

1898.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

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ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

OF THE

WOODS AND FORESTS DEPARTMENT

FOR THE

FINANCIAL YEAR 1897-8.

BY

J. EDNIE-BROWN,

CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS.

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.*

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PERTH:

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1898

No. 35.

*To the Honourable George Throssell, M.L.A., Commissioner of Crown Lands.*

Woods and Forests Department,

Perth, 30th June, 1898.

SIR,

I have the honour herewith to submit my Annual Report upon the works and progress of the Woods and Forests Department during the Financial Year of 1897-8.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. EDNIE-BROWN,

Conservator of Forests

## CONTENTS.

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	Page
INTRODUCTION ... ..	7
SECTION I. ... ..	8
REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ... ..	8
SECTION II. ... ..	9
STAFF ... ..	9
SECTION III. ... ..	10
PLANTING OPERATIONS OF DEPARTMENT LAST YEAR ... ..	10
SECTION IV. ... ..	11
STATE NURSERY ... ..	11
SECTION V. ... ..	13
OUR TIMBER INDUSTRIES ... ..	13
SECTION VI. ... ..	17
ADVERTISING OUR TIMBERS ... ..	17
SECTION VII. ... ..	19
RAILWAY SLEEPERS FOR SOUTH AFRICA ... ..	19
SECTION VIII. ... ..	19
PLANTING AT ROTTNESST ISLAND ... ..	19
SECTION IX. ... ..	21
PLANTING ON THE GOLDFIELDS ... ..	21
SECTION X. ... ..	22
POINT WALTER PUBLIC PARK ... ..	22
SECTION XI. ... ..	24
FREE DISTRIBUTION OF TREES ... ..	24
SECTION XII. ... ..	25
SEEDS, PLANTS, SPECIMENS OF TIMBER, ETC., RECEIVED ... ..	25
SECTION XIII. ... ..	25
STATE FORESTS ... ..	25
SECTION XIV. ... ..	26
THE PLAN ... ..	26

*Annual Progress Report of the Woods and Forests Department  
for the Financial Year 1897-8, by J. Ednie-Brown, Conservator  
of Forests.*

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INTRODUCTION.

1. A few words only are necessary under this heading, but these are required as indicating generally the features, intentions, and probable scope of the subsequent matter in the Report.

2. The Department has now been pretty well established, and its general usefulness as regards the control and management of the enormous natural wealth of the timber resources of the Colony is beginning to be recognised and appreciated by the mass of the people, and the various individuals directly and indirectly connected with the industry. This fact is most encouraging, and should be satisfactory to the Government.

3. Although, as a whole, the affairs generally in connection with our forests are left entirely in the hands of the Department, there is yet a great improvement necessary, and that is with regard to the applications for Special Timber Leases. These have yet to be made direct to the Department of Lands and Surveys, and although they are always subsequently submitted to me to say whether or not I know of any objections to their being approved by the controlling Minister, the fact remains that the Department is frequently placed at a disadvantage through not being in a position to give definite information to intending leaseholders as to what forest country is still available.

4. This anomaly in administration is sometimes very irritating, both to the officers of the Department and the public. All information in regard to our forests should be up to date, and be obtainable direct and instantly from the Department under whose jurisdiction they are supposed to be, otherwise confusion and mistakes are sure to arise.

5. This is a matter which wants rectifying as soon as possible, but although frequently alluded to by me, I regret to say as yet ineffectually. I trust that the Report of next year will be able to indicate that this very necessary improvement has been carried into effect. If it were done, I am sure that the change would be appreciated by the general public.

6. I am, however, pleased to say that in various other ways the control and management of our forests has been placed entirely in the hands of the Woods and Forests Department. The issuing and thorough direction of all timber licenses are now carried out by it. This, of itself, I find to be a great improvement, and keeps me more "in touch" with the outside working of the Department. The various Forest Rangers have been appointed issuers of licenses, and they report very favourably of this step, in that it is much appreciated by the woodcutters, and enables the above officers to have a better insight and control of the timber-cutting going on in the forests within their respective jurisdiction.

7. It is with considerable satisfaction I am enabled to state that the Department has now been provided with a suite of other offices. These are fairly commodious, and will do until further developments take place. They are situated at the corner of Hay and Pier Streets, Perth, and are reasonably convenient to the Minister, and for the general public as well.

8. The proposed new regulations in regard to the general management of our forests have been incorporated with the amended laws relating to Crown Lands, which Bill is now before Parliament under the title of "An Act to consolidate and amend the laws relating to the Sale, Occupation, and Management of Crown Lands, and for other purposes." It is to be hoped that this Bill will pass, in order that the conditions of our important and valuable forests may be placed upon a more sure and satisfactory footing than they are at present.

9. As will be seen under their proper headings, the timber trade and general revenue of the Department have greatly advanced during the year. This is very pleasing information, and must be satisfactory to the Government as well as to the general public.

10. The Report issued by the Department in 1896, upon "The Forests of Western Australia," having now been all exhausted, and there being still a considerable demand for the publication, it is contemplated to issue a second edition, bringing the subject matter, with additions, up to date.

11. Altogether, therefore, I think this Departmental Report may be looked upon as recording some points of considerable interest, and that the Woods and Forests Department of Western Australia is progressing.

## SECTION I.

### REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

12. These very important matters now come in for consideration, beginning with—

#### A.—REVENUE.

13. I find that the revenue of the Department for the year ended 30th June, 1898, amounted to no less than £23,022 10s. 10d.

14. This amount was derived from the rents received from special timber leases, timber concessions, royalty on piles and poles, hewing, firewood, sandalwood, and the ordinary timber-cutters and carting licenses.

15. It would be interesting to know what was really derived from each of the sources enumerated above; but owing to the fact that the revenue is received at the Lands Office, where no system of separating the amounts received under distinguishing headings is adopted, this cannot be given.

16. Of course it can hardly be expected that the Collector of Land Revenue will go to the trouble of placing the amounts received under their respective headings; so that until the Forest Department is empowered to receive its own revenue, the system of separating the amounts received under distinctive sectional headings will, I fear, not be carried out, although desirable as well as interesting.

17. In consequence, however, of all piles and poles being only available by special arrangement and permits from this office, I am enabled to state that 2,248 of these have been cut during the year, and that they realised a sum of £212 8s. 4d., or something like 2s. each. In connection with this subject it may, perhaps, be as well to remark that there is no uniform charge over the Colony for timbers of this class, that each district has its own particular rate, and that piles and poles are charged for at the same rate per running foot—the contention being that the cutting of a sapling causes as much deterioration to a forest as the cutting of a young tree suitable for a pile.

18. Referring to the total revenue of the Department, it is most gratifying to be able to report that the amount for the year under review is no less than £11,505 16s. 6d.; more than and just about double that of 1897.

19. This is an immense increase, and points to the possibilities of our forests when they are all taken up for working. Some time ago I stated that the time would come when the revenue of the Department would reach the respectable sum of £50,000 per annum, and it seems that this is likely to be realised very shortly.

20. Of course we cannot get away from the fact that considerable areas of this great estate have been taken up simply for speculative purposes; still, as the regulations compel the lessees to erect machinery and commence work within twelve months after the applications have been approved by the Minister, this fact is not at all detrimental to the proper working and utilisation of these magnificent forest lands, and to the increased revenue and population expected to arise therefrom.

