

ANALYSIS of CORRESPONDENCE relative to CONDITION of the FORESTS of NEW ZEALAND—*continued.*

PART I.
Analysis of
Reports, 1869.

QUESTIONS.	AUCKLAND.	HAWKE BAY.	TARANAKI.	WELLINGTON.	NELSON.
6. State any damage which has occurred to agricultural districts, or other destruction of property, such as mills, &c., that has been imputed to floods, or droughts being rendered more severe through the destruction of the forests.	No instance.	Great damage at Porongahau and Napier. Severe droughts in 1861 and 1867. Four inches rainfall now is equal to seven inches formerly, owing to destruction of scrub in gullies.	No instance.	Great destruction in Hutt Valley, owing to severity of floods, caused by destruction of bush.	No instance, but thinks damage has been done by cutting down on banks of rivers.
(1.) Are bush reserves advisable, or should the forests be allowed to pass into freehold, with a view to their better conservation than at present?	Should be allowed to become freehold. Reserves generally inadvisable, as they harbour thistles.	Reserves should be made in large forests. The smaller ones should be allowed to become freehold.	Reserves should be made within 10 miles of top of Mount Egmont.	No occasion for bush reserves. As much should be sold in freehold as possible.	Tops of mountain ranges and heads of rivers should be reserved.
(2.) Does the system of granting bush licenses lead to an extravagant waste of the forests, and could you propose any system of supervision by which the forests might be thinned without their absolute destruction?	Yes. Inspectors of Works in employ of Highway Boards, Postmasters, &c., could look after this, or supervisors should value kauri trees to bushmen and get percentage on value received.	Bush licenses should be restricted to certain districts. System not yet tried. Supervision impracticable. Sides of roads should be planted.	Never yet granted. Would probably be necessary to protest against towai trees being stripped of bark.	No answer.	No; but would not recommend their being granted.
QUESTIONS.	MARLBOROUGH.	CANTERBURY.	OTAGO.	SOUTHLAND.	WESTLAND.
1. What is the area, character, and value of forests in the district?	700,000 acres black birch and rimu, on mountains and plains, and white and red pine and totara on latter. No estimate of value can be formed.	270,000 acres of totara, manuka, and other useful timbers. Best, £10 to £12 per acre. Government price, £2. Average of freehold property, £5.	1,421,000 acres; principally inferior, with totara, pines, and nuka interspersed. Value, £20 near town.	766,000 acres of mixed bush. Value, from 20s. up to £6 15s.	2,000,000 acres of red, white, and black pine principally. Birch on the mountains.
2. What was the original area of forest?	Little destroyed.	300,000 acres.	1,440,000 in 1847, originally 7,000,000.	816,000 acres, of which half is in Stewart's Island.	Little destroyed.
3. How much is still on Crown lands?	690,000 acres.	223,000 acres.	1,356,000 acres.	766,000 acres.	1,998,000 acres.
4. State what has been the relative destruction of forest on Crown lands and on freehold.	Nothing appreciable.	In equal proportions.	Much greater on Crown land than on freehold.	Inestimable; but very little has been felled on freehold land.	6,000 or 7,000 on Crown lands, and 1,000 on freehold.
5. What causes have led to the destruction of the forest, particularizing the relative effect of accidental fires, felling by holders of bush licenses, and destruction by cattle.	A few thousand acres by holders of pastoral leases, none by bush licenses or cattle.	Fires—principally accidental. None by cattle.	Mostly by fires. Destruction by cattle not apparent. Also by bush licenses.	Very little by fire and cattle, chiefly by bush licenses.	Principally by clearing for gold mining, &c. Destruction by cattle inappreciable. Also clearing for towns and roads.
6. State any damage which has occurred to agricultural districts, or other destruction of property, such as mills, &c., that has been imputed to floods, or droughts being rendered more severe through the destruction of the forests?	No instance.	No instance.	No instance.	No instance.	Low lands of Hokitika and Arahura, owing to destruction of thick scrub, are being rapidly destroyed.