

declare any forests belonging to the Crown within such district to be forests subject to the provisions of this Part of this Act, and also from time to time to alter, amend, or revoke any such Proclamation.”

All other provisions under this Part of the Act, which specially relates to forests, being the literal reproduction of provisions previously enacted under “The New Zealand Forests Act, 1874,” Part V. of “The Land Act, 1877,” consequently does not extend any further in its bearing than as an amendment to section 6 of the former Act. Therefore, apart from the withdrawal of the special fund and of the said amendment, both being enactments of a purely administrative character, the principles and provisions of “The New Zealand Forests Act, 1874,” not having been repealed by an Act of the Legislature, still stand as the forest law of the colony.

It is enacted, under the Acts pre-cited, that the Governor shall have power to make, alter, or repeal regulations and by-laws for the administration and management of Crown forest-lands, and that “any regulations and by-laws may be made applicable to forests generally, or to one or more of such forests in particular.” The last-cited provision indicates clearly that, although the extent of lands to be proclaimed State forests is not specified in the Act, this is a matter left for investigation on the part of the Administration, and to be determined by the Governor.

Under sections 88 and 167 of “The Land Act, 1877,” the power to reserve and to withdraw from sale, leasing, or licensing any Crown land is vested in the Governor absolutely.

Hitherto, no regulations under the Act have been framed, and it is obvious that no definite regulations can be made prior to the proclamation of the Crown timber lands which shall be reserved for State purposes, the issue of the Proclamation itself depending upon a solution of the question of extent.

In conclusion, our forest law is plain and definitive: it prescribes the conservation of the Crown timber lands in such proportion, or to such extent, as the Governor shall deem necessary; but it may be remarked that the powers of the Governor, under the Act, apply only to measures of execution which do not touch nor suspend, and still less do they abrogate, the main objects of the law—viz., the twice-proclaimed enactment of the conservation of the public forests: and, in the matter of public forests, conservation means inalienability. Again, and apart from all question of legality, it may be observed that, at the time of the passing of “The New Zealand Forests Act, 1874,” the extent of the Crown forest lands in this colony might have been more than sufficient for State purposes. Has, since then, the area of these lands been so far reduced, through successive alienations, that the remaining portion might be found, under a proper system of conservation, only equal to, if not even below, the requirements of the present consumption, as supplied out of the public estate? This is the first question to be answered.

III. QUESTION OF EXTENT OF FOREST LANDS TO BE RESERVED FOR STATE PURPOSES.

The extent of bush land to be declared subject to the provisions of the Act may, generally, be determined by comparing the amount of the annual demand for produce out of the public forests with the quantity of the same which these forests can afford to supply annually and permanently. The ascertained relation existing between the supply and the demand will lead to a solution of the present question.

Although the available information on the subject is very limited, the few data at hand will allow estimates sufficiently approximate for the purpose of a demonstration.

As regards the extent of the general demand, the official information at hand does not give any further particulars than the quantity of sawn timber supplied out of the public forests in 1875. The increasing quantity since then has been taken approximately, and added to the known one. (See remarks under Table I.) As to the demand for produce other than sawn timber, the lack of information does not allow any other approximate estimate than by judging from comparison with the other class of produce. Altogether, the general demand is taken as annually absorbing the produce of 40,000 acres of the public forests, presumed to yield an average of 15,000 superficial feet of sawn timber to the acre. Approximate estimates of the money-value of the timber will be found under Table II.

Referring now to the quantity of produce which high timber forests can supply annually and permanently, such being the aims of State forestry, we shall be guided by rules and principles adopted in countries where forest-conservation is best carried out.

The perennity of forests may, notwithstanding the periodical cuttings in them, be maintained by the observance of rules applying to forest-cultivation which constitute the rudiments