

On the north bank of the Waitara River, about seven miles from its mouth, and in close proximity to the Tikorangi Village, stands the ancient pa called Awa-te-take, standing on the verge of the precipice that borders the Waitara River in this locality, in height some 200 ft. This old stronghold may be reckoned amongst the great fighting pas of Taranaki, and its acquisition under the Act by the Crown as a scenery and historic reservation is of considerable importance, as its fortifications are in such a fine state of preservation.

Many generations ago the pa was captured by surprise by the Taranaki Tribe, and in this connection there are some "sayings" about it that illustrate some peculiarities in the Maori language. The story as set out in vol. 18 (No. 1), page 21, of the *Polynesian Journal* runs as follows: "Te Tuiti-Moeroa was the chief of Awa-te-take Pa, and he had apparently been threatened by some one of the Taranaki chiefs whose residence was in the forest. On this threat being made known to Te Tuiti, he said, 'I shall not be killed by a man who is a mouku-treader,' mouku being the Maori name for the common forest fern—or, in other words, by a forest-dweller. Nevertheless, his pa was attacked by Taranaki in the night, he and his son alone being there, when the 'fern-treader' called out to Te Tuiti in his house, 'Now will you die by the mouku-treader.' Te Tuiti shouted in reply, 'Had you come by daylight you might have seen Te Tuiti, but as for this, you have come by night, and will not see Te Tuiti.' Saying this, Te Tuiti got out at the back of the house, and made his escape."

These old pas, with Puketi (Town of New Plymouth) and Tatareamaka, twelve miles to the south, complete the number taken for historic purposes. Negotiations are now in hand for the purchase of Pukerangiora. This transaction when completed will secure to the country a pa celebrated in pakeha as well as Maori history. From the site a beautiful and extensive panoramic view over the surrounding country may be obtained.

W. H. SKINNER.

APPENDIX D.

REPORT OF THE SCENERY PRESERVATION BOARD.

The present Board is composed of the Surveyor-General (Mr. John Strauchon), the General Manager of Tourist and Health Resorts (Mr. F. S. Pope), and the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the district in which is situated the land to be dealt with.

During the twelve months ended 31st March, 1910, it was only necessary to hold two meetings of the Board, one concerning matters in the Taranaki Land District, and the other relating to land in the Wellington Land District. Eleven recommendations advising the setting-apart of scenic areas under the Scenery Preservation Act were passed, and five of these areas have since been proclaimed as reserves. The other recommendations are now being dealt with by the Government.

A pleasing feature of the year's operations was the donation by Mrs. Nini Koro of a portion of Section 7, Pahiatua Native Reserve, on which is situated the well-known Pahiatua Hill, and the legendary cave of Rongomai. Although the land had passed from Mrs. Koro's possession into that of the Messrs. Warren, the latter proprietors generously consented to relinquish any claim they might have had to the land, and also agreed to add a small portion of the surrounding land to the proposed reserve in order to complete the reservation of the most picturesque portion of the hill. The formal gazetting has not yet been made, but it is hoped that this will be effected at an early date.

Meetings of the Board to deal with lands in the Otago, Nelson, and other districts are about to be held, and every care is taken that thorough inquiry is made into all lands at all suitable for scenic reservation, and not adapted for close settlement, which the Minister directs from time to time shall be reported upon.

JOHN STRAUCHON,
Chairman, Scenery Preservation Board.

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