

The forest and agricultural branches of the department, which are respectively under the especial care of Mr. Kirk and Mr. Reeves, conduct all business correspondence through the Under-Secretary of the department, Mr. Elliott, who, having a complete knowledge of all that is transpiring in the Land Department proper, as well, is enabled to prevent any clashing in matters that are akin.

In conclusion, I have but to express my obligations to Mr. Elliott and all the officers of the department with whom I come in contact for their frank and cordial co-operation.

J. McKERROW.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX No. 1.

CANTERBURY PLANTING BOARD REPORT.

SIR,—

Windermere, 6th July, 1886.

I have the honour to enclose a memorandum giving particulars of the work executed by the Canterbury Plantation Board during the season of 1885.

From this it will be seen that the total area dealt with amounted to 621 acres, of which 167 acres were sown with blue-gum-seed, 100 acres with wattle-seed, and 258 acres were planted with trees of various kinds and in various proportions, according to soil and climate; whilst ninety-five acres were fenced only and but partially broken up, the work being stopped by the dry weather.

The eighty-five acres at Hororata were planted with one-half larch, one-fourth *insignis*, and one-twelfth each of *Abies excelsa*, *P. austriaca*, and *P. laricio*; the *insignis* being planted as nurses for the others.

With the exception of the wattle-sowings, all the work has been successful.

The planting-out of the pines has, for the most part, been done by contract, under guarantee from the several nurserymen to replace all the plants that should die; and, considering the exceptionally-dry season, a very small percentage of the plants required renewal.

The 127 acres at North Rakaiia and Bankside which were sown with gum-seed show a much larger number of young plants than usual. Whether this is attributable to the extra warmth of the season favouring the germination of the seed, or to the seed being of better quality, I am unable to determine; perhaps it is due, in part, to both causes; and it is satisfactory to know that a large part of the seed was collected from trees growing around Christchurch.

It is matter for regret to find that *P. silvestris*, *P. pinaster*, and *P. austriaca* are all subject to a blight for which there appears to be no remedy short of cutting down the trees.

The Board planted considerable quantities of *P. austriaca* in the season of 1884, under the impression that it was free from the disease which had attacked the other two.

From personal observation it is clear that the three pines above named are badly blighted, and should be struck out of all lists for planting in this district.

During the last season the Board have planted *insignis* only as nurses for the more valuable pines, for which its rapid growth commends it.

In order to protect from fire the plantations adjacent to the railway-line, I had a strip of land, about 20ft. wide, ploughed round each plantation between Chertsey and Ashburton. Although this ploughing extended a few yards beyond the limits of the plantations, I regret to have to report that two of the blocks were much damaged by fire; but the trees, being all gum-trees, have since made a strong growth from the roots.

Owing to the exceptional dryness of the season, the fire, after burning the tussocks up to the ploughed land, appears to have crept along the hedge-row, burning straw by straw until reaching the fences surrounding the plantations.

To prevent similar destruction in future, greater care must be observed to surround the plantations by strips of land to be kept fallow or sown with white clover only.

As this is the last report which I shall have the pleasure of sending you, I desire to express my entire concurrence with the proposal to vest all the plantation reserves in the Councils of the several counties within which they are situated. This step should secure a larger amount of interest in the work, which has hitherto been carried on by only three or four enthusiasts. It will, perhaps, also bring more eyes to bear upon the public plantations to protect them from injury.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD G. WRIGHT,
Chairman.

J. McKerrow, Esq., Surveyor-General, Wellington.

WORK EXECUTED, SEASON 1885.

RAKAIIA, fifty-seven acres fenced and sown with gum-seed; Bankside, seventy acres fenced, and sown with gum-seed; Reserve No. 1742, fifteen acres fenced, and sown with gum-seed; Reserve No. 1741, twenty-five acres fenced, and sown with gum-seed; Reserve No. 1770 (Ashburton), forty acres ploughed, and sown with wattle; Reserve No. 2589 (Mayfield), forty acres ploughed, and sown with wattle; Reserve No. 2591 (Mayfield), ninety-six acres fenced, thirty-seven acres broken up only; Reserve No. 2564, twenty acres ploughed, and re-sown with wattle; Hororata, eighty-five acres, planted with 30,600 pines; Bluff, Coalgate, ten and a half acres, planted with 3,780 pines; Reserve No. 1767 (Wakanui), twenty-five acres, planted with 7,500 pines; Reserve No. 1782 (Winslow), twenty acres, planted with 7,000 pines; Reserve No. 1770 (Ashburton), twenty acres planted with 7,000 pines; Reserve No. 2565 (Valetta), forty acres, planted with 10,000 pines (filled); Reserve No. 2564 (Anama), forty acres planted with 10,000 acres (filled); Reserve No. 1905 (Tinwald), four acres,