

*Hawke's Bay.*

4. On my arrival at Woodville, *viâ* the Manawatu Gorge, I was met by Mr. Hallett, deputed by Mr. Weber, the Chief Surveyor, and we proceeded together to Pahurite, near which I inspected the forest in what is known as the Tauraki Block, consisting of fine totara, with straight boles running up to 40 and 50 feet without a branch, mixed with black, red, and white pine. Much of the best of the forest in this neighbourhood is still in Native hands. Crossing the road, I saw a tract recently sold by Government, at £5 per acre I believe, containing very fine totara, whence piles for the Napier Harbour works were being taken. The contract price, I was informed, was high—£2 per 100 feet superficial; but there is a good deal of wastage, as many of the trees are honeycombed and unfit for the purpose.

We next proceeded to Takapu, visiting a very fine forest, in what is known as the Mahotoko or Rikaitai Block, where there is to be a railway station. The totara here is exceedingly fine, and older than what I have seen before. The block extends two miles by half a mile, and was recently opened for selection, but withdrawn. A considerable area should certainly be reserved here for future supply. Besides pine, I observed some beech in the gullies in the neighbourhood. A considerable area of totara forest in the neighbourhood of the Danish settlements has been destroyed by fire, which is much to be regretted. Although difficult, it is not impossible to prevent such fires, as has been proved by our experience in India. From Takapu I went *viâ* Waipukurau to Napier, noting the considerable plantation of blue-gums at the former place formed by Mr. H. Russell. At Napier, I saw Messrs. Ormond and Weber, and left on the 29th October for Taupo, inspecting on the way the bush at Pohue and Tarawera, much of which is now freehold. For some fifteen miles beyond Tarawera, the road passes through an undulating country, more or less covered with forest on the higher slopes, the chief timbers being apparently black and white pine, and miro of indifferent growth. I understood that all this country is in Native hands, and therefore deemed a more detailed inspection unnecessary. It will, however, certainly be advisable to acquire and conserve most of the forest in this generally treeless country, in which successful planting can scarcely be looked for, though Mr. Loughley's experiments near Tapuaeharuru show that it is not impossible on a small scale.

I did not visit the Poverty Bay district, as I was told by Mr. Ormond that there was not much demanding special attention there, and time was of course an object.

*Wellington.*

5. My first introduction to a New Zealand forest was in South Karori and Makara, in the neighbourhood of Wellington Town, where I accompanied Mr. Kirk shortly after my arrival in the colony, in order to make myself conversant with the names of the trees, their habits of growth, &c. Shortly afterwards we visited the forests in the neighbourhood of the Upper Hutt, Pakuratahi, and the Rimutaka, which may be considered typical of the forests of the west and south-west coast of the Wellington Province, near the seaboard. The forest in the Hutt Valley has, as is generally known, been extensively cleared, and no time should be lost in making considerable permanent reserves there, if, indeed, it be not too late, as I fear most of the land has already been sold. Mr. Carruthers tells me that he has secured the reservation of some limited areas as protection to the railway works, but a more general reservation would appear advisable. The timber on the Rimutaka Range is chiefly beech (*F. fusca* and *Menziesii*) and red pine, with a little white pine, and I believe considerable quantities of totara in the more inaccessible portions of the range. Considerable damage has been done by fires, which have cleared regular belts or roads through the forest, many trees on which appear also fully mature; but, on the other hand, I am pleased to note a good crop of young beech coming up on the outskirts, which only requires care to form the forest of the future. The height of the saddle where the road crosses is, I believe, 1,800 feet, and I ascended to 2,500 feet in the neighbourhood. In September I again proceeded over the Rimutaka to Masterton, whence I went some distance on the new Castlepoint road, and also visited some fair totara forests on Mr. Lowes's property, which I was glad to learn from him he was about to work and conserve on a definite system. The state of the rivers prevented my getting on through the Forty-Mile Bush to Woodville.

Returning to Wellington, I went by the alternative route *viâ* Paikakariki and Otaki to Foxton and Palmerston, and thence by the Manawatu Gorge to Woodville. There is heavy forest containing fine totara inland from the north of Paikakariki and Otaki, where much of the country is, I believe, unsurveyed. Before any portion is thrown open for settlement adequate reserves should be formed, and the same applies to the neighbourhood of Foxton and Palmerston, where settlement is already in progress, and the forest is rapidly falling without any adequate return to the State.

In November I came from the Patea River to Wanganui, intending to explore some of the forests inland from the latter place, but deferred doing so, owing to its being apparently impossible to ascertain what was in the hands of Government and what was not.

I have collected a good deal of useful information from various sources regarding the forest of the Wellington Provincial District, but have, I think, seen less of it than of any other, and found it more difficult to obtain information from official sources.

*Canterbury.*

6. I first visited the Canterbury district in August, on which occasion I went, by the advice of the Deputy-Superintendent and Chief Surveyor, to Oxford, where I inspected the forest, and was particularly pleased to note the manner in which the beech was renewing itself wherever fire had not followed in the wake of the bushmen. I subsequently received some useful information regarding this and the Harewood Forest in reply to a series of questions, which I submitted to the Deputy-Superintendent. Most of the land, however, is now freehold.

After a visit to Sir Cracroft Wilson's planting, at Cashmere, I went to Timaru, observing the country, and, especially, the state of the river-banks *en route*.

On returning to Christchurch, owing to the inclemency of the weather and absence of Mr. Rolleston, in Wellington, it was deemed advisable to postpone further inspection, and I accordingly returned to Wellington.