

in the present management of these forests: no proper and remunerative treatment of the forest is practicable under the system of bush licenses and leases granted by superficial measure of the land; but ample power, under the Act, is given to the Executive for the purpose of issuing new regulations on the subject. (The reforms suggested on this particular point will appear in the sketch of regulations hereinafter submitted.)

Again, the object of the administration of forests, being to supervise and promote colonial interests of the highest importance, would be frustrated by the interference in such business of the Land Boards acting under the powers relating to Crown timber-lands generally, as given to them by "The Land Act, 1877," and especially in reference to such powers under sections 86 and 90, Part IV. of the same Act; but, here again, it may be observed that these powers would be virtually rescinded solely by the fact of the Governor exercising the superior powers vested in him, specially under sections 88 and 167 of "The Land Act, 1877," and generally under Part V. of the same Act.

In reference to the question of expenditure, and to that of the organization of the forest service, no substantial objection could be raised should the subject be viewed in its proper light. It is obvious that no fully efficient and scientific staff of foresters, such as may issue at a future time from our forest schools, can be formed at present; and, moreover, it must be understood that an institution of the kind is not immediately needed here, for the most urgent wants of the colony in respect to its forest affairs are simply these: (1) To stop at once the rapidly-progressive destruction of these magnificent forests, as now proceeding through the general practice of working indiscriminately extensive areas of the same, without any care for the natural regeneration of the forest; and (2) to obtain a most legitimate colonial revenue out of the immense quantity of produce which these forests yearly supply towards the general demand. Therefore, until we can attain to full efficiency in the service (such as the splendid arboreal vegetation in New Zealand will lead us to anticipate when our forest industries and timber trade shall have been developed and extended in the proportion they are entitled to), the administration of the timber-lands must be submitted to a transitory organization, and confined within the boundaries of practical forestry, as comprehended in the terms "conservation" and "revenue." Thus, for the present practical purposes of our forest administration, it may be contended that, not only for reasons of economy, but principally for the good of the service itself, no noticeable, if any, extra expenditure should accrue to the budget of the Land Ministry, as the staff of foresters at first necessary ought to be drawn from the general Land and Survey Departments. These officials, already trained in the business of administrative routine, would readily understand the bearing of, and the process of bringing into force, the new forest regulations; also, acting under instructions issued by the central forest administration, these officials would, if not already trained, soon become competent in the execution of their official and technical duties.

The number of the forest officers on executive service must, of course, be proportionate to the amount of work they will have to perform. Judging from the approximate estimates previously given (and still judging *a priori*, as the lack of information compels us to do), it may be, however, asserted that no less than 30 rangers, assisted by an adequate number of forest-guards, say, 90 or 100, all being under the authority of 10 inspectors, should constitute the staff of foresters on executive service^{at} the beginning—that is to say, for the purpose of allowing the means of operating successfully through a period of experimentation. Of course there will be no objection to the extension of the staff as soon as practical and profitable results may be obtained. The inspectors and rangers to be, in the first instance, taken out of the present forest service, and the number of them as above given to be supplemented, if necessary, by the transfer of officials from the Survey Department into the Forest Department. Forest-guards to be obtained by the transfer of men of the Armed Constabulary into the forest service. It must be observed that the duties of rangers and forest-guards will consist of actual and considerable work to be done by them, which will not any longer be confined to a simple police function, as is the case at present.

The general direction of the Forest Department would be given to the Minister of Lands, whose clerical staff would do the office work of the department. Superior control over the executive service should be exercised by the Commissioners of Crown Lands, acting as general inspectors, under the direct authority of the Minister of Lands.

The result of such an organization would be a considerable economy of expenditure, combining as well the exigences of good service which are so imperatively required for the success of a new institution destined to promote colonial interests of the highest importance,