21. Under these circumstances, and as there is still a considerable area of these forest lands available for occupation, it is to be hoped that the whole remaining area will be taken up at a very early date, and the matured timber upon it utilised to the best advantage.

22. I think, perhaps, it is as well for me to explain that the whole of our forest area contains large quantities of matured timber trees, which ought to be removed, in order to make room for the young crop, which is naturally coming on to take their place.

23. It will therefore be seen that the sooner the whole of our available forests are taken up under lease and put under a systematic course of utilisation and subsequent conservation, the better it will be for their permanency and the country's good. This fact ought to be realised by the Government and the people generally, and action taken accordingly.

#### B.—EXPENDITURE.

24. Without going into particulars as to the items, I find that the whole expenditure of the Department for the year ended 30th. June, 1898, amounted to only £3,954 16s. 1d.

25. This was £1,194 12s. 9d. more than that of 1896-7, and only £74 16s. 1d. in excess of what was passed by Parliament in the Estimates.

26. The excess referred to occurred principally through the taking over of the Point Walter Reserve, which was not provided for in last year's Estimates, and by a sum of £159 12s. paid for the inspection of railway sleepers for the Orange Free State Government, South Africa, which will shortly be refunded.

27. Practically, therefore, there was no excess over our Estimates for the year.

### SECTION II.

#### THE STAFF.

28. The Officers of the Department now consist of the following:—

##### IN THE PERTH OFFICE:

C. G. Richardson, Chief Clerk.  
W. Calcutt, Clerk.  
D. W. Arnold, Messenger.

##### FOREST RANGERS:

S. Patterson, stationed at Chidlow's Well.  
W. Brockman, stationed at Donnybrook.  
N. J. Cox, stationed at Coolup.  
C. A. White, stationed at Coolgardie.  
J. H. Gregory, stationed at Northam.

##### NURSERYMAN:

Alfred McFarlane, resident at the State Nursery, near Drakesbrook.

##### CARETAKER OF POINT WALTER PARK:

J. C. S. Deans.

29. I have frequently approached the Minister for the appointment of a draftsman to the Department, but as yet have not been successful. The services of such an officer are very much needed in this office.

30. I am pleased to say that all the officers enumerated have given me very considerable satisfaction, and carried out their duties efficiently during the year.

### SECTION III.

#### THE PLANTING OPERATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT LAST YEAR.

31. Unfortunately in this direction the results have not been so successful as I anticipated, owing, principally, to the fact of deficient rainfall when most urgently needed.

32. The pine plantation at Bunbury was a complete failure. In the early stages of the plants they grew well and promised a great success. Even up to the end of November and middle of December I had hopes of being able to make a favourable report upon the establishment, but the subsequent hot weather and want of rain, later on, played sad and rapid havoc with the tender plants.

33. I am certain that, had we been favoured with the usual summer rains, the results would have been very different. There are some fine sheltered nooks and hollows within the area embraced, and I feel confident that the *Pinus insignis* and *Pinus pinaster*—two of the best pines for planting on maritime sites—would have made wonderful growth, and soon have topped the indigenous scrub. Of course it may result that all the seeds sown did not germinate last winter, in which case they may come up this season, and render the experiment not altogether abortive; but I doubt it.

34. That these Pines can be successfully grown upon our sand dunes I do not doubt. The growth upon those put out here last year was simply astonishing. In many cases they grew some inches in height within a few weeks.

35. I think a mistake was made in planting one-year-old plants instead of older trees. In the case of the latter, the woody matter composing their stems would be better able to resist the severe sun heat than those of the former.

36. Holding this opinion, I therefore purpose acting upon it in future; and, with this view, am "lining out" seedling pine plants which have been raised this year for operation next season. This plantation will, therefore, be operated upon during the season of 1898-9.

37. Very great success attended the sowing of wattle seed on a strip of ploughed land within the Railway Reserve near Spencer's Brook. The seed was sown broadcast and germinated freely, and the plants had to be thinned out during the summer, leaving, according to the Forest Ranger's report, some 48,000 plants upon the ground as the permanent crop. This is remarkably good, and points to the possibilities of the farmers in the Northam district growing clumps and belts of this valuable tannin-producing tree on portions of their holdings which are worthless for agricultural purposes. This plantation will be extended next year.

38. Some of the trees planted on a strip of ploughed land near the Railway Station at Northam have done fairly well, and the failures will be made good during the season following.

39. The Meckering Sandalwood plantation has made satisfactory progress during the year, and now presents a well-cared for piece of sandalwood conservation.

40. The wattle sowing at Gooseberry Hill was a failure, owing to the dry season, and the fact of there being much indigenous jarrah and wandoo timbers upon the block. The seed germinated freely, but the young plants died for want of moisture.

41. At Cannington the strip of railway reserve planted with some sugar gums shows fairly good results.

42. Nothing very satisfactory has to be said about the Sandalwood Farm at Pingelly. The nuts germinated nicely and a good result was anticipated, but again the hot, dry weather experienced changed the aspect of affairs. There are, however, a few nice plants which have survived the extremely dry weather and are making satisfactory progress.

43. Being under the impression that the experimental planting here in other years was always carried out too late in the season, the planting this season was effected very early, before the rains came, in order that the nuts might germinate and the young plants have the full benefit of the winter rains. Some 15 acres of the area were therefore re-sown with nuts during the latter part of March last. This early sowing was done at the express recommendation of the Minister and Mr. Ranger Gregory.

44. It may be mentioned that several other wattle plantations will be formed upon the railway reserves during the coming season. These object lessons will, I think, be of service to settlers.

#### SECTION IV.

##### THE STATE NURSERY.

45. As was indicated in the Annual Report for 1897-98, the establishment of the State Nursery is now permanently situated at Drakesbrook, on the South-Western Railway. It forms part of the DeHamel property, recently acquired by the Government.

46. The Nursery proper embraces an area of 15 acres of the deep, black, rich alluvial bottom lands, through which the Samson Brook runs, and is admirably adapted for the raising of such trees as Oaks, Elm, Sycamore, Catalpa, and Walnuts, etc.

47. Upon the adjoining high ironstone lands some 50 acres have also been reserved for the Nursery. Upon this is the Nurseryman's house, stables, shade-houses, potting-shed, implement shed, etc., etc.

48. For the use of the plants which are raised in the shade-houses the water from the creek is pumped up in pipes by a windmill.

49. The remainder of the 50 acres not occupied by the buildings is used as a paddock for the horses of the Department.

50. The place is, of course, only in its infancy, and as very little money has so far been spent upon it beyond that of preparing the ground for the raising of the trees, erection of the shade-houses, and fencing of the ground, which were all done by the staff last year, its general condition does not warrant a very critical inspection. It is intended, however, eventually to make the place an attractive one, but this will only be done as means and time permit.

51. We find the place admirably adapted to the growth and general health of the plants raised. The only difficulty experienced was the cutting off or use of the stream at a critical time in summer when water was most needed, but this drawback will, I trust, not occur again.



