

BEHOLD, THE FORESTS VANISH!

THIS CONCERNS EVERY CITIZEN.

The story of less than 100 years destruction by fire, axe, slip, flood, molestation, foraging and denudation is told with tragic plainness for anyone who studies this map, prepared by the State Forestry Service in 1929. The black portions represent the remaining native bush in New Zealand. Much even of this, to quote the State Foresters, is incapable of regeneration. This is our Heritage—or what remains of it. Saw milling and other activities since 1929 have resulted in a heavy reduction of the areas shown in this map.

"The passing of the forest in all its primitive grandeur during the past 85 years has left a very small proportion of its then extensive areas," says Mr. W. W. Smith of New Plymouth, a fine naturalist of wide reputation, writing to "The Dominion" newspaper on April 20. "Lovers of New Zealand know clearly and well that its perfect and extensive scenery of every class, its native race, and its facilities for health and sport are now attracting an annually increasing number of tourists and visitors from many lands."

"Having visited many of the scenic areas of both islands, I would say that there is no country to compare with New Zealand for the scientific study of scenery. The grand mountains of the South Island with their lower zone clad in rich and stately native beech forest in many districts are magnificent. From the summit of the great southern mountains, which are of various altitudes, the great

expanse of lake, forest, mountain, river and valley scenery must be unsurpassed in any scenic region."

"The vegetation of New Zealand is low and compact, growing, with dense, robust mosses covering the forest floor, and retains the heavy rains of rain forests and slowly releases the surplus to form small streams which increase in volume

and flow in all directions over the country. The majestic tree-ferns of several species, requiring 50 to 100 years to attain full growth, are much admired by visitors."

"Professor Pouchet, a French naturalist, writing 70 years ago on forests, stated 'the special character of the vegetation in some forests gives them quite a characteristic aspect, as in New Zealand, arborescent ferns, with the aspect of palms, give the distant landscapes an appearance which is seen in no other part of the world.' The prodigious annual destruction of glorious tree-ferns for their trunks, which are used for commonplace purposes, is a serious menace in depleting the glades and bush of much of their native excellence and beauty."

The work of the New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society is now awakening public interest in the necessity for saving the remnant of the once glorious forest-covering of this land. It behoves every citizen to get on side and join in with and help the Society.

REFERENCE.

Forest Resources Shown by black unenclosed areas.
State Forest Plantations Enclosed in squares.
Reproduced courtesy Hon. F. Langstone, Commissioner State Forests.

