

1910.  
NEW ZEALAND.

## DEPARTMENT OF LANDS: SCENERY - PRESERVATION.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1910; TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS  
AND SCHEDULE OF LANDS ACQUIRED AND RESERVED DURING THE YEAR UNDER THE  
SCENERY PRESERVATION ACTS.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 17 of the Scenery Preservation  
Act, 1908.*

SIR,—

Department of Lands, Wellington, 31st May, 1910.

I have the honour to submit herewith report on scenery-preservation for the twelve months  
ended the 31st March, 1910.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM C. KENSINGTON,

Under-Secretary for Lands,

The Hon. Thomas Mackenzie,

Minister in Charge of Scenery-preservation.

### REPORT.

THE past twelve months have witnessed steady and consistent progress with the work of scenery-preservation, although every care has been taken to avoid interference with land suited for settlement purposes, or to acquire areas that would necessitate the expenditure of large sums of money. The land reserved for scenic purposes during the year amounted to 3,470 acres, making, with the areas reserved under the Scenery Preservation and Public Works Acts between 1903 and 1909, a gross area of 42,448 acres.

It was, however, found advisable to revoke the Proclamation of three areas of land that had previously been set aside for scenic purposes, and a total of 1,901 acres was withdrawn from reservation in this manner, thus leaving the net area reserved at 40,546 acres.

In addition to these areas, many scenic reservations were made under the authority of the Land Act, 1892, between the passing of that Act and the general operation of the Scenery Preservation Act, about 85,000 acres of Crown lands being thus retained in its natural state.

It may be well to again draw attention to the fact that the bulk of scenic reserves are composed of land mostly unsuitable for close settlement, and that in very few cases could the lands be utilised for settlement save in large blocks, and sold at low prices or leased at small rentals. The majority of the reserves are composed of hilly, broken country, covered with bush that prevents the soil from slipping into the gullies and streams, and tends to insure the conservation of the water-catchment areas under satisfactory conditions, and they are immensely more useful to New Zealand in their present state than if they were denuded of forest, when they would form a continual trouble to the farmer, owing to their barren slopes allowing the rain-water to pour unchecked down the ridges and gullies, assisting to swell the flood-waters, and thus cause much damage.

The foregoing remarks, though relating to matters that have previously been discussed, are repeated, as there is still a tendency amongst the general public to attach a certain amount of importance to occasional statements published by irresponsible persons to the effect that large areas of good agricultural or pastoral country are locked up in scenic reservations. This is not the case, and the settlement of the country is not retarded, but rather benefited, by the judicious reservations that are made when fitting opportunity offers of lands along high ridges, wooded slopes and gullies,