52. Following is a complete list of all the trees and shrubs which were raised in the nursery last year:—

*Statement showing number and names of Trees and Shrubs propagated at State Nursery, Drakesbrook, Season 1897.*

Names of Plants.		Number and how raised.			
Botanical.	Vernacular.	In pots.	In bamboos.	Open root.	Total.
<i>Euc. corynocalyx</i>	Sugar Gum	...	11,000		
" <i>callophylla</i>	Red Gum	...	260		
<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle	...	1,000		
" <i>dealbata</i>	Silver Wattle (Queensland)	...	180		
" <i>melanoxydon</i>	Blackwood	...	300		
<i>Pinus canariensis</i>	Canary Pine	231			
" <i>halepensis</i>	Allepo	520			
" <i>insignis</i>	Remarkable Pine	672			
" <i>pinaster</i>	Cluster	651			
" <i>pinea</i>	Stone	40			
<i>Cedras Deodara</i>	Indian Cedar	150			
<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>	Cheese Wood	420			
<i>Syncarpha Laurifolia</i>	Turpentine Tree	250			
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob Tree	480			
<i>Phoenix dactylefera</i>	Date Palm	342			
<i>Grevillea robusta</i>	Silky Oak	500			
<i>Laganaria Pattersonii</i>	...	315			
<i>Schinus Molle</i>	Pepper Tree	2,124			
<i>Euc. corynocalyx</i>	Sugar Gum	2,300			
" <i>ficifolia</i>	Crimson Flowering Gum	140			
" <i>citriodora</i>	Lemon Scented Gum	500			
<i>Acacia Baileyana</i>	Silver Weeping Wattle (N.S.W.)	585			
<i>Sterculia diversifolia</i>	Kurrajong	198			
<i>Ficus Macrophylla</i>	Morton Bay Fig	378			
" <i>Australis</i>	Small Leaved Fig	250			
<i>Agonis flexulosa</i>	Peppermint Tree	300			
<i>Sterculia Acerifolia</i>	Flame Tree	30			
<i>Dracena Draco</i>	Dragonblood Tree	100			
<i>Catalpa Speciosa</i>	...	...		3,615	
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	Button Wood	...		525	
<i>Fraxinus Americana</i>	American Ash	...		125	
<i>Ulmus camperstris</i>	English Elm	...		50	
<i>Quercus robur</i>	English Oak	...		325	
<i>Populus alba</i>	White Poplar	...		88	
" <i>dilatata</i>	Upright Poplar	...		8,540	
<i>Salix aurea</i>	Golden Willow	...		900	
" <i>Viminalis</i>	Basket Willow	...		4,650	
<i>Tamarix gallica</i>	...	...		2,797	
<i>Melia azedarach</i>	White Cedar	...		4,000	
<i>Laganaria Pattersonii</i>	...	...		700	
<i>Pinus pinaster</i>	Cluster Pine	...		16,000	
" <i>insignis</i>	Remarkable Pine	...		19,900	
" <i>pinea</i>	Stone	...		2,250	
" <i>halepensis</i>	Allepo	...		13,500	
" <i>Canariensis</i>	Canary	...		1,200	
<i>Callitris arborea</i>	...	...		500	
<i>Frenella Verucosa</i>	W.A. Pine	...		300	
<i>Sterculia diversifolia</i>	Kurrajong	...		500	
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	Date Palm	...		400	
<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>	Cheese Wood (N.S.W.)	...		3,000	
<i>Ficus Australis</i>	Small-Leaved Fig	...		1,000	
" <i>macrophylla</i>	Morton Bay Fig	...		1,000	
<i>Virgilia Capensis</i>	...	...		200	
<i>Laurus Camphora</i>	Camphor Laurel	...		50	
<i>Cedrela Australis</i>	Red Cedar	...		500	
<i>Lygustrum lucidum</i>	Evergreen Privet	...		400	
<i>Cupressus torulosa</i>	Twisted Cypress	...		400	
" <i>sempervirens</i>	Common	...		500	
" <i>horizontalis</i>	Spreading	...		300	
" <i>macrocarpa</i>	...	...		600	
" <i>pendula</i>	Weeping	...		100	
<i>Syncarpha Laurifolia</i>	Turpentine Tree	...		300	
<i>Leneadendron Argentum</i>	Silver Tree (Africa)	...		100	
		114,746	12,740	91,715	333,931

53. Including all the labour upon the place during the year, cost of seeds, wind-mill, piping, fencing, etc., the expense of this establishment did not exceed £350. This I consider remarkably cheap, considering the number of plants raised and the amount of work done.

## SECTION V.

## OUR TIMBER INDUSTRIES.

54. With his usual courtesy, Mr. Clayton Mason, the Collector of Customs, has favoured me with the following particulars of the Timber Imports and Exports of the Colony during the year ended the 30th of June, 1898.

55. I shall refer to each under its respective heading, beginning with:—

## I.—OUR TIMBER IMPORTS FOR YEAR ENDED JUNE, 1898.

56. These were as under:—

	Value.		
	£	s.	d.
Architraves ... ..	2	0	0
Boards ... ..	30,949	0	0
Laths ... ..	464	0	0
Mouldings ... ..	350	0	0
Palings ... ..	46	0	0
Skirtings ... ..	17	0	0
Wooden-houses ... ..	55	0	0
Worked ... ..	51,150	0	0
Unworked ... ..	40,610	0	0
In bulk—rough or hewn ... ..	2,185	0	0
In short lengths for case-making ... ..	1,946	0	0
In all ... ..	£127,774	0	0

57. Last year the value of our timber imports was £141,000; consequently these figures show a decrease of £13,226 in the importation of soft woods during 1897-8.

58. It is, of course, almost impossible to say what was the cause of this decrease, but if it means that more of our indigenous timbers were used by builders than hitherto, then I think the Colony and all concerned are to be congratulated. Of course, on the other hand, it may have been caused by our timber merchants having large stocks in hand, or that the building trade has decreased; nevertheless, whatever the cause, the fact remains as stated.

## II.—OUR TIMBER EXPORTS.

59. Mr. Mason's figures also show the following:—

Description of Timber:	Quantities.	Values.
Timber ... ..	68,545½ loads	£283,694
Sandalwood ... ..	4,882 tons	38,355
Total value of timber exports during year ended 30th June, 1898	...	£322,049

60. It appears that prior to 1898 no particulars of descriptions of the various kinds of timber exported were kept by the Customs. These, however, are now kept, and the following subsidiary return furnished by Mr. Mason for the half-year ended

June, 1898, will give an idea of the particular kinds of timbers sent out of the country, and the respective quantities of each, with their corresponding values:—

Description of Timber.	Quantities.	Values.
Sandalwood ... ..	2,732 tons	£21,244
Jarrah ... ..	26,510 loads	97,789
Karri... ..	16,437 loads	74,195
Tuart... ..	10 loads	50
Wandoo ... ..	5½ loads	33
Value of timber exported for half-year ended this date	...	£173,311

61. It is satisfactory to see, from the last returns that some of our minor timbers, such as Tuart and Wandoo, are now beginning to find an outside market. Of course we know that Tuart has been exported to the other Colonies in small quantities from time to time, but I think this is the first record of any Wandoo having left these shores. In my opinion there will be a fair demand for both these timbers when their qualities come to be properly recognised. For wheelwright requirements they have not their equal in Australia.

