

1. That the directing control of the Forestry Branch of the Lands Department should be placed in the hands of an executive officer at an adequate salary, such officer to be of approved administrative and financial ability.

2. That the said officer should have associated with him an Advisory Board of experts in forestry and matters appertaining thereto.

3. That such Board shall consist of not less than four members, who are to be paid such fee as may be prescribed, and to be appointed by His Excellency the Governor.

4. That the Board shall be called together not less than once a quarter for the consideration of matters of policy and important details with regard to the State forestry operations. We also are of opinion that the present Superintending Nurserymen should, under the direction of the proposed Forestry Board, control the operations in the North and South Islands respectively, and that they shall receive remuneration adequate to the important duties they discharge.

Such a Board as composed above would be in a position to confer with the Superintending Nurseryman on many matters of importance. They would also be responsible for changes in method, &c. Forestry is not a science in itself, but is a compound of many sciences together, with a practical knowledge of nursery-work and tree-planting. It seems to us that a combination of men, expert in various branches of the subject, and each man with a grasp of the whole, would be far better equipped to direct the forestry operations of the country than would a young man brought out from Europe or America, who, however well he was acquainted with the forestry practice of his own country and with theoretical forestry, would be altogether ignorant of both New Zealand conditions for tree-planting and of the indigenous forests.

6. AS TO THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE STATE SHOULD ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST TREE-PLANTING BY PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS AND LOCAL BODIES.

(1.) *Private Tree-planting.*

From the earliest days of settlement up to the present time there has been a good deal of private planting, so that plantations, large and small, are more or less in evidence in all the settled districts. No sooner is the indigenous forest felled and burned than the settler forthwith plants a few foreign trees round his homestead.

Tree-planting by the settler is usually undertaken for shelter purposes with the trees in one or more parallel lines at right angles to the prevailing wind. Sometimes the plantations are a chain or more in width, but, no matter how wide, the trees are nearly always planted so far apart that the lateral branches are not suppressed at an early age, and, in consequence, the timber is of very indifferent quality, through its being full of knots. It is this that has led to the timber of certain trees being considered valueless for building purposes—a quite mistaken conception.

Tree-planting by the settler is by no means universal. We were much struck, for instance, by the lack of shelter-belts on the windswept Southland Plain, where such would be of inestimable value not only to the farmer but to the whole district.

The reasons for private tree-planting are as follows: (1.) To afford shelter from wind, such shelter being beneficial not only for the stock and the crops, but it also protects the ground from loss of water, and favours the formation of the all-important humus. (2.) For providing firewood. (3.) For supplying fencing-material. (4.) For providing timber for rough buildings. (5.) For furnishing wood for handles, &c., for farm implements. (6.) As box-timber for packing purposes. (7.) For timber for sale for building purposes if the trees are planted under forest conditions. (8.) For purposes of beauty. (9.) For increasing the selling-value of the land through its making the farm more attractive.