

hand, private owners in various districts suffered more or less severely through damage to standing bush, logs, dams, tramways, buildings, roads, camps, &c. Where opportunity occurred, the timber-measurers, caretakers, bush contractors with their employees, and others assisted to stay the ravages and also the spreading of fires.

Gathering Gum, Waipoua and Warawara State Forests.—A small contract to strip and grade tree-gum in Waipoua has been let recently. Large returns are not expected, as incisions are restricted. About 8½ tons of tree-gum has been received from Warawara State Forest, 6 tons of which has been gathered by contract, and the remainder by the caretaker, part of whose time is utilised for this purpose. The object in stripping the gum is to remove the temptation for trespassing, and the practice is to gather the overflow outside of incisions only with a view to the preservation of the trees.

MARLBOROUGH LAND DISTRICT.

Schedule showing Approximate Quantity of Milling Timber.

Rimu.	Kahikatea.	Matai.	Totara.	Birches.	Totals.
<i>On Crown Lands.</i>					
68,000,000	23,000,000	5,900,000	350,000	5,000,000	102,250,000
<i>On Privately-owned Lands.</i>					
54,000,000	14,600,000	2,600,000	197,000	4,000,000	75,397,000

These quantities are, of course, only rough estimates of the amount of timber still available. Much of this may be destroyed by fire before it can be utilised; on the other hand, as timber becomes scarcer and more valuable new ways of working may be devised, and timber now considered inaccessible may be used and a considerable greater quantity produced.

The quantities of the several varieties of timber cut from the State Forests in this district are as follow: Rimu, 1,491,704; white pine, 475,748; totara, 30,719; and matai, 176,484 super. feet; or a total of 2,174,655 super. feet, yielding a total revenue in royalties of £590 15s. 4d.; an increase of £14 2s. 5d. over last year's receipts, but a decrease of 142,342 super. feet. This apparent anomaly is caused by a variation in the quantities of the higher-grade timber, some of which pay 1s. per 100 super. feet and others only 6d.

The quantity of timber cut from Crown lands this year has been 4,520,132 super. feet, made up as follows: Rimu, 2,486,828; kahikatea, 1,468,802; totara, 83,865; and matai, 480,637 super. feet—an increase of 1,725,910 super. feet. The total royalties from this source has been £1,192 17s. 1d., showing an increase of £593 18s. 1d. on the previous year. This is largely due to Messrs. Brownlee and Co.'s new mill at Ronga cutting for part of the period.

The gross revenue derived from all classes of State-owned forests has been £1,783 12s. 5d., or an increase of £608 0s. 3d. over last year's receipts; but out of this sum £596 8s. 6d. is payable to local bodies.

Estimated Receipts for next Year.—Owing to the starting of the double mill in the Upper Opouri Valley it is estimated that the gross revenue will be £2,300.

The approximate quantity of timber cut from bush owned by Europeans—or privately owned land—is estimated to be about 3,800,000 super. feet, divided very much into the same proportions as to varieties as the timber cut from State-owned forest. It is difficult to give a close approximation under this head, because private mills do not appear to keep any close account of the timber they cut.

The approximate quantity of timber cut in this district from all sources is about 10,494,000 super. feet, about 4,864,000 super. feet of which is exported to Nelson, Wellington, and Lyttelton. The balance of 5,630,000 super. feet is used locally, chiefly for building purposes, cabinet-work, box-making, &c.

The total number of men employed directly by the mills is 247, but there are probably about twenty or thirty men engaged in carting and other things connected with the industry.

There are fourteen mills now cutting in this district—the same as last year; some have closed down, cut out, or have shifted to new localities.

NELSON LAND DISTRICT.

There are eighty sawmills in the Nelson Land District, an increase of eight mills during the past year. Twenty-three of the mills are situated in the Buller County, fifteen in Inangahua County, and the remainder—forty-two—in the northern portion of the district. The cutting-capacity of the mills is 69,700,000 superficial feet. Fourteen of the mills are worked by water generating 145-h.p., and sixty-six by steam generating 765-h.p. Fifty-nine mills supply timber for local purposes, twelve for purposes of export to other districts and local purposes, and nine for export to other districts only. Twenty-four of the mills are cutting timber off Crown lands, forty-eight off lands held by Europeans, and eight off Westport Harbour Board endowment lands. The output for the year from the sawmills is as follows: Rimu, 12,047,358 super. feet; kahikatea, 2,220,565 super. feet; matai, 540,000 super. feet; birch, 925,747 super. feet; totara, 155,000 super. feet; yellow pine, 742,617 super. feet; cedar, 400 super. feet: total, 16,631,687 super. feet—an increase of 37,288 super. feet for the year. Number of persons employed in connection with the sawmilling industry is 493; number of horses and bullocks, 302 and 123 respectively; number of miles of tramway in use, 81 miles.