62. These detailed returns of the timbers exported from the Colony are most valuable ones, as they show us clearly in what direction these exports run, and I therefore hope that the Collector will see his way to continue these most desirable statements.

63. Referring again to the total annual exports of timber in paragraph No. 59, we find that the declared value of these amounted to no less a sum than £322,049. The Sandalwood, which is always a fluctuating product, yielded £27,445 less than it did during the previous year; but the timber, which is Jarrah and Karri chiefly, exceeded the previous year's returns by £91,243, and that of the year before by £206 odd.

64. This, although not a very large increase, is highly satisfactory, and shows clearly that the export timber trade of the Colony is rapidly and steadily increasing. This fact will be more forcibly realised when I state that five years ago the value of these exports amounted to only £33,888 per annum, whilst now they are close upon £330,000, or nine times more than that of the previous period.

### III.—THE LOCAL TIMBER INDUSTRY GENERALLY.

65. I shall now refer in a general way to the progress which has been made during the last year in the demands for the hardwoods of Western Australia.

66. There is no getting away from the fact that these have been immense and almost phenomenal when considered in connection with an industry of this kind.

67. Over all the world, and more particularly in England, there has arisen a wonderful demand for "Australian Hardwoods," which, to a very large extent, means those of Jarrah and Karri; and as the trees of this kind are purely endemic to this Colony, it is natural to suppose that the most of the quotations bearing this name refer only to the forests of Western Australia. This fact is most satisfactory, and points emphatically to the value of our forests, and how necessary it is that they should be retained from unnecessary settlement, and properly looked after by systematic conservation in order to ensure their permanency. How necessary, therefore, for a liberal policy in connection with this important matter! The salaries and expenses of a few extra forest rangers are a mere bagatelle when compared with the value of their services.

68. Of course I do not for a moment mean to infer from these remarks that the only hardwoods of Australia are to be found in Western Australia; far from this, as some of the other colonies—more especially those of Queensland and New South Wales—possess a much greater variety of timbers than we do, but certainly not of those kinds and varieties which are in such great request commercially over the world.

69. Our timbers, from some cause, seem to meet the requirements of outdoor constructive works generally, hence the demand for them. Perhaps, again, they may have been better advertised and brought before the eye of the world than those timbers of the other colonies.

70. Again, perhaps, the great secret of the “run” which is now being made upon the forests of Western Australia—apart altogether from the fact of their undoubted excellence—is that large quantities of the same kind of tree can be obtained in large areas without any material intermixture of other kinds. This fact is, of course, of very great advantage to timber-getters, in that it tends very materially to lessen the working expense for moving machinery, and all the other expenses in connection with securing a large quantity of any particular kind of timber.

71. Our timber trees are chiefly gregarious. This is, fortunately, particularly the case with the two principal members—Jarrah and Karri; although, as a rule, the former is always found forming a fringe to the forests of the latter, but never the latter to the former.

72. Of course we always find what is known as the Red Gum intermixed with most of our other timbers, but seldom or never, except in a few special cases, interfering with the Jarrah as Jarrah forests.

73. This peculiarity of specially marked habitats for specific trees is a distinctive feature of the forests of Western Australia, and, as I have already inferred, is her strength in the disposal of her timbers.

74. Whatever the causes may be, the fact remains that, as I have already remarked, the demand for Jarrah and Karri forests, since my last annual report, has been enormous.

75. This may be judged from the fact that 340,220 acres of Jarrah forests have been applied for and leased from the Government during the year for the purpose of acquiring the timbers upon them.

76. Perhaps some of the richest and most accessible of our Jarrah forests have now been secured, but, as will be seen from the attached plan, there is yet a very considerable area of forest land still open for selection.

77. The immense area under lease has been taken up in blocks ranging from 640 to over 50,000 acres in extent, and represents over 531 square miles.

78. It is of interest to note that several applications are now being received for purely Karri country, but the only drawback to the utilisation of that kind of timber upon a scale equal to that of the Millar Bros. at Denmark, or the Davies Co. of Karri-dale, is the want of railway or shipping facilities for the removal of the timber. Until either of these is supplied by the Government I fear that the proper working of our Karri forests will remain in abeyance.

79. The total area of forest land now held under Clause 96 and Special Concession is 1,052,426 acres.

80. As showing the position and output of the various sawmills and timber leases in the Colony during the year under review, I give the following tabulated return of these, as supplied by the various owners:—

Name of Proprietor or Manager.	Name of Mill.	Where Situated.	Timber Cut on Crown Lands or on Special Timber Licenses.	H.P. of Mill or Mills.	Probable Number of Trees cut during year ending 30th June, 1898.	No. of loads of Sawn Timber sent from Mill during year ending 30th June, 1898.	Percentage of Waste.	Probable Acres cut over during year ending 30th June, 1898.	Number of all persons connected with Mill.	Horses.	Bullocks.	Length of Tram and Railway on Property.
Adelaide Timber Company	Adelaide Timber Company	Mundaring	Special Timber License	16	1500	950	50	1880	20	8	10	
Baxter & Prince	Preston Jarrah Mills	Donnybrook	Do.	28	3800	3744	50	2560	32	37	...	4 1/2 miles
Blakeney Bros. & Johnston	Armadaale Timber Company	Armadaale	Do.	18	2500	2700	25	800	15	12	...	
Buckingham, J. A. & E. A.	Kelmscott Mill	Canning River	Crown Lands	6	100	75	45	200	3	3	6	
Buckingham, Thos.	Poplar Mill	Kelmscott	Freehold	10	30	10	50	3	2	3	...	
Bunning Bros.	Dandalup Saw Mills	North Dandalup	Special Timber License	16	5400	4380	40	600	30	25	...	
Byfield, James	White Gum Gully	Eastern Railway	Crown Lands	16	8000	2000	25	1000	16	12	...	6 chains
Davies Karri and Jarrah Company, Limited	...	Karridale	Concession	60	128	5111	50	512	374	100	300	28 miles
Davies Karri and Jarrah Company, Limited	...	Borauip	Do.	60	173	6921	50	698	...	...	...	
Forsyth, Wm. C.	Helena Saw Mill	Childlow's Well	Special Timber License and Crown Lands	16	1100	583	35	600	18	12	...	
Gill & Company	Mahogany Creek Mill	Darling Range	Do.	20	700	786	35	2000	28	18	...	10 chains
Do.	Sawyer's Valley Mill	Do.	Do.	32	1800	2760	35	5000	40	60	...	1/2 mile
Hannans Saw Milling Company, Limited	Hannans Saw Mill	Dwellingup	Special Timber License	14	1800	2500	40	200	25	30	...	
Higgs, John	Armadaale Saw Mill	Armadaale	Crown Lands	14	800	400	50	500	16	12	...	3 miles
Honey, R., & Company	Lion Mill	Eastern Railway	Special Timber License	50	3600	3200	35	5000	200	40	...	26 chains
Hooker, M.	17-Mile Siding	Donnybrook Line	Do.	14	300	400	40	1194	22	46	10	5 miles
Jarrah Timber and Wood Paving Corporation, Limited	Collie No. 1.	Collie	Do.	25	1151	1714	25	1280	22	20	...	
Jarrahdale Jarrah Forests and Railways, Limited	24-Mile	Donnybrook	License and Lease	12	2038	2187	50	1280	29	15	...	
McDowell, Joseph, & Company	Waroona Mill	Jarrahdale	Concession	650	20000	25000	50	2500	350	100	100	56 miles
Millar's Karri and Jarrah Forests, Limited	Waroona Mill	Waroona	Crown Lands and Special Timber License	64	12000	10200	50	2700	120	80	...	6 miles
Millar's Karri and Jarrah Forests, Limited	...	Yarloop	Special Timber License	950	24000	20000	60	8000	390	155	...	19 miles
McCoy & Son	Darling Range Saw Mill	Denmark	Freehold	165	7900	31625	50	1200	450	176	146	40 miles
McDevitt Bros. and Mitchell	Reliance Saw Mill	Cookernup	Special Timber License	12	3000	1500	50	4000	15	15	...	
Sexton Bros.	Sexton's Mill	Drakesbrook	Private Property	16	275	1100	45	110	9	12	...	
Shearer, Weatherhead & Company	...	Parkerville	Special Timber License	20	1500	1400	45	600	18	12	...	
Scott, James	Cookernup Sawmill	North Dandalup	Do.	16	300	313	23	200	10	5	...	
Williams, R., & Company	Cookernup Sawmill	Bridgetown	Do.	14	250	800	40	600	7	8	...	
Yelverton, H. J.	Donnybrook Mill	Cookernup	Lease and License	14	914	2376	35	238	15	18	10	
Do.	Quindalup Mill	Donnybrook	Crown Lands	14	2100	1910	55	3000	20	12	...	13 1/2 miles
Do.	Quindalup Mill	Quindalup	Special Timber License	22	1400	1864	52	185	26	22	...	
				2884	108459	227959	...	48125	2832	1065	582	21 1/2 miles 62 chains

