

1931.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.
SCENERY-PRESERVATION.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1931, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND SCHEDULE OF LANDS ACQUIRED AND RESERVED DURING THE YEAR UNDER THE SCENERY PRESERVATION ACT.

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

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st July, 1931.

I have the honour to submit herewith a report on scenery-preservation for the year ended 31st March, 1931.

I have, &c.,

W. ROBERTSON,

Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Hon. E. A. RANSOM, Minister in Charge of Scenery-preservation, Wellington.

REPORT.

PROCLAMATIONS issued during the year setting land apart as scenic or historic reserves under the provisions of the Scenery Preservation Act covered a total area of 131,415 acres.

In the North Auckland Land District a valuable addition to the Kirk's Bush Scenic Reserve, near Papakura, was made as a result of a gift to the Crown of an area of 2 acres 1 rood 25 perches by Messrs. R. J. and A. Willis. The gift area contains some beautiful native bush, and its reservation has greatly enhanced the value of the reserve, which was already well known as containing native trees in great profusion and variety. It is particularly pleasing to record a public-spirited gift of this nature, and the thanks of the people of the Dominion are due to the generous donors.

In the last report reference was made to the reservation of an area of some 98 acres in Wairoa Parish formerly owned by the Manukau County Council, and it was intimated that some further areas in the locality would be set aside. This matter was completed during the year now under review by the reservation of two further scenic areas of 51 acres and 68 acres 2 roods 22 perches respectively, and the control of all three reserves was vested in the County Council.

For some considerable time the Department has been endeavouring to obtain certain small sections in the Township of Leigh, with a view principally to the preservation of the beautiful pohutukawa-trees growing along the coast-line. An area of 1 acre was secured during the year, and arrangements practically completed for the acquisition of two further areas. Leigh is a particularly charming spot, and now that it is easily accessible from Auckland City by car the Department is anxious to take all possible steps to preserve its natural beauty.

Reservations in the Auckland Land District included an area of 67 acres at the Aratiatia Rapids, and areas totalling 3,318 acres surrounding and including Lake Okareka. In the case of the first reservation the area extends to the top of the hill overlooking the Waikato River, and, although the whole area is not covered with trees, the bush down by the water is very pretty and greatly enhances the beauty of the rapids. So far as the other reservation is concerned, Lake Okareka is an attractive sheet of water, while the surrounding areas are mostly covered with beautiful native bush of high scenic value.