

A supply of books for a library is also wanted, together with a supply of the daily and weekly papers.

Fencing.—Mr. Ross has enclosed a paddock of about 35 acres, by erecting a length of 56 chains of six-wire and standard fence, for a sheep-paddock, and he has enough material left to enclose a paddock of similar size.

Bush.—Though the greater part of the bush has been burnt, there is a little left near the house, and by next spring, when the blackness is washed off, and the Mount Cook lilies and plants are green, it will not look so bare as at present. Some cocksfoot grass-seed should be scattered over it in the spring. Mr. Ross also intends to procure some of the seed of the mountain-birch and sow it on the burnt part.

Vehicle.—A light station wagon or buggy should also be provided, as during the winter season, if any one was hurt or seriously ill, they could be brought down with the Hermitage horses. This would mean a trap and a set of double harness, which would cost about £35.

I may say that the Hermitage is now in good order, and will in future be fit for a large number of tourists at any time of the year; and if it is properly advertised a very successful future may be anticipated.

The coaching season should start on the 1st October, and not November as now, as the Australian people like to come over early, and get back home for the Christmas and New Year.

Mr. and Mrs. Ross are very enthusiastic in their work, and take great pains to make all alike comfortable. The visitors' book contains many notes in their favour. The house and surroundings are well kept, and I do not think any more could be expected from them.

W. H. WILLIAMS, Crown Lands Ranger.

APPENDIX No. 10.

REPORTS IN CONNECTION WITH PLANTATIONS OF FOREST TREES.

AUCKLAND.

KAINGAROA PLAINS.

On my last visit to the Rotorua and Taupo district I embraced the opportunity of examining the experimental plantations. The one between Taupo and Rangitaiki is only now in progress. The principal reason for so great a delay was the amount of work in hand in connection with the roads, and more especially, lately, with the floods along the Napier Road.

Along the Galatea Road there are three plantations of 5 acres each, and the trees therein looked exceedingly well. The only failures that did take place were in connection with the blue-gums and the native totara; but I am informed by Mr. Fairley, who had the work in hand, that he never expected the blue-gums to succeed; the young trees had evidently been too long on the road, for they showed signs of failing before they were put in the ground. Similar reasons account for the failure of the young totara trees—too long a time had elapsed between their being lifted and planted; but the spruce, larch, oaks, sycamore, ash, golden willow, red-gum, chestnut, and pines are everything that could be desired. They looked splendid, although immediately after they were planted there succeeded a long drought, and, as Mr. Fairley informed me, he feared that the whole of them would prove a failure. One acre also of Chewing's fescue has been sown on the Galatea Road. It is coming on, but somewhat slowly.

I am exceedingly pleased with the tree plantations, and I am personally satisfied that they will prove a complete and great success. The one at Turakenga also, where 15 acres were planted, looks very well. The plantation at Mamaku, 6 acres, I am informed is in fair condition; but the young trees in the bush are getting very thin and lanky in appearance. What they evidently want is sunlight. However, it is perhaps too soon to speak of the success or otherwise of plantations in forests.

Along the Galatea Road, as already stated, there are three plantations of 5 acres each, which of course increase the cost per acre, inasmuch as there is so much more fencing connected therewith than with the 15-acre plantation at Turakenga. The cost of the plantation along the Galatea Road comes in round numbers to about £12 per acre. The cost of the plantation at Turakenga is about £5 10s. Of course there was a very much heavier expense connected with the Galatea plantations in connection with freight, cartage, &c. I have gone carefully into calculation and find that a square mile (640 acres) can be fenced and planted at the rate of £4 per acre exclusive of cost of trees, and I strongly recommend the Government to face this matter and set about immediately to put the Kaingaroa Plains to good use by planting at least six square miles every year.

The £4 expenditure per acre will in thirty years (allowing compound interest) swell up to £16 per acre, and against this there would be an acre of trees, or allowing an average of 30 ft. between the trees, there would be seventy-five trees per acre. The value of fifteen of these would fully cover the £16 cost to the Government and leave the value of sixty trees per acre, or deducting the expense of cutting, removal, and disposal, leave a profit of about fifty trees per acre.

This planting of our pumice lands should be carried on continuously; no less than six square miles should be planted every year, thus securing a forest plantation of about two hundred square miles in thirty years, when some of the timbers will be large enough for cutting, and thence-