Worked only 78 days.  
 Worked 9 months. Have not been working full time.

176

Silverthorne & Adair have cut 1,000 tons firewood at Coolgardie and Bulong.

## Addendum to Woods and Forests Annual Report of 1897-8.

Owing to some peculiar oversight, all reference to the Canning Jarrah Timber Company, Limited, was omitted from the Report this year, and in consequence it has been necessary to lay the following particulars upon the Table of the House with regard to this important Company.

Following are the returns of the Mills as supplied by the Manager:—

Name of Proprietor or Manager.	Name of Mill.	Where Situated.	Timber Cut on Crown Lands or on Special Timber Licenses.	H.P. of Mill or Mills.	Probable Number of Trees cut during year ending 30th June, 1898.	No. of loads of Sawm Timber sent from Mill during year ending 30th June, 1898.	Percentage of Waste.	Probable Number of Acres cut over during year ending 30th June, 1898.	Number of all persons connected with Mill.	Number of Horses and Bullocks employed.	Length of Tram and Railway on Property.
The Canning Jarrah Timber Company (Western Australia), Ltd.	The Canning Timber Mills	Canning, Darling Range	Concession	470 including locos.	9,000	10,624	48 per cent.	2,500	250	200	38 miles

In consequence of the inclusion of the above figures, the correct total returns, as referred to in paragraph 80 of the Report, are now as follows:—

Name of Proprietor or Manager.	Name of Mill.	Where Situated.	Timber Cut on Crown Lands or on Special Timber License.	H.P. of Mill or Mills.	Probable Number of Trees cut during year ending 30th June, 1898.	No. of loads of Sawm Timber sent from Mill during year ending 30th June, 1898.	Probable Number of Acres cut over during year ending 30th June, 1898.	Number of all persons connected with Mill.	Number of Horses and Bullocks employed.	Length of Tram and Railway on Properties.
				2,854	117,459	238,588	50,625	2,582	1,847	249 miles 62 chains

I may remark that this Company has frequently sent samples and particulars of our timber to England in order to show their qualities and suitability for certain work. I have also to acknowledge their kindness in sending various specimens to me when required by the Department.

Perth, 25/9/98.

J. EDNIE-BROWN,  
Conservator of Forests.

## SECTION VI.

## ADVERTISING OUR TIMBERS.

81. Although our timbers are fairly well known in the principal markets of the world, much has yet to be done to bring their important qualities and quantities prominently before the commercial world generally.

82. Hitherto the principal advertising of our forests has been carried out by and at the instance of private firms or individuals. Notably those who have done this most worthy work are the Jarrahdale Jarrah Forests and Railways Company, Limited; M. C. Davies Karri and Jarrah Company, Limited; and the Millar's Karri and Jarrah Forests Company, Limited. Many thousands of pounds have been spent by them in this way. Of course, their object in doing this was simply for their own aggrandisement; but the fact still remains that much of that which they have done has had beneficial effects upon the timber trade of the Colony generally.

83. I am glad to say that the present Commissioner of Crown Lands is a great advocate for advertising our timbers to the world, and is disposed to carry on this work where private enterprise has left off. Nothing very extensive has yet been done in this respect, but the following are a few instances of what has been carried out by the Department during the year at the request of the Minister.

84. At the instance of Messrs. Throssell, Son, & Stewart, Northam, a number of photographs of forest scenes were sent to Messrs. Massey, Harris, & Co., of Canada, for insertion in their annual catalogue. This publication will be sent all over the world; and thus, by its means, an excellent and far-reaching advertisement of our timbers will be given. On behalf of the Government I hereby desire to thank them for this, and Messrs. Throssell & Co. for the trouble they have taken in the matter.

85. There is now a Royal Commission sitting in Melbourne on "State Forests and Timber Reserves," and to advise the Government of Victoria as to the best means to prevent denudation and waste in these areas. This Commission, being anxious to obtain information from the other Australasian Colonies relative to their existing laws and regulations on the subject of the preservation and cutting of timber, has been in correspondence with this Department in regard to the subject as it exists here.

86. Considerable correspondence has taken place upon the subject, and much valuable information has been given in regard to our forests generally. As this will no doubt be published, and in part form the outcome of a report, I am in hopes that the information there given will have some favourable effect as regards advertising our extensive and magnificent forest lands to the world.

87. At the instance originally of Mr. H. E. Parry, C.E., of this city, who, knowing of the desire of our Government to advertise and introduce our hardwoods to all parts of the world, offered himself as travelling agent to China and Japan for this purpose, a lot of wood specimens and enlarged photographs were forwarded to the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce, Tokio and Osaka, Japan. These institutions, as advertising mediums representative of Japan, were selected by Mr. H. Turusama, the Japanese Consul stationed in Sydney, with whom correspondence was opened up upon the subject; but the Government did not see its way towards going to the expense of engaging Mr. Parry for the purpose in view. A letter from the Department was sent to each of the institutions named, pointing out the commercial importance of our timbers generally. A special communication was sent to Mr. Turusama upon the subject, which, no doubt, was forwarded to Japan.

88. Mr. W. F. Croft, connected with Messrs. Gill & Co., of Perth, and travelling through China and Japan, was supplied with reports and wood specimens for the purpose of showing the authorities in those countries what our timbers are like.

89. As there are likely to be considerable constructive works in the shape of railways and harbours being carried out in those countries soon, it is more than probable that the attention of the authorities there may be attracted to our timbers from the efforts made, as indicated.

