

Some red deer were presented by Miss Audrey Chirnside, of Werribee Park, Victoria, and liberated near Lake Kanieri. The wapiti liberated in George Sound last year are reported to have successfully acclimatised, as on the 23rd March last the captain of the "Hinemoa" found tracks of the herd.

The Haurangi State Forest Deer Reserve, near Martinborough, was closed against all shooting for this season in order to afford protection to the deer, it having been found that illegal shooting had been taking place. Two special Rangers were appointed to patrol the reserve during March and April.

Some very fine heads were reported from Lake Hawea, and this district is becoming the most favourite resort for deerstalkers.

Good sport was reported with fallow deer in the Blue Mountains, near Tapanui, the number of licenses issued being in excess of previous years.

Fallow deer are stated to have considerably increased in the Maungakawa Ranges, Waikato District.

Three red-deer stags and two hinds were procured from the Wellington Acclimatisation Society's farm in the Wairarapa, and liberated by the Department on the eastern side of Mount Ruapehu.

The thar liberated at Mount Cook, and the Japanese deer near Rangitaiki, Northern Kaimanawas, are reported to have successfully acclimatised.

In December last the Department decided to get some opossums for liberation, and procured through the offices of the Southland Acclimatisation Society twenty pair. Ten pair were forwarded to Rotorua, three pair being liberated on Mr. Benn's run, and the rest on the northern shores of Lake Rotoiti. Ten pair were donated to the Hokitika Society, and were let loose at the back of Kumara and on the slopes of Mount Tuhua. The undertaking was a very satisfactory one, only one animal having died in transit. The opossums were Tasmanian black and grey.

Ten white sporting ducks were procured from the Hokitika Acclimatisation Society, four of which were sent to the Rotorua Gardens, and placed in the pond with the other ducks there; the balance went to the caretaker at Lake Waikaremoana, and were released on one of the arms of the lake.

#### SCENERY-PRESERVATION.

The Commission appointed in March, 1904, completed its work on the 31st March last, having during its existence furnished fourteen interim reports, containing 380 recommendations relating to scenic and historic places throughout the colony. The acquisition and proclaiming of a number of these, to the extent of about 68,000 acres, was in hand up to the 31st March, 1906, when the administration of the Act was transferred to the Department of Lands and Survey.

I have to place on record the services of Mr. S. Percy Smith, who acted as Chairman of the Commission, and to whom the thanks of the Department's officers are due for his valuable advice and assistance.

#### METEOROLOGICAL RECORDS.

I am pleased to state that the meteorological stations have during the past year been placed on a better footing by the Director of the Colonial Museum, a condition of things much to be desired, and of considerable importance to the colony's tourist and health resorts.

#### NORTH AUCKLAND.

Steps are now being taken to establish a regular service from Dargaville to Whangarei *via* Poroti, which, if successful, will serve to greatly popularise the attractive and charming round trip to Auckland, Helensville, Whangarei, and back to Auckland.

During the year the Balneologist visited Helensville to report as to the best means of improving the Domain and its bathing facilities. The sum of £200 was paid over to the Domain Board to give effect to the initial improvements outlined by the Balneologist.

#### TE AROHA.

The receipts at Te Aroha for the year to the 31st March, 1906, amounted to £1,633 4s. 3d., an increase of £90 9s. 8d. compared with the previous year. The total number of baths taken was 40,865, as against 38,975 in 1904-5.

The necessary maintenance-works were carried out in the various buildings.

The Pavilion Bath building was repaired and painted, and three extra dressing-boxes were constructed.

The Children's and Sulphur Bath buildings were also repaired and painted, and the old swimming-bath in the latter building reconstructed, and the dressing-boxes improved.

No. 3 bath building has been altered and fitted up for Aix and electrical baths.

The want of an emergency ward for accidents is keenly felt, as at present there is no provision for the treatment of such cases, which have to be taken by train to Hamilton, the nearest hospital town.

#### Water-supply.

The Borough Council submitted a scheme for increasing the town water-supply, to cost £600, towards which the Government contributed half the cost. This work is now in hand.

#### Drainage.

The improvement in drainage mentioned in my last report has now been effected by the Borough Council, assisted by the Government grant of £333.