

An average of thirteen persons was employed on nursery throughout the year.

Four acres of oats were grown for horse-feed, and, although very late in maturing, an excellent well-headed crop of about 11 tons will be harvested. Spare portions of land were utilised in the production of horse-carrots, and about 4 tons will probably be realised by same.

The total expenditure for the year amounts to £1,418 18s. 8d.

The following is the record of rainfall and temperature :—

Record of Rainfall and Temperature at Tapanui Nursery.

Month.	Rainfall.	Number of Days Rain fell.	Highest Reading of Thermometer.	Date.	Lowest Reading of Thermometer.	Date.
1902.	Inches.		Degrees.		Degrees.	
April	3·79	16	76	1st	28	24th
May	3·38	17	66	9th	24	8th
June	1·10	7	62	12th and 18th	22	14th
July	3·34	17	62	14th	27	21st
August	3·50	7	68	21st	23	15th
September	7·12	19	62	28th	24	22nd
October	2·59	12	78	14th	24	18th
November	4·34	21	76	20th	28	11th
December	8·05	19	96	25th	30	5th and 20th
1903.						
January	4·73	19	92	19th	33	10th
February	2·42	7	92	16th	38	7th and 9th
March... ..	3·96	12	90	9th	30	21st
Totals	48·32	173

R. J. ROBINSON, Nurseryman in Charge.

DUSKY HILL PLANTATION, OTAGO.

(Area, 845 acres.)

DURING the year 624,383 trees have been planted here at a cost of £1 5s. 1d. per thousand, occupying an area of 229½ acres. 181,855 acorns were also sown *in situ* on steep hillsides where pitting was impracticable. These covered an area of 66½ acres, and the cost of preparing land and planting amounts to 15s. 9d. per thousand. The area planted during the year is 296 acres, and the total area now under forest trees is 552 acres, containing 1,228,588 trees. 356,300 pits were made by contract at £1 10s. per thousand, and 256,650 pits prepared with grubber-pick at £1 per thousand; making a total of 612,950 pits for the year, at an average cost of £1 5s. 9d. per thousand. The number of pits unplanted at end of last year was 487,983, and the number available for this season's planting 476,550. Over 100 acres of manuka-scrub land was cleared and burnt prior to pitting, at a cost of 5s. per acre.

An expenditure of £35 6s. was incurred in keeping down rabbits. No damage has been done to the trees by these pests this season, and for the future very little labour should be necessary to keep the plantation free.

Every species of tree planted has made excellent growth during the year, notably larch (both European and Japanese), many of which show over 30 in. of vertical growth for the season. The success of acorns planted *in situ* has again been great, and further extension of oak forests will be made by this method.

From Tapanui Nursery 556,422 trees were received, in seventy-six three-horse-wagon trips, at a cost of 1s. 10d. per thousand trees.

A good deal of labour was necessary in cleaning around newly planted trees, and the result of this work shows plainly in the increased rate of growth. £22 was spent in pruning trees of strong side branches and double leaders. Fourteen chains of open drains were made at a cost of 4s. 3d. per chain, and all water-tables kept in order along the four miles and a half of roads, which were ploughed for a width of 15 ft. to keep down weed-growth.

Past experience proves that planting of small-sized fibrous-rooted trees shows best results, and during the coming season it is proposed to plant some 260,000 lined in trees, in what are termed "grubber-pits." These pits are prepared by removing the turf with a mattock to a diameter of about 12 in., and then loosening the soil to a depth of 10 in. to 12 in. with the pick. In planting, the spade is thrust into the centre of these spots, then drawn forward, and the small tree inserted in the V-shaped aperture; the spade is withdrawn, and gentle pressure with the foot completes the operation.

The remaining unplanted portion of this plantation (293 acres, less roads) will be filled up during the approaching season.

An average of twenty-one persons was employed throughout the year, and the expenditure amounts to £2,147 5s. 11d. The total expenditure to date is £6,351 4s. 6d., and the estimated value of the plantation is £12,349 0s. 2d.

Details of expenditure, values, trees planted, are appended.

HARRY HOWE, Forester.

R. G. ROBINSON, Nurseryman in Charge.