

TARANAKI DISTRICT.

There are twenty-five different State forests in this district, covering an area of 64,145 acres. All the land is still in its natural state, and is covered with mixed bush and timber, the latter being almost entirely available for milling purposes, as only about 4,000 acres of these forests are not so suitable. None of the timber has yet been disposed of to sawmillers, and there is consequently an estimated quantity of 77,000,000 superficial feet which could be utilised if deemed advisable. However, much of it is difficult of access and situate in remote localities, so that disposal in this manner is not at present practicable. Fires have apparently encroached very little into the reserves, and the forest seems to be untouched, so that tree-planting operations have not yet been needed in Taranaki, and the lands serve the purpose for which they were originally set aside, and assist in maintaining the climatic equilibrium of the country.

WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

Some forty-five State forests in this district contain 938,951 acres of land set apart under the provisions of the Act. With the exception of a few acres in the outskirts, the whole of this large reserve is still in its natural state, and contains great quantities of valuable milling-timber, though for want of easy access a large proportion cannot be utilised for that purpose for many years to come. About 3,600,000 superficial feet has been disposed of to sawmillers and others, and fires have swept through the bush on about 3,000 acres, thereby destroying the forest growing on the land, but with this inconsiderable exception the forest reserves are untouched. No reforestation has yet been carried out in the Wellington District, and as much of the present reservation is unlikely to be needed for settlement requirements, but is admirably adapted for climatic and scenic purposes, it is probable that tree-planting on a large scale will be unnecessary for a long time to come.

MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

There are only two State forests in Marlborough, comprising 25,260 acres. About 15,500,000 superficial feet of timber has been felled and sold to sawmillers, and it is estimated that about 94,000,000 superficial feet of milling timber still remains available. An area of 500 acres has been burnt, and of this 300 acres has now been put down in grass. None of the cleared area has yet been replanted, as only some 1,600 acres has been affected in this manner.

NELSON DISTRICT.

In Nelson are to be found some twenty-three different blocks of land set apart under the State Forests Act, aggregating 8,900 acres. It is estimated that 27,000,000 superficial feet of milling timber are included in these forests, and of this none has been disposed of in any way. About 310 acres of bush has been destroyed by fires sweeping through it, but, with this exception, the whole of the land reserved is still in a state of nature, and, from a climatic point of view, is very useful to the district. No replanting has been thought necessary under the above circumstances.

WESTLAND DISTRICT.

Only 456 acres, in three reserves, have been set aside for State forest purposes. They have been denied of the original indigenous forest, but a secondary growth is now springing up and covers all the area.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT.

There are no less than eighty-five different areas of forest lands set aside under the provisions of the Act in Canterbury, extending over 270,631 acres. Most of these forests were recommended for reservation for climatic and preservative purposes, to prevent the back country from being converted into shingle-faces, rather than for any timber-value. The majority of the reserves are of such altitude and so difficult of access that they are of little value for milling purposes, though it is estimated that there is a large proportion of birch timber which will eventually be available for utilisation in this manner. In North Canterbury some 7,000 acres of forests were destroyed by fire about eight years ago, and subsequently partly surface-sown in grass, and in many of the forests traces of fires are to be seen, though much damage has not been done. No afforestation has yet been considered necessary in the reservations, though at Hanmer and elsewhere plantations have been started and are doing well, as will be seen by the Report on Afforestation by the Chief Forester of the Department.

OTAGO DISTRICT.

Some 91,100 acres, comprised in ten different blocks, have been set aside as State forests in Otago, mostly in the extreme north of the district, round the McKerrow, Young, and other ranges. About a thousand acres has been destroyed by fire, but with this exception the forests remain in their natural state. About 200,000 superficial feet of timber has been cut and sold off the reserves, and it is estimated that 3,700,000 superficial feet of milling-timber are available for future supplies. None of the burnt area has been grassed or replanted, but the Chief Forester has planted 1,679 acres of plantations in other parts of the district, which more than counteract the destruction of the natural forests.

SOUTHLAND DISTRICT.

The second largest area of lands reserved for State forest purposes is to be found in this district, as 445,150 acres contained in twenty reservations have been set aside from time to time. Very little forest has been burnt, and practically the whole of the area is still in its natural state, and no less than 102,630 acres of sawmilling bush is still available for future operations, containing approximately 92,000,000 superficial feet of rimu, 16,000,000 superficial feet of kahikatea, 9,000,000 superficial feet of matai, and 200,500,000 superficial feet of totara, whilst 93,000,000 superficial feet of birches are estimated to be included in the above forests. Outside these areas is the great Sounds National Park, of over 2,000,000 acres, so that climatic considerations have been well looked after in the Southland District.