

refused to grant any portion of the land to me. The first resolution of the Board in regard to these areas was one to regrant the whole to Massey, but it was lost on going to a division. A resolution was then submitted to grant half of the area (800 acres) to Massey and the balance to the public by ballot, and to refund Massey what he had paid with interest added. There was no provision for me, though I was the first applicant and had incurred considerable expense to bring about the position. However, I moved in the matter, and was granted ultimately 400 acres of the remaining 800 acres. The balance was offered to the public by ballot. Before the licenses were granted the whole area, 1,600 acres, was revalued for royalty. It had been previously surveyed into blocks of 200 acres each and valued by Mr. Authorized Surveyor T. S. Miller, a competent and trusted officer. The revaluation was made by Ranger Collins, whose valuations are interesting. His valuation of three of the areas granted to Massey were decreased in quantity of timber by 116,780 ft. and in value by £33 12s. 11d., while his valuation of two areas adjoining granted to H. Cox by ballot, with one granted to me by resolution of the Board—three altogether—increased the quantity of timber by 976,760 ft., and the value by £347 18s. 4d. Yet these areas had been valued previously by a highly competent officer. Regarding timber on Crown lands: The Land Act, 1908, Part X, section 311, provides for the issue of provisional licenses, for a term not exceeding three years, to occupy any rural land not exceeding 200 acres for the purpose of cutting, felling, or removing timber or bark, and also for the conversion of the license at any time during its currency into a lease having a term not exceeding twenty-one years. Section 312 provides that on the application of any sawmill-proprietor or other person any block or blocks of timber land not exceeding in the whole 600 acres of which licenses of sections not exceeding 200 acres each may be granted. Thus it seems quite clear Parliament intended the area of timbered Crown land which any one person should be entitled to obtain is 800 acres. Yet in the face of this provision regulations were issued on the 31st March, 1909, providing for the issue of licenses over areas up to 1,500 acres, while in actual practice areas much exceeding that limit have been granted. On the 3rd February, 1910, an advertisement was published in an Invercargill paper calling for applications for a block of 1,978 acres, and this was granted in one lot to one applicant. It is true the plan shows an area of 200 acres, and across the balance is written "Reserved for 588, 1,300 acres"; but the marginal colouring embraces the whole of the balance of land that was advertised, and this contains by survey 1,778 acres, and this balance absorbed all the available Crown land in the district. We claim these regulations are *ultra vires*, and desire also to point out they are unjust. We contend that every man in this Dominion is equal in regard to his right to participate in the distribution of the public estate. But the regulations in question discriminate between persons by providing in section 32 for the size of areas as follows: "Where the nominal horse-power of a mill does not exceed 8 horse-power, 300 acres; where it is 9 or 10 h.p., 400 acres; where it is 11 or 12 h.p., 500 acres; where it is 13 or 14 h.p., 600 acres; where it is 15 or 16 h.p., 800 acres; where it is 17 or 18 h.p., 900 acres; where it is 19 or 20 h.p., 1,000 acres; where it is 21 or 22 h.p., 1,200 acres; where it is between 22 and 30 h.p., 1,300 acres; from 30 h.p. upwards, 1,500 acres." Right under these regulations seems to be measured by the length of a man's purse. We thought we dwelt in a democratic country, but it appears we do not.

3. *Mr. Anderson.*] You have been connected with forestry for a considerable time?—Yes.
4. You have studied it specially?—I did in my early days.
5. You were Secretary for Forestry and Agriculture in Victoria?—I was.
6. And therefore know a good deal about it?—Yes, a little.
7. In Victoria do they allow areas of land to be appropriated in this way?—Certainly not, neither for forestry nor occupation. The amount for occupation was 320 acres in my time, but I believe it has been extended since. In 1869 the limitation was 350 acres—that is to say, no one man could acquire more than 350 acres from the Crown.
8. Does that apply to forests as well?—Yes.
9. You found it impossible to obtain bush in Southland?—Yes, quite impossible. I had to search and make inquiries to find out what could be acquired legally.
10. You were successful in the case you brought where the forest was under the jurisdiction of the Land Board?—Yes; we had no necessity to go to the Court. It was admitted that the title of these licensed areas under the regulations of 1886 was not good.
11. When you had an opportunity of going before the Court you satisfied it that the titles under these regulations were not good?—We had no occasion to go to the Court. The Department admitted that they were not good, and what we are asking for is that we may be allowed to go to the Court.
12. The regulations of 1886 have been amended, and now it is impossible for a man to hold bush in the way it could be done under those regulations?—No. They allow you to take up half-a-dozen areas still if you like.
13. Will you explain how that is done?—Any man can walk into the Land Office, if the land is available, and put in an application for a sawmill area in a State forest or on Crown land; and he can walk in next day and block another application alongside that, and it will be granted to him.
14. Is there no restriction as to area?—The restriction is 800 acres. My contention is that under the Act and the regulations any man can hold up to 800 acres; but the Department says that a man can hold as many areas of 800 acres as he likes.
15. You consider that no man until he has cut out that area should be allowed to hold any more?—That is so. He should apply for more when he has cut that out, otherwise he can block every one else.
16. The amount of bush a man can hold now is regulated by the horse-power of his mill?—Yes.
17. And the bigger the capitalist the more horse-power he can put in?—Yes, and the greater the area he gets. That is what we object to.
18. In your opinion the regulations of 1886 and 1909 are in the interests of the capitalist as against the small man?—Most undoubtedly they are.