5)
- 1919 Board of NZI Resolved (1-3 February) to urge Minister of Lands to acquire the remaining portion of **Kapiti** and to formally recognise the **Institute** as an **advisory body** in connection with the administration of Kapiti and other sanctuaries. (Followed up by a deputation to the Minister of Lands. Minister agreed to establish an advisory committee with a representative of the Institute on it. *T.N.Z.I.*, 52 : 471); to again urge upon Government the necessity of strictly **enforcing the regulations for the protection of seals and native birds** (prompted by OI with support from PIC); to urge the Government of Tasmania to protect the **seals and birds of Macquarie Island**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 51 : 468-9) Resolved (30

January) to ask Minister of Internal Affairs to allow the NZI an opportunity to see and **advise on proposals for protection of fauna** before they are submitted to Parliament. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 52 : 472)

- 1923 Board of NZI Further action taken on **extensions to Tongariro National Park and reservation** of parts of the **Kaimanawa Range** urged upon the Government. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 55 : 731); Opposition to **heather planting at Tongariro and leasing** of a portion of the park. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 55 : 772) Sub-committee to compile **list of rare birds** deserving of better legislative protection. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 55 : 756) Guthrie-Smith asked to report on the preservation of the **avifauna of Stewart Island**. As a consequence of the report, the NZI and Otago Institute to co-operate in endeavouring to create bird sanctuaries on the Stewart Island region and Government urged not to allow control of wildlife on the Island to pass to acclimatization societies. Government to be asked to **consult with NZI before granting permits to take birds**. **Representation sought on Tongariro Park Board**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 55 : 755-756)
- 1924 Board of NZI Deputation to Government re **heather and grouse at Tongariro**; sub-committee on control of animal life on Stewart Island recommend removal of deer and control of hunting; sub-committee established to recommend scenic reserves on **Stewart Island**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 56 : 751 & 753)
- 1925 Board of NZI Seeks establishment of an **Advisory Board on the introduction of plants and animals**. Opposition to **Leasing of Auckland Island**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 57 : 985 & 987) Resolved (29 May) to support N.Z. Tourist League's efforts to have membership of the **Scenery Preservation Board** widened to include representatives of societies dealing with historical and scientific matters. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 57 : 987)
- 1926 Board of NZI **Policy Statement** (8 July) on **Tongariro N. P.** re its protection as an example of primitive New Zealand and opposing the presence of foreign flora and fauna. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 58 : 5-7); Dept. Of Internal Affairs to be asked to send a representative on the Whitney Expedition to supervise permit for **collecting native fauna**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 57 : 589)
- 1927 Board of NZI Moved that Auckland Islands and Disappointment Island be made **scenic reserves**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 58 : 9); Resolved (17 August) to oppose widening of track from Ohakune to Ohakune Hut in **Tongariro N.P.**; **Sub-committee** established to keep watch on matters relating to **national parks**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 59 : 6 & 7)
- 1928 Board of NZI Motion passed regretting Government's decision to open a road at **Waipoua**. Forest should be preserved for all time. AI to set up a vigilance committee; Dept. of Lands to be asked to make not only forest but also the open ground at **Arthur's Pass** a scenic reserve. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 59 : 22 & 23)
- 1929 Board of NZI Letter to Minister of Marine (25 September) supporting endeavours of Mr E. Stead to have the **shags** protected. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 61 : 8)

- 1930 Board of NZI Dept of Lands to be asked to allow NZI to elect a member to **Arthur's Pass Park Board** and **Mt Egmont Park Board**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 61 : 27) (Member appointed to Arthur's Pass Park Board in 1933) **Committee** set up to deal with **scenery preservation**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 62 : vii)
- 1932 Board of NZI Further protest re **Waipoua**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 64 : vi)
- 1933 Board of NZI Supports Forestry League's call for a Commission of Inquiry into **destruction of forests by plant eating animals** and advocates extending the terms to include an investigation of the whole subject of **wildlife control**. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 64 : 375)
- 1934 Board of NZI **Standing committee on Wildlife Control** established which recommended the formation of a Flora and Fauna Board to advise the Government and co-ordinate wildlife administration. (*T.N.Z.I.*, 64 : 378)