

15,000 superficial feet of timber, equal to the full yield of one acre upon an average, are producing a net income of £16 2s. 11d. to the owner of a forest under systematic management. Why should not a like revenue accrue to the State from the sale of its timber standing in equal conditions of value and quantity to the timber on private property? The net income of £16 2s. 11d. arising from the sale of 15,000 feet of standing timber is equal to 2s. 2d., nearly, per 100 superficial feet; and, should the total quantity of timber yearly cut down on Crown lands be taken as 48,000,000 superficial feet, the upset prices averaging 2s. 2d. per 100 feet, this would indicate a revenue to the amount of £53,000 as a minimum, subject to the fluctuations of the timber market.

The above estimate of 48,000,000 superficial feet, set down as the approximate quantity of wood yearly cut down on Crown lands, originates from the single but reliable information on the subject, viz., that the revenue derived from the Crown forest-lands does not exceed £3,000 yearly (Crown Lands Report, 1879). Actual prices for timber standing on Crown lands are—3d. per 100 superficial feet; 20s. for 20 cords of firewood; no charge being made to miners, who may cut indiscriminately as much as they require; moreover, there being no effectual control to check the declarations of the saw-millers, &c., as to quantities cut by them. Under these circumstances, it has been thought that by doubling the amount of the revenue, and putting down the price of all cut timber at 3d. per 100 feet, the result would be nearer to the actual extent of the fellings (£6,000 at 3d. per 100 feet=48,000,000 feet)

No doubt all the figures used in the foregoing estimates would have to be remoulded under official investigation. However, they are intended to indicate a new direction in the forest affairs of the colony, which may be worthy the consideration of our statesmen.

RECAPITULATION

REVENUE—	£	s.	d.
By property-tax on private forest-areas, total area 5,000,000 acres, value £5 per acre (<i>vide</i> page 3)=total value £25,000,000=property-tax	104,166	13	4
By property-tax on cut timber, round and sawn, total quantity 400,000,000 superficial feet, value 10s. per 100 feet, total value £2,000,000 = property-tax	8,333	6	8
By annual sales of timber on Crown lands	53,000	0	0
Total	£165,500	0	0

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