

For purposes of extraction and transport of timber, no improved appliances similar to those common in countries where Forestry has attained an advanced stage, such as timber-slides or tramways, have been introduced in the Forests. A valuation survey, the first of its kind in Travancore, is being made at present of one of the largest Forest Reserves of the State, to determine whether it would be a financial success to open a tramway to connect it with the South Indian Railway for facility of transport of timber.

CONSERVATION OF FORESTS.

Originally, it was a popular opinion that the forests would reproduce themselves, and that it would be superfluous to bestow any care upon them in the direction of conservancy and regulation fellings, and consequently there was no restriction whatever placed in the matter of removal of timber or clearing of land for cultivation or the grazing of cattle. That such a system was erroneous in principle and disastrous to the welfare of the people, as it affected climatic conditions and forest improvement, was eventually realised and we see that the first attempt towards forest reservation was made in the year 1888. Speaking of the alienation of public forest lands, Arthur P. Davis in a paper on "Suggestion for forest policy" published in "*Forestry and Irrigation*" for January, 1906, says, "Every acre of forest land in public ownership should be included in a Forest Reserve and a scientific control exercised over the grazing and cutting thereon," and again "Private lands bearing forest should be added to these reserves as fast as practicable and they should be made nuclei for forest extension by planting and cultivation. The Travancore Forest Regulation II of 1068 M.E. ‡, (1892-1893) enunciates the procedure to be followed in the settlement of Forest tracts and it greatly helped this all-important work, and we find that at the end of the last official year, 1080, there were under the control of the Forest and Cardamon Departments, 2245 sq. miles, 416 acres of Reserved Forests and 192 sq. miles, 190 acres of Reserved lands.* When once this work of settlement is completed and all available forest lands brought under the category of Reserved Forests, and valuation surveys are made, it will be feasible to work the Travancore Forests on the more systematic basis of Proper Working Plans, in the place of which for want of a scientific survey of the forests, they have only a system of Preliminary Working Plans, which but roughly indicate the area wherein felling operations are to be located, without

‡ M.E. stands for Malabar Era which began from August, 824 A.D.

* Report on the Administration of Travancore for 1080 M.E., 1904 to 1905 A.D.