

# Sawmilling Section.

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During the past month among the sawmiller visitors to Wellington whom we have met were Messrs. W. J. Morris from Reefton, G. A. Gamman and Punch from Rangitikei, and Wesley from Southland; and we would like this to be a reminder to all sawmillers, that if they happen to be in Wellington at any time and can find time to call at the office of the Federation, Room 20, 153 Featherston Street, their visits will be appreciated.

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We regret to have to report that recent news from Mr. Irvine from Sydney is to the effect that he has suffered another severe attack of his old illness, and that he has had to return to the Sanatorium for treatment.

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We were pleased to read a very able leading article in the *Dominion* of September 5th under the heading of "Forestry and Settlement," dealing with the statement just issued by the Minister for Lands (the Hon. D. H. Guthrie) respecting the Urewera lands and their settlement. The article in question calls attention to the fact that the Minister has dealt with only one aspect of the question of Forest Conservation in this region, and aptly points out that besides providing for the preservation of forests on the hill-tops and banks of rivers to prevent erosion there is the bigger question of proper demarcation of other forest lands that were more fit to retain in permanent forest than for settlement, and also the question of proper utilisation of forest wealth on those lands which are more suitable for settlement when cleared. These questions had already been exercising the minds of members of the Forestry League, and this body has in hand the question of making suitable representations to the Minister to have thoroughly reliable reports made by competent men with a view to proper demarcation before any of the land carrying bush is thrown open for settlement, and we would add a word to urge that this be done. It might not be inappropriate to suggest that several practical and expert timber men be appointed to report upon the areas as to their suitability from a milling point of view. The Minister's statement on the question is reprinted below.

## UREWERA LANDS.

### PRESERVATION OF FOREST.

#### WHAT THE MINISTER PROPOSES.

The Minister of Lands (the Hon. D. H. Guthrie) stated recently that the plans for the opening up of the Urewera Country made provision for the

preservation of necessary forest. He had discussed the plans with officers of his Department and others who were well acquainted with the country. The Urewera land was not of very high quality. It had a good surface soil on a bed of pumice, and the removal of all the forest from the area would undoubtedly have a damaging effect. The plan of settlement would provide for the preservation of the forest on the hill-tops and also along the banks of the rivers, where there would be danger of serious denudation and erosion if the ground were cleared. The bush that was required to be preserved would not be touched.

The Minister mentioned that arrangements were being discussed for the reservation of an area of 26,000 acres in the neighbourhood of Lake Waikaremoana. This was forest land required to be maintained as a catchment area for the lake, in view of the hydro-electric scheme. The land that remained in the hands of the Maoris under the scheme of consolidation in the Urewera Country would include a very large amount of bush.—*Dominion*.

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Following is an extract from the *Auckland Star* of August 30th, on the same subject, giving the views of one who knows the country in question thoroughly, Mr. Elsdon Best, and who was also quoted in the article in the *Dominion* previously referred to:—

## SAVE THE FOREST.

### A PLEA FOR THE UREWERA.

#### MR. ELSDON BEST'S WARNING.

A strong protest against the indiscriminate deforestation of the Urewera which is to be opened up by the Government as soon as the question of titles is settled with the Maori owners, was made by Mr. Elsdon Best, who knows the country from end to end. He lived for many years not far from Ruatahuna studying the peculiar customs of the "Children of the Mist"—the natives still point out the pretty little slab-whare with its crimson Rambler roses climbing over the roof, which "Peihiti" occupied—and made a memorable trek through to Lake Waikaremoana, over the lofty Huiarau Range, snow-covered at the time, in search of legends and folk-lore, the record of which is still a classic. Mr. Best says the country was very steep, over-laid by pumice on which is about six inches of humus.

"You fell the bush and grass it. It grows magnificently for three years or so. The first and second year you have cocksfoot higher than your