90. At the instance of the Perth Chamber of Commerce, enlarged photos. of forest scenes and samples of our principal forest timbers were forwarded to the Secretary of the Philadelphian Commercial Museums, Philadelphia, U.S.A. The object of this Institution is to develop a mutual foreign commerce between the United States and other countries; and it is collecting, classifying, and installing, for permanent exhibition, the natural products of various parts of the world, including Australia; and the attention of manufacturers in the United States is being called to such products as may be available for their special uses.

91. I think that something tangible may arise from this exhibit. At all events, it is most desirable that our timbers should have proper representation in such an important country as America, where, I think, there are immense possibilities.

92. Perhaps, however, the most complete advertisement which we have yet carried out in showing the value and superiority of our Jarrah timber to outsiders was that done at Colombo through W. Traylen, Esq., J.P., late Chairman of Committees in the Legislature. Mr. Traylen, in August last, drew the attention of the Minister to Ceylon as a market for our timbers, and subsequently called there and delivered the following specimens to the Public Works Department and various prominent residents:—

No. 1.—Portion of an old pile five feet long and 18 inches in diameter, cut above high-water line.

No. 2.—Portion of an old pile eight feet long and 18 inches in diameter, cut between wind and water.

No. 3.—Portion of an old pile eight feet long and 18 inches in diameter, cut below the water line.

N.B.—All the above were in the Fremantle Jetty for upwards of 30 years.

No. 4.—A new pile 35 feet long and 18 inches in diameter, cut from McDowell's timber lease at Drakesbrook.

No. 5.—Three old sleepers seven feet long, 8in. x 4in., taken from the Eastern Railway, and which were in the line for 17 years.

No. 6.—Three new sleepers, 7ft. x 8in. x 5in., cut at Messrs. Millar Bros.' timber station at Yarloop, on the South-Western line.

No. 7.—One newly-hewn sleeper from Parkerville, on the Eastern Railway line.

No. 8.—One bundle of assorted Jarrah boards, cut at Messrs. Millar Bros.' sawmill at Yarloop.

No. 9.—One bundle of Jarrah shingles from Mr. McDowell's mill at Drakesbrook.

No. 10.—A piece of Sandalwood kindly supplied by Messrs. J. & W. Bateman, Fremantle.

All the above were branded W. & F.



93. Altogether a fair beginning has been made in bringing our timbers prominently before hitherto unapproached markets.

94. Negotiations are now proceeding with regard to the appointment of an agent to represent the Government in Paris for a time, with reference to the timber question.

## SECTION VII.

### RAILWAY SLEEPERS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

95. I am pleased to state that there is now a very considerable demand for our timbers by some of the Governments of South Africa.

96. Of course it is generally admitted that the African trade was originally opened up by M. C. Davies, Esq., of Karridale. His company is now reaping the benefit of this enterprise. I understand, also, that the Millar's Jarrah and Karri Company, Limited, are large shippers of our timbers to this market.

97. Some time during the year under review considerable contracts for Jarrah railway sleepers were entered into by the companies referred to for the Orange Free State and Cape Governments, and these Governments wrote to the Premier of this Colony asking that these sleepers might be inspected and passed by an officer of the Forest Department before shipment.

98. This was attended to, and up to date the following have been sent away from the respective ports named:—65,811, 7ft. x 10in. x 5in., from Fremantle on account of the Millar's Jarrah and Karri Company, Limited; 69,200 sleepers, 7ft. x 10in. x 5in.; from Rockingham and 70,306 of the same size from Hamelin, on account of the M. C. Davies Company, Limited.

99. In all, therefore, some 205,337 railway sleepers of the size named were despatched from our forests last year for the Governments in question. These were all Jarrah, and certified to as such by this Department.

100. Of course other orders for the Governments referred to were executed by the firms named, but only those enumerated above came immediately under the cognisance of this Department.

101. I understand that the sleepers have given every satisfaction, and that other orders are therefore likely to follow.

102. The African market is a good one for our timbers, and if the Government takes care to see that nothing but the very best reliable materials are sent, it is likely to be largely extended.

## SECTION VIII.

### PLANTING ON ROTTNEST ISLAND.

103. In February of 1897 His Excellency the Governor, through Mr. North; the Private Secretary to the Premier, drew attention to the destruction of trees which was being carried out round the lakes on the island, and suggested that this be put a stop to, and that planting of trees on the island be carried out by the Forest Department.

104. Subsequently, under instructions from the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands, I visited the island, with the view of reporting to him about the matter generally.

105. My Report was as follows:—"In accordance with the request of His Excellency the Governor, and at the special desire of the Hon. the Minister for Lands, I beg to report having visited Rottnest, with the view of advising in regard to planting and other matters relating to the island generally.

"In the first place, I desire it to be put on record that, in my opinion, this insular portion of the Colony has natural features of very considerable beauty, and thereby possesses capabilities of a no mean order for general ornamentation by artificial means. The beautiful lakes are a special feature of the place, and I think their natural attractiveness should be maintained irrespective of other considerations.

"His Excellency was kind enough to personally show me round the island, and explained his views in regard to the whole matter of planting and other questions. With these views I heartily concur, and if the matter be otherwise satisfactorily arranged, I shall endeavour to carry them out.

"One of the beauties of these inland waters lies in the fringe of verdure round their edges. This has now been almost altogether removed by cutting and grubbing. No doubt this has been considered necessary in connection with the upkeep of the penal settlement, but it certainly does not tend to increase the picturesqueness of the place.

"Without going into particulars, I may state that I consider that various trees of kinds might be planted upon the island with a view to add to its beauty. There are many well-sheltered nooks or glades in which the monotonous hues of the Australian bush might be relieved by the introduction of exotic foliage, such as *Araucaria excelsa*, *Pinus insignis*, *Pinus maritima*, *Cupressus horizontalis*, *Cupressus macrocarpa*, other *Coniferæ*, *Tamarisks*, and *Ficus macrophylla*. The most of these, being of a dark colour, will contrast favourably with the lighter greens of the native scrub. I fear that to plant deciduous trees would be to court failure in many instances, but a few of the hardier kinds might be tried with a certain degree of success.

"My belief is that trees of the *Coniferæ* family chiefly should be grown, and that these will have to be strong two-year old pot-grown plants before being put out. I observe, however (from the fact of a few growing well near the settlement), that the date palm does well on the island, and would recommend that individuals and clumps of these trees be planted here and there in suitable spots. They will give an Oriental look to the scene, and add considerably to its sylvan attractiveness.

"Perhaps, however, the tree which would have the most telling effect, if planted on the island, would be the Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria excelsa*). The straight upright character of this tree would contrast favourably with the general looseness and straggling nature of the indigenous foliage. I have no doubt as to its growing well at Rottnest, and have to recommend it accordingly.

"I spoke to Lady Smith about the Minister's wish that an avenue should be planted and bear her name. A site for this avenue was selected by His Excellency. It is round a portion of what is known as the Serpentine Lake, and commands a prominent position within full view of the back of Government Cottage.

