

The whole of the district, with the exception of a fringe of open country along the coast from Pukearuhe to Patea, averaging three miles in width, and containing about 250,000 acres, and some valleys at the north-eastern corner of the district about 150,000 acres in extent, was originally covered with heavy forest, but this is rapidly disappearing under progress of settlement and erection of sawmills to deal with such timber.

The larger timber is chiefly rata, rimu, matai, tawa, kahikatea, kohekohe, pukatea, rewarewa, hinau, with a few totara scattered here and there. Among the smaller trees may be mentioned the kotukutuku (or fuchsia), karaka, and mahoe.

An area of 72,565 acres, measuring six miles on every side from the summit of Mount Egmont, was originally set apart as a forest reserve. To this has now been added 1,040 acres on the lower slopes of Pouakai Range, with an additional 5,500 acres on the Patua Range, making a total of about 79,000 acres, which has now by Act of Parliament been set apart as the "Egmont National Park," the internal affairs of which are administered by a partly elected and partly nominated Board of ten members. At about three miles within the reserve the forest begins to get stunted; and at four and a half miles it gives place to low wiry scrub, which ceases at five miles, or an elevation of about 4,000 ft. At 5,000 ft. the moss ends; beyond this point to the summit the mountain is composed of loose scoria and lava.

VARIETIES OF TIMBER TREES, AND USES.

4. *Matai*.—A large forest, now destroyed, covered the south-west portion of the province. About 25,389,500 sup. ft. in district. Durable above ground. Used in buildings, fencing-posts, and strainers. Used at present for building-frames. Value, 19s. per 100 sup. ft.

2. *Totara*.—Scattered over the province, in small lots. About 35,942,000 sup. ft. in district. Very durable. Used for bridges, culverts, all sorts of buildings, house-blocks, fencing-posts, &c. At present used for all classes of buildings and works of a permanent nature. The wood is brittle, and short in grain. Value, £1 per 100 sup. ft. This timber is exceedingly light, but durable, and can be used for nearly all classes of work of a permanent nature which requires no cross-strain.

26. *Kahikatea*.—Found on damp and swampy locations throughout the province. About 98,893,750 sup. ft. in district. Not advisable to use in house-building, owing to prevalence of dry-rot. First-class timber for manufacture of butter-boxes. Now being used altogether for that purpose. Value, 12s. per 100 sup. ft. This timber is now rapidly disappearing, owing to the large quantity used in the dairying business, both in New Zealand and Australia.

25. *Rimu*.—Found all over the district, but more particularly on the western and south-western parts, where splendid forests of this valuable timber once grew, but now destroyed by the advance of settlement and cutting out by sawmills. About 405,932,250 sup. ft. in district. Used for bridge-framing above water, fencing-posts and strainers, and generally very fine house-building and furniture-manufacturing timber. Value, 19s. per 100 sup. ft.

33. *Pukatea*.—Scattered fairly well in district. About 61,086,250 sup. ft. A fairly durable timber, and can be used for weatherboarding, fencing, and internal fittings. Value, 19s. per 100 sup. ft. This timber is eminently adapted for decorative work, as ceilings, panelling, and suchlike internal work, as well as for furniture. It is a valuable timber going to waste.

19. *Rata*.—Grows in every part of the province, but is particularly plentiful and large around the base of Mount Egmont. About 152,774,250 sup. ft. in district. Durable as framing for wagons; also used for bridges, telegraph-arms, bearings for machine-beds, all wheelwright's work, boat knees and ribs, and wagon-frames. It is excellent firewood. Value, £1 per 100 sup. ft. Grows in all parts of the province.

17. *Maire*.—Scattered in small quantities throughout the province. Durable. Used for house-blocks, all sorts of turnery, bearings, strainers, posts, and house-piles. There does not appear to be much demand for this timber, therefore it is not much used in the trade.

31. *Tawhai rauriki*.—Found in fairly large patches in the more broken country in north and north-east portions of the district. About 7,028,000 sup. ft. in district. Very durable. Useful for railway-sleepers, fencing-posts, strainers, &c. Used for house-blocks, sleepers, bridgework, and fencing. This timber is not handled here by timber-dealers.

34. *Hinau*.—Found throughout the province. Very durable. Used for piles, sleepers, bridges, culverts, posts, rails, &c. Valuable for tanning. Timber-dealers cannot quote price, as it is only used for special purposes in the settled districts.

37. *Tawa*.—Scattered all over the district. Valuable as firewood. Can be used for buckets, tubs, and butter-casks, but too heavy for boxes, and will not hold nails very well. Now mostly used as firewood. When made into boxes this wood is half as heavy again as kahikatea, is not so easily worked, and will not hold the nails well. Casks for butter have gone out of date.

41. *Rewarewa*.—Grows in isolated patches throughout the province, but preferably along the coast belt. About 1,974,000 sup. ft. in district. Not durable if exposed. Useful for ornamental and cabinet work, turnery, and all sorts of internal fittings. Timber-dealers do not quote price, being used only for special purposes, and not in large quantities.

43. *Towai*.—Grows all over the province. Strong, and fairly durable. Used for fencing-posts. Timber-dealers do not stock this wood; it is only used by the settlers as posts for post-and-wire fencing.

50. *Mahoe*.—Found all over the district. Not durable. Valuable for charcoal, but apparently not used at all. Timber-dealers do not stock this wood. Nearly all the trees are hollow, and are therefore practically useless.

24. *Kowhai*.—Scattered along streams, mostly in northern part of district. Very durable. Used for fencing-posts and strainers and small works requiring strength and durability. Not stocked by timber-dealers.