

hard, being similar to maire in this respect, but it is easily worked with the saw. No reason is given for the manner in which it gradually assumes its hard flinty character, but probably the extraction of its gums and juices by the sun and other agencies has something to do with it.

Mr. District Surveyor J. Stevenson deals especially with the Waimarino Forest :—

The forest in the Waimarino district is the finest I have ever seen, and on the flat land around Ohakune and Raetihi it is magnificent. The trees are growing very thickly, and tall and straight in the barrel, and sound, and from a sawmiller's point of view, an ideal forest for milling, the trees being so easily got at and brought to the mill, and the quantity being estimated at from 20,000 sup. ft. to 40,000 sup. ft. per acre. I have heard of it cutting as high as 45,000 sup. ft. to the acre of rimu, matai, miro, and kahikatea, the only timbers that are milled here.

On the hilly country the bush is not so heavy, there being fewer large trees to the acre, and a larger proportion of the smaller timbers, such as tawa, tawhero, &c., and on this hilly country ratas and rewarewa grow more profusely than on the flat land.

There are very few totaras in this district, and the few that are there are hardly worth taking into account in making an estimate.

Hinau and maire grow over the whole district, but are not milled. Hinau is used a little for fencing-posts, and sometimes for house-blocks. Maire is used for firewood, and a very limited quantity for straining-posts for bridges, &c. Rewarewa is found all over the district, principally on the ridges.

Tawa grows more profusely to the south and west—towards the Wanganui River—of Raetihi. Also in the Manganui-a-te-ao Valley to the north-west; while to the east along the Wangaehu River, and towards Mount Ruapehu from Karioi, there is a large belt of “red-birch,” as it is called here—tawhai raunui (*Fagus fusca*) I think it is. This birch is said to be a durable timber, and some fencing-posts at Karioi are still perfectly sound which are said to have been in the ground for over thirty years. This birch timber, I think, would do very well for building purposes, but do not know of it having been used as such, and it is not milled. There is a large area of this birch, mostly fine large trees, and easily got at. The timber very much resembles totara in appearance, and would require an expert to tell the difference in the plank.

It is an impossibility to give more than a wild guess at the quantities of timber in most of this district. The whole bush area contains good milling-timber, but a great deal of it is totally inaccessible at present.

The blocks of bush land I know most intimately belong to the Natives, and it is fast being taken up for settlement, and at present is too far from railways and a market for any one to think of milling it; and whether it would do to hold for milling in the future, when roads and railways are put through, is questionable.

The blocks immediately round Raetihi containing milling-timber are as follows :—

	Acres.
Ohutu Block, Native land, leased to settlers, say	40,000
Otiranui Block, Native land	5,000
Raetihi Block, Native land, mostly leased to sawmillers	16,500
Tawhito-Ariki, Crown land (bush still standing)	2,000
Tupapanui Block, Native land	5,145
Mairekura Block, Native land	3,366
Reserve A Block, Native land	14,850
Ngatipare Block, Native land, about	1,610
Morikau Blocks, Native land (half leased to settlers)	30,000
Mairehau Block, Native land	(not given.)
Papahaua Block, Native land, about	10,000
Whaharangi Block, Native land	10,000
Waimarino No. 3 Block, Native land	18,350
And the bush still left on the various settlers' holdings in the district round Raetihi, say about	50,000
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Taking the area of the different blocks mentioned, and estimating the amount of milling-timber—i.e., rimu, matai, miro, and kahikatea—at 10,000 sup. ft. to the acre, and, say, one-half of the blocks contain milling-timber, the amount would come to 1,034,100,000 sup. ft., which, at the rate of 10s. per 100 sup. ft., would amount to the sum of £5,170,500.

The quantity of timber, or more, I believe, is there, but what proportion of it can be utilised for milling is a most difficult question to answer. Still, I think a good proportion of it will be milled, though a great deal of the land in the blocks mentioned is totally inaccessible at present, and, where accessible, a long way from a market and railway.

The timbers in this district, so far as I have observed, I would place in the following relative order of abundance in numbers and quantity: Rimu predominates; then there would come matai, miro, hinau, maire, tawa, tawhero, birch, kahikatea, rata, rewarewa; totara is very scarce, only an odd tree here and there; and most of the smaller trees and shrubs are found over the whole district.

Rangers Sutherland and Smith's joint report has special reference to the southern and eastern portions of the province, and is as follows :—

The southern and eastern portion of the province reaches from the Akitio River, on the Hawke's Bay boundary-line, to Wellington on the south, and comprises portion of the western slopes of the