

ance, it is of a more robust and spreading habit. Few soils, even of the poorest, come amiss to this tree, and, besides providing a timber of no mean quality, it is one of the best shelter-trees yet introduced.

Large numbers are growing of the Douglas fir (*Abies douglasii*), which furnishes the celebrated Oregon pine of America. Many good specimens of this tree are to be seen in the recreation reserve, Naseby, where it is flourishing with remarkable vigour.

Of the Norway spruce (*Abies excelsa*), about fifty thousand young trees are in the beds. This tree, which has already proved itself suitable to this district, produces the well-known deal of commerce. Amongst other trees grown in smaller quantities may be mentioned *Abies menziesii*, a rapid-growing tree with timber almost identical with that of the Oregon pine; *Pinus ponderosa*, a durable coarse-grained timber; *Pinus strobus*, and American black spruce (*Abies nigra*). It will be observed that from this list are absent such trees as *Cupressus macrocarpa* and *Pinus insignis*, and such trees as have a value only as shelter, and not as timber trees. The reason of this is, Mr. Matthews states, that on this point his instruction from the Government was to the effect that only those trees producing useful timber were to be planted. The above list will, we venture to say, prove that this instruction has been thoroughly carried out. Noticing a large number of young cabbage-trees at the lower end of the nursery, we learned, on inquiry, that Mr. Matthews has furnished these from his own nursery, and that when the planting season arrives he intends to distribute them gratuitously to any settlers who may visit the nursery at that time. We hope that during the coming season full advantage will be taken of this generous offer, for, to our mind, no other tree gives a home such a characteristically New Zealand look as does the cabbage-tree.

For the preparation of the ground for the reception of the young trees next season about 4 acres have been put into crop on the eastern boundary, where the trees will remain for one or two years, according to the variety, before being planted out in their permanent quarters. As a water-supply is an essential to the growing of trees in their earlier stages, we find, as we expected, that here, as in other departments, nothing has been left to chance. We learn that water can easily be got all over the property by sinking in suitable places from 1 ft. to 5 ft. In one place near the nursery, rising out of a gully, a fine supply was struck after half an hour's work, much to the surprise of a farmer who had worked on the ground, and who said that if he had known water was there he would have had it long ago. Just so. So would every one else who required it—if they knew it was there. But how could he know without a trial? And we verily believe that this farmer is not singular in thirsty Maniototo. Close to the men's quarters a hole about 5 ft. in diameter by 3 ft. deep was dug for rubbish. To their surprise, in the morning it was full of water. The hole was at once enlarged, and yields, even in this dry season, an unfailing supply. A Farrington pump has been erected over this hole, and is connected by pipes with the seed-beds, which by means of a hose are thus provided with the necessary supply of water. A powerful windmill is being erected to raise water from this and other springs on the property. On the northern and higher boundary two large dams have been constructed to store water for use during a dry season. Even if the creek which supplies these dams should run dry, as it has done this season, arrangements are being made to keep the dam full by forcing the water up from the springs before mentioned by means of a windmill. A complete set of meteorological instruments is in use, and observations are taken daily at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. As showing how largely the success of the nursery is dependent upon irrigation it may be mentioned that the rainfall since the commencement of this work until the date of our visit has been only 0.73 in. A large and commodious building has been erected of sun-dried bricks. In one end comfortable quarters are provided for horses; next to the stable is the shed for traps—a very necessary convenience in this climate of extremes; the other end is occupied by the workshed and the men's quarters. The whole of the foundations and floors are laid in cement concrete, which, owing to the plentiful supply of gravel close at hand, has been found cheaper as well as more suitable than timber flooring.

The rapid progress made, and the success so far attained in this new undertaking, reflects the greatest credit on the Forester, Mr. Matthews, and his two nurserymen, Messrs. Gleeson and Roberts, who, by the way, both served their apprenticeship under Mr. Matthews at his well-known nurseries at Dunedin, a success all the more creditable seeing the work has been initiated in one of the worst seasons ever experienced in the Maniototo district. Of course it will be said, and truly said, that in this important undertaking its managers have only begun to climb the first brae of the Hill Difficulty, that the first winter and the planting process have yet to be faced, but the abundant precautions taken to attain success in its earlier stages favours the hope that an equal success will follow the later stages of this undertaking. In the meantime the thoughtful farmer who visits the Eweburn Nursery will meet with every courtesy from Mr. Matthews and his assistants, will see much to instruct him, and will, we trust, take home with him a number of new ideas on which to chew the cud of reflection at his leisure.

#### SOUTHLAND.

*Forest Plantation.*—An area of 304 acres has been fenced and wire-netted in Seaward Forest for this purpose, and I would draw attention to the following report by Mr. Matthews, Forester, on the work now undertaken there. Shortly after my arrival here I asked Mr. Matthews to visit the reserve on which this planting is now being carried out, and his advice will be generally followed:—

“In accordance with your instructions, I have inspected the Seaward Bush Forest Plantation Reserve, and now report as follows: One chain in width of bush has been felled around boundary and the underscrub partly burnt, but logs have been left, necessitating removal to a safe distance from fence-line before clearing. A large number of logs and stumps are abutting against fence from outside, thereby rendering the rabbit-proof netting ineffective by affording easy ingress. At