

Abies Douglasii.—For one year's seedlings the crop is exceptionally fine.

Two-year-old trees in seed-beds: Larch have made an extraordinary growth; the bulk run from 1½ ft. to 2 ft. Owing to their immense growth and thickness in the seed-beds, all small and weakly seedlings have perished. A considerable reduction has to be recorded in the stock schedules on this account. One hundred thousand of those trees are now ready for planting out on plantations.

Pinus Austriaca.—A splendid tree; the plants are healthy and sturdy.

Lining out one-year-old trees was begun on the 12th August. Weather conditions during planting were very favourable. *Pinus insignis*, and to some extent *Berberis*, suffered from the fierce and parching gales experienced in October and November, and considerable loss has to be recorded thereby, especially among the pines. Cost of lining out 119,498 trees, 2s. 4d. per thousand.

Transplanting two- and three-year-old trees and shrubs: This work was completed on the 23rd September; owing to the late date and the size of the trees, considerable care had to be exercised. 14,971 trees were transplanted, at a cost of 15s. 4d. per thousand; these are now in a fine condition for removal, and will insure the success of the extensions to plantations and shrubberies contemplated this coming winter.

The number of trees in nursery at 31st March is 862,150. The estimated number of trees available for permanent planting out is 127,000. These will be lifted, sized, and puddled in readiness for carting to the plantation.

The number of trees grown to date is 862,150, and their value £1,030 2s. During the year, as opportunity offered, good progress was made with the general scheme of nursery-formation by roading, levelling of nursery-grounds, picking and carting off stones, and extending the water-supply, also in erecting necessary horse-troughs at stables and horse-paddock.

Subsoil ploughing: An area of 17 acres was treated, at a cost of £14 12s. 6d. The work has been an object-lesson to settlers, the success of the oat-crop proving beyond doubt the great benefits to be obtained by deep cultivation in a soil and climate like South Marlborough.

Good progress has been made with improvements. An area of 5 acres was prepared, and planted with 4,300 trees; this work has been very successful, all the trees having made good growth, and little or no loss observed, except on a few exposed places along the river-bank.

Six chains of hedges were planted, and as a permanent improvement will be of great service in a year or two.

During last month the whole of the boundary-line was enclosed with a rabbit-proof fence. This work comprised the erection of entrance-gates to nursery, erection of 25 chains new fencing, improving 60 chains of existing fences, and erecting 85 chains rabbit-netting; total cost, £104 7s. 11d.

The average number of men employed during the year was five.

Horses, tools, and implements are all in first-class order, and have been well looked after during the year.

Living-accommodation is urgently required for the workmen, some of whom are compelled to live in tents. A nurseryman's cottage and office would also be a convenience, as at present a rented house some distance from the nursery is being utilised.

Horse-feed to the value of £129 10s. was grown—chiefly oaten sheaf, which will be chaffed and sent to other nurseries.

The expenditure for the year amounts to £958 16s. 9d., and the total expenditure to date is £2,608 10s. 5d.

The following is a record of temperature and rainfall for the year:—

Meteorological Report, Starborough Nursery, Seddon.

| Month. | Rainfall. | Number of Days Rain fell. | Maximum Tempera- ture. | Date. | Minimum Tempera- ture. | Date. |
|---------------|-----------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
| 1902. | Inches. | | Degrees. | | Degrees. | |
| April .. | 3.23 | 9 | 74 | 2nd | 34 | 24th |
| May ... | 1.68 | 10 | 68 | 10th | 30 | 25th |
| June ... | 2.46 | 7 | 66 | 3rd | 32 | 7th |
| July ... | 0.22 | 2 | 68 | 25th | 30 | 17th |
| August ... | 1.48 | 8 | 68 | 21st | 30 | 11th |
| September ... | 1.83 | 7 | 74 | 6th | 32 | 9th |
| October ... | 0.72 | 4 | 76 | 28th | 32 | 20th |
| November ... | 1.13 | 7 | 82 | 22nd | 38 | 27th |
| December ... | 3.43 | 13 | 87 | 28th | 36 | 20th |
| 1903. | | | | | | |
| January ... | 3.59 | 10 | 92 | 25th | 42 | 30th |
| February ... | 0.66 | 5 | 94 | 26th | 44 | 22nd |
| March ... | 0.70 | 3 | 90 | 25th | 38 | 13th |
| Totals ... | 21.13 | 85 | ... | ... | ... | ... |

N. CRAIG,
Nurseryman in Charge.