"It may be out of place for me to make any comments about the present system of working this island; but I cannot help remarking that, in my opinion, the clearings which are from time to time made should be conducted on a more systematic plan, and that the use of fire should be carefully avoided in the bush, and only upon those portions which have been cleared."

106. Unfortunately, the plants in the nursery were too small for extensive planting being carried out this year, but, at the special request of the Minister, a beginning is being made in this direction as we go to press.

107. About 10,000 trees of sorts will be put in. These will consist chiefly of Lombardy Poplars, Oriental Planes, Golden Willows, White Cedars, Tamarisks, Sugar Gums, Pepper Trees, Date Palms, *Pinus insignis*, and *Pinus pinaster*. Besides these, a quantity of the seeds of *Acacia pycnantha*, or the Golden Wattle of South Australia, and Cluster Pine will be sown in suitable places.

108. Under a qualified foreman, the planting is being carried out with the black prison labour of the place, so that, when finished, it will not have cost much. The foreman reports very favourably of the blacks, and says that the warders who look after the prisoners are giving him every assistance in his work, and take a special interest in it.

## SECTION IX.

### PLANTING ON THE GOLDFIELDS.

109. No one will deny that any increase to the indigenous vegetation of the dreary and dry regions of our goldfields would in many ways be a great boon to the residents there. The introduction of various suitable exotic trees, shrubs, vegetables, or even grasses, which adds to the attractiveness and salubrity of the place, is highly commendable, and should therefore have the special attention of the Government.

110. It will therefore be of considerable interest to the public when it is informed that the Department of Woods and Forests has, to a certain extent, taken this matter in hand, and has made a beginning towards this most desirable end.

111. The first to move directly with this object in view was Mr. Vosper, the member for the district, who, in July of 1897, addressed the Hon. the Minister upon the subject generally, and specially in regard to the cultivation of the Date Palm and Carob Bean in these regions. In regard to this matter he was ably advised by Mr. C. A. White, of Coolgardie, who was subsequently appointed Forest Ranger for the district.

112. Prior, however, to Mr. Vosper's communication upon the subject, the Department had practically taken the matter in hand, and had raised some 300 plants of the Date Palm for subsequent planting upon the goldfields.

113. In my minute to the Minister upon the subject, the following occurs: "The planting of this valuable palm in the interior of Australia has been strongly advocated and practically tested by me for some years past. At Hergott Springs, in South Australia, plants of the Date which were put in some 15 years ago are now bearing fruit equal to the imported article. The plant seems to adapt itself well to the soil, brackish water, and climate of Australia, and groups of it at the various 'soaks' and watering places throughout the deserts of Australia would be of immense value to travellers both for shelter and nourishing food."

114. At the express desire, therefore, of the Minister, arrangements were made to carry out the idea of planting the Date and other suitable trees on the goldfields, and operations have already been commenced this season.

115. The planting is being carried out under the direction of Mr. Forest-Ranger White, and a considerable number of Dates, Carob Bean plants, and a quantity of the seeds of both these species will be put in round the dams, swamps, and other suitable places, near Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. The caretakers of the various dams have promised to look after the plants until they get established, and the ranger feels pretty confident of their success.

116. The Government Botanist of Victoria, Mr. Leuhmann, has supplied Ranger White with a large number of various kinds of Indian seeds suitable for the goldfields, and over 500 packets of these have been distributed by Mr. White to persons who have asked for and are willing to look after them.

117. At the instance, also, of Mr. Vosper, M.L.A., the Minister's attention has been drawn to the Carnauba Palm (*Copernicia ceriferi*) as a plant which might be found suitable for planting upon our dry goldfields country. Of this palm, the late Baron Von Mueller says:—"This magnificent Fan-palm has proved to be hardy as far South as Sydney, by Mr. Charles Moore (late director of the Sydney Botanic Gardens). It resists drought in a remarkable degree, and prospers, also, on a somewhat saline soil. The stem furnishes starch; the sap yields sugar; the fibre of the leaf sheets are converted into ropes which resist decay in water, the leaves can be used for mats, hats, baskets, and brooms, and many other articles are prepared from them. The inner part of the leaf-stalks serve as a substitute for cork. This palm, however, is mainly valued for the Carnauba-wax with which its young leaves are coated, and which can be detached by shaking. This is harder than bees-wax, and is used in the manufacture of candles. Each tree furnishes about 4lbs. annually. In 1862 no less than 2,500,000lbs. were imported into Great Britain, realising about £100,000."

118. Steps are now being taken to procure some of the seeds of this remarkable palm. It is a native of Brazil.

119. In a report submitted to the Minister on the 9th of June last, I recommended the formation on the goldfields of plantations for the future supply of timber for these. In this report I said, "While upon the subject of tree planting upon the goldfields, I think it would be as well for the Government to consider the advisability of forming plantations near the principal centres, if only for mining and firewood purposes. The time will, I fear, come when the indigenous trees will be pretty well exhausted, and, looking to the future undoubted progress of these goldfields, I think it behoves the Government to endeavour to raise plantations there for commercial purposes. The soil is all that could be desired, and I do not see any reason why plantations cannot be raised if necessary. At all events the matter is worth considering, and I respectfully advise its consideration by the Hon. the Minister for Lands."

120. The matter is now under consideration.

## SECTION X.

### POINT WALTER PUBLIC PARK.

121. On the 9th of October, 1897, the Hon. A. P. Matheson, M.L.C., wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands as follows:—"I beg to call your attention to the Public Park at Point Walter, at which place the Government have lately constructed a substantial jetty to facilitate the landing of picnic parties. My reason for doing so is to ask you to consider whether or not you should appoint a custodian of the grounds, which are, without exception, the most picturesque on the whole river. There is a large quantity of grass land upon which wattle and gum trees have come up, and great havoc was done to the wood last year, even before the jetty facility existed, both by people chopping down wood and by the spread of picnic fires. One large belt, in particular, of timber was burnt completely out. There is also an old dwelling house on the property which is being rapidly destroyed."

122. It may be necessary to explain that the place referred to is a very prominent point or bend in the Swan River, and is situated immediately opposite Claremont on the South side of the river.

123. It is undoubtedly a charming spot, and hence a great resort for picnic parties of all kinds. It is nicely wooded, high, and lying along the river edge; there is an excellent well of fresh water on the place, and it commands fine views of the river, and altogether makes a very fine place for holiday recreation purposes.

124. Without going further into the *pros* and *cons* of the whole question, it is sufficient in this report for me to say that a caretaker was ultimately appointed at a salary of £100 per annum.

125. It is intended to erect a house upon the Reserve for the caretaker, but for the present he and his family reside in two large commodious tents provided for the purpose. The old residence referred to by Mr. Matheson is a complete ruin, but could be re-built at a comparatively small outlay.

