

1903.
NEW ZEALAND.

FORESTS - CONSERVATION
(FURTHER REPORTS RELATIVE TO).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated the 23rd October, 1903.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House a return showing the outline of the scheme for more vigorous conservation of our remaining forests, and extending planting operations, prepared and submitted for approval as mentioned in the Chief Forester's report, C.-1, 1903, Appendix IV., page 89."—(Mr. McNAB.)

NOTES ON FOREST-CONSERVATION AND AFFORESTATION.

Department of Lands and Survey, State Forests Branch,
Rotorua, 23rd July, 1903.

THE rapidity with which this colony is being denuded of its forests has again been emphasized by the Acting-Premier in the last Financial Statement, wherein he says, "Additional information has been obtained as to the area of the remaining forests suitable for milling purposes, and a rough estimate has been made of the quantity of kauri and other timbers in the Auckland, Poverty Bay, and Westland Districts, which, though more satisfactory than previous estimates, points to the conclusion that in a comparatively few years' time the great natural resources of the colony as represented in its wealth of forest will fall lamentably short of requirements." The same opinion was expressed in 1887 by Captain Campbell Walker in his report to Government on "The Organization and Working of the State Forests Department."* In 1879 Mr. A. Lecoy, M.A., LL.B., published a most exhaustive report on "The Forest Question in New Zealand," † in which he called attention to the wholesale destruction of forests, while their renewal was being entirely neglected. Mr. G. S. Perrin, Conservator of Victorian Forests, also reported on "The Conservation of New Zealand Forests" in 1897. That gentleman stated, "Unless forest reforms are inaugurated speedily the timber famine which already threatens your colony must come."

Since 1885 ordinary Crown forests have been under the control of Crown Lands Boards, who issue licenses for timber-felling and act generally as conservators. State forests are under the immediate control of the Commissioner of State Forests, who acts on the recommendations of the Conservators of State Forests for the various land districts, these Conservators being also Commissioners of Crown Lands. The direction of forest-tree planting is undertaken by the State Forests Branch of the Department of Lands and Survey, which has no connection whatever with native forests. There are thus practically three branches of the service connected with our forests, controlled generally by the Surveyor-General.

The following table shows the revenue derived from State forests and the expenditure on forestry operations, including management and supervision of State forests :—

Year.	Revenue.†			Expenditure.§		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1896-97	6,504	4	10	2,472	7	10
1897-98	10,995	13	1	5,114	15	3
1898-99	5,844	6	6	4,044	3	2
1899-1900	8,845	18	10	4,002	9	7
1900-1	14,915	5	3	6,857	9	2
1900-2	17,118	11	5	10,334	13	7

The credit balance on State Forests Account at 31st March last was £49,011 13s. 8d. The receipts from timber licenses and sales of timber on ordinary Crown lands are paid into the Consolidated Revenue Account.

* Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, Vol. ix., pages 27, 187.
Institute, Vol. xii., page 3.

† Includes rent from State forests let for grazing purposes.

‡ Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, Vol. xii., page 3.

§ Includes management and supervision of State forests.