

Any condition may be enforced on a tenant; but if land is sold under conditions of improvement, it will be optional, in a legal point of view, for the purchaser to do it or let it alone; therefore, if conditions of settlement are to be enforced, it will be much easier done by letting the lands with a purchasing clause, if the conditions be carried out. (Pardon me if I am forgetting I am writing to a statesman.)

PART I.
Proposed Forest
Settlements.

The greatest source of destroying the forests of this Colony are bush fires. Bush fires that will scorch an Australian forest to the topmost branches will not kill a tree that was sound before the fire. Not so in the New Zealand forests. Fortunately, bush fires do not penetrate into the green standing bush in this Colony, or there would not be a forest existing in the country. Totara timber is especially liable to be destroyed by bush fires, in consequence of the inflammability of the bark of those trees; and nothing tends so much to the spreading of those destructive bush fires as falling isolated trees or small patches in different parts of the forest, in the way that splitters and some saw-mill owners do, picking out the best of the timber first. The consequence is, that the dried tops of the fallen timber are often the cause of killing the whole forest; whereas, if the forest was worked systematically, and all the valuable timber taken off as far as it was touched, then when an accidental bush fire came it would burn up the tops of the dry fallen timbers, but it would only penetrate a few chains into the standing green bush, unless in very rare cases.

The only way, I think, to save our New Zealand forest from fires, is to enclose the reserves and prohibit trees being fallen, except by systematically commencing on the side of the forest to which the tops of the trees have the greatest lean, which experience shows to be generally to the north-east; so that as trees were fallen and removed, those that stood more to the south-west would then be fallen on the cleared ground.

These details, however trifling they may seem, are important in the practical working out of the principles you desire to introduce, and which will have to be carried out by officials who will work by rule only, and who no doubt have learned or will learn from experience that the safest course for a civil servant to adopt is to accept as little responsibility and give as little trouble as possible to the powers above them. Hence the reason I think timber cut up by Government would be more expensive than it would be to import it from America or Tasmania.

Trees that would stand bush fires without being killed are much needed as plantations to replace those destroyed yearly by bush fires.

Experience has shown that the chance of any co-operative undertaking succeeding is very small if it has to compete against hired labour properly directed. Few working men will carry on a saw-mill with success under a co-operative system. I have tried it, and understand the difficulties that will have to be surmounted before a number of workmen can be induced to work a complicated business requiring both capital and judgment in the direction of the labour to work economically, and where a single mind only can do it to advantage.

I find that I have run this matter to a greater length than I had intended, and as your time is valuable, I fear I have made it too long for your own consideration.

The Hon. J. Vogel, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. ANDERSON.

IV.—EXTENT AND RATE OF DESTRUCTION OF FOREST LANDS : PROFITS OF PLANTING.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT showing the PERCENTAGE of the FOREST LAND in New Zealand, 1830, 1868, and 1873.

Rate of
Destruction of
Forests.

PROVINCE.	Total Area in Acres.	Estimate of Forest Land.		
		In 1830.*	In 1868.*	In 1873.*
Auckland	16,650,000	4,000,000	1,650,000	1,200,000
Taranaki	2,290,000	2,000,000	1,800,000	1,600,000
Wellington	7,000,000	5,000,000	4,000,000	3,000,000
Hawke's Bay	3,050,000	970,000	360,000	250,000
Nelson	6,928,000	3,000,000	2,500,000	2,000,000
Marlborough	2,720,000	800,000	700,000	500,000
Canterbury	8,693,000	300,000	270,000	180,000
Westland	3,025,000	2,000,000	1,900,000	1,500,000
Otago	16,038,400	2,300,000	2,116,000	1,900,000
Totals	66,394,400	20,370,000	15,296,000	12,130,000

* These approximate estimates of forest land in the various Provinces are furnished by Dr. Hector.