126. In placing this Reserve under the management of the Forest Department the object was not only to protect the timber now upon it, but also to beautify the place by planting. Upon the latter point the Minister (Hon. Geo. Throssell) was particularly emphatic, and in order to comply with his desires in the matter, a beginning was made during the end of the year in carrying out some ornamental planting about the place. Unfortunately, the variety of trees available at the State Nursery was not very great, but we have been able to plant out the following this year upon the place:—

50 Catalpas.  
 150 Upright Poplars.  
 20 English Oaks.  
 15 Oriental Planes.  
 100 Golden Willows.  
 50 White Cedars.  
 10 Date Palms.  
 10 *Pittosporum undulatum*.  
 10 New South Wales Turpentine Trees.  
 10 Red-flowering Gums.  
 50 *Pinus Insignis*, or the Californian Remarkable Pine.  
 10 Cluster Pines.  
 100 Tamarisks.  
 10 Silver Poplars.  
 10 W.A. Red Gums.  
 100 Sugar Gums.  
 20 Golden Wattle.  
 10 Victorian Black Wattle.  
 6 Pepper Trees.  
 10 Carob Beans.  
 30 Silky Oaks, of New South Wales.  
 10 Scented Gums, of Queensland.  
 20 *Acacia Baileyana* from Queensland.  
 10 Norfolk Island Pines.

127. In all, there have been planted upon the Reserve this year some 821 tree and shrubs. This is a fair beginning, and, if they do at all well, will no doubt materially help towards the ornamentation of this favourite recreation ground. This planting has been carried out in the shape of clumps and avenues.

128. Some rough jarrah seats have been erected in nice shady places over the grounds, and these have been much appreciated by the visiting public.

129. The old well has been thoroughly cleaned out, fenced in, and provided with a pump. This of itself has given general satisfaction.

130. The fence on the Southern boundary of the Reserve has been thoroughly repaired in order to keep out stock of all kinds.

131. The expense in connection with this Reserve, including the caretaker's salary, has, up to date, been under £65.

132. The caretaker reports that over 6,000 persons visited the Reserve during the year.

## SECTION XI.

## FREE DISTRIBUTION OF TREES.

133. The free distribution of trees by the Government is a subject very much of individual opinion, and certainly one deserving of consideration.

134. Naturally the nurserymen are very much against the practice, as it must to a certain extent interfere with their business. On the other hand, in many cases it has just an opposite effect; as it encourages people to continue planting trees round their holdings, which otherwise they would not do had they not at first received the trees *gratis*. Such is one of the arguments which is advanced in favour of the system.

135. In South Australia—which is almost a treeless country—the giving away of trees by the Government was looked upon as a national advantage, in order that the country might in time be clothed with forest verdure, and thus tend to the improvement of the climate and the amelioration of the country generally. Consequently, in that Colony, I had a special vote on the Estimates for the “Raising of Trees for Free Distribution.”

136. The amount allowed was £400, and from it we used to distribute nearly one million of trees annually. I have known cases where 10,000 seedlings were given to one individual in one year. The trees were given to anybody, so long as they were land owners. The system worked well, and the effect may now be seen in belts of fine plantations round many of the homesteads and in the corners of the farms which before were treeless wastes.

137. Of course there is no need for such an extensive system here as that which has just been depicted, and what few trees we give away are only, as a rule, surplus stock, and for experimental purposes, and are only given to corporations and other public bodies.

138. The Minister is very particular upon this point, as he does not wish in any way to interfere with the trade of our nurserymen.

139. In giving away the trees which we had to spare, a considerable preference was given to the corporations and other public bodies upon the goldfields and other portions of our, comparatively speaking, treeless regions.

140. From a return which I have just had made up, it appears that the trees given this year were distributed to the following bodies:—

To Churches	...	...	...	50 trees
„ Postmasters and Resident Magistrates	...	...	...	1,096 „
„ Municipalities	...	...	...	3,594 „
„ Perth Zoological Gardens	...	...	...	3,008 „
„ Botanical Gardens	...	...	...	350 „
„ Schools	...	...	...	660 „
„ Roads Boards	...	...	...	546 „
„ Progress Committees	...	...	...	464 „
„ Hospitals	...	...	...	547 „
„ Cemeteries	...	...	...	1,401 „
„ Recreation Grounds	...	...	...	724 „
„ Racing Clubs	...	...	...	100 „
Or in all	...	...	...	12,540 „

141. It is interesting to note that a large proportion of the trees given away in 1896 are doing well. Those sent to the Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie Municipalities are especially making good progress. These had special attention given to them.

## SECTION XII.

## SEEDS, PLANTS, AND WOODS RECEIVED.

142. I am indebted to the following gentlemen for the donations indicated opposite each name:—

- J. H. Maiden, Director of the Botanic Gardens, Sydney: Various forest tree seeds; pamphlets.
- W. Baker, Curator of the Technological Museum, Sydney: For a very fine collection of the principal woods of New South Wales.
- W. Gill, Conservator of Forests, South Australia: Sugar Gum Seeds.
- H. P. Woodward, Perth: Carob Bean and *Pinus Pinea* seeds; also specimens of Eucalyptus flowers from the Goldfields.
- L. Grant, Contractor, Perth: Sample of Jarrah and Wandoo which had been 61 years in use at Ellensbrook Flour Mill.
- Public Works Department, Perth: Portions of piles drawn from the Murray Bridge, said to have been driven in 1846.
- W. Howitt: Samples of Jarrah from pile driven in the old Causeway Bridge, Perth, over 50 years ago.
- Abbott Kenney, Chairman of State Forest Board, California: Seeds of *Sequoia Gigantea*.
- The Inspector General of Forests, India, through several Conservators of Forests: A very valuable consignment of Teak, Cypress, and Acacia seeds.
- A. R. Richardson, late Commissioner for Crown Lands: Paper-bark used for the purpose of keeping the clay on the decking of a bridge; forty years in use, and still in a perfect state of preservation.
- Public Works Department: Shingles, rafters, and portion of staircase from the Supreme Court, Perth, erected in 1837.
- Millar's Karri and Jarrah Forests, Ltd.: Turned legs for tables, in the rough and varnished.
- Jarrahdale Jarrah Forests and Railways, Ltd.: Blackbutt and Red Gum slabs.
- Gill, McDowell & Co.: Jarrah slab 50in. square, 3½in. thick, a splendid sample of seasoned timber.
- Public Works Department: Red Gum piles, driven in Swan River in 1868.

## SECTION XIII.

## STATE FORESTS.

It may be mentioned that a considerable area of forest land has been set apart as Timber Reserves or State Forests. These are in blocks ranging in size from 1,000 to 10,000 acres, and are situated in places all over the settled areas of the Colony, but chiefly in the South-Western District. The principal object in reserving these areas is that there may be plenty of forest available for the settlers and the small men cutting under ordinary licenses. These State Forests or Timber Reserves are strongly advocated by the Hon. the Minister for Lands, and it is to his advocacy that many of those now made owe their existence. This system of setting apart blocks will be continued as the forests are applied for under Special Timber License, so that no fear may be felt as to there being no timber left for the settlers.

**SECTION XIV.****THE PLAN.**

143. With this report is published a plan of a portion of the South-Western Division of the Colony, showing the forest lands which have been taken up under lease, and such as are still available for selection.

144. Although it will be seen that a very considerable area has been taken up, it will also be observed that there is still a large amount for selection.

145. The area of forest land now held under lease in the Colony amounts to 1,052,426 acres; of this, some 435,800 acres are held under special concessions, which were granted a considerable number of years ago.

146. There is still a very considerable area of good forest—Jarrah and Karri—open for selection. The only objection to this being taken up under lease is the fact that it is somewhat too far from an available railway or port for payable transport of the timber to market.