

1908.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS: SCENERY-PRESERVATION.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1908; TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS
AND SCHEDULES OF ALL LANDS ACQUIRED AND RESERVED UNDER "THE SCENERY
PRESERVATION ACT, 1903," AND AMENDMENT ACT, 1906.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 10 of "The Scenery
Preservation Act, 1903."*

SIR,—

Department of Lands, Wellington, 22nd June, 1908.

I have the honour to submit herewith report on scenery-preservation for the twelve months
ended the 31st March, 1908.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM C. KENSINGTON,
Under-Secretary for Lands

The Hon. Robert McNab, Minister of Lands.

REPORT.

THE preceding twelve months has not witnessed any unusual need for urgent action in the direction of acquiring and purchasing private or Native lands for scenic purposes, and the extensive bush and grass fires during the summer months necessitated any steps so taken being of an extremely cautious nature. As most of the areas suitable for scenery-preservation are lands almost entirely covered with native forest, great care had to be exercised in insuring that they had not been, or were not likely to be, affected by the bush-fires periodically occurring throughout New Zealand, particularly in such a dry summer as has been recently experienced. However, it is worthy of note that none of the existing reserves were seriously affected in this manner, and that their natural beauties are practically preserved under, in many cases, exceptionally trying circumstances.

RESERVATIONS IN YEAR.

Up to the 31st March, 1907, an area of 25,801 acres had been acquired and reserved under "The Scenery Preservation Act, 1903," and "The Public Works Act, 1905," and during the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1908, an addition of 8,130 acres was made to the total, which thus reached 33,931 acres, exclusive of about 100,000 acres of Crown land similarly reserved under the Land Act. Prominent among the lands thus acquired is an area of 751 acres of Native land bordering the railway-line between Auckland and Rotorua, some six miles distant from the latter place, and a portion of 157 acres of freehold land almost adjoining, the result being that a stretch of native bush through which the railway-line runs is preserved intact. Another purchase was some 1,517 acres of forest land on the banks of the Wanganui River, below Pipiriki and adjoining Koroniti. This includes several areas of detached forest in the Ahuahu, Ohotu, and other Native blocks recently leased for grazing purposes by the Aotea Maori Land Board: and the Government, in order to insure the protection of the bush on the river-banks, was compelled to take the land under the Public Works Act, which authorises the purchase of lands for scenery-preservation.

A spring of mineral water near to Pipiriki, on the banks of the Wanganui River, was also taken under the same Act, and has now been leased to Mr. Hatrick, owner of the Pipiriki Accom-