

### APPENDIX III.—THE TIMBER INDUSTRY.

#### EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS OF CROWN LANDS.

##### AUCKLAND.

DURING the year there has been a keen demand for timber owing to the amount of building and other works in progress. Three measuring-parties have been constantly employed, and timber to the quantity of 65,210,973 superficial feet has been offered for disposal.

The following table shows the actual amount of timber of the various kinds disposed of during the year:—

	Kauri.	Rimu.	Kahikatea.	Totara.	Matai.	Total.	Amount realized.	
	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	£	s. d.
Crown lands (including national endowments)	5,044,409	1,154,552	13,606,958	2,337,333	1,065,779	23,209,031	11,159	5 11
State forests .. ..	26,563,397	6,148,445	12,402,285	1,577,734	598,836	47,290,697	49,451	3 3
Sections loaded with value of timber	88,687	1,762,852	2,649,775	387,316	93,066	4,981,696	1,274	16 0
Education reserves ..	..	..	..	13,600	..	13,600	6	16 0
Totals .. ..	31,696,493	9,065,849	28,659,018	4,315,983	1,757,681	75,495,024	61,892	1 2

By a recent amendment of the regulations, authority was obtained to dispose of kauri timber by auction, instead of only by tender as previously, and at the first sale held afterwards the record price of 6s. 3d. per 100 superficial feet for kauri timber was realized, thus indicating the value that is placed upon the limited remaining supplies of this unique timber. The sales of kauri have indicated that the time may have arrived for the minimum rate of royalty to be at least doubled.

Timber to the value of £334,413 has been exported from Auckland, principally to Australia, and timber valued at £72,118 has been imported, this being mostly Oregon pine. It is expected that there will be an importation of Manchurian pine during the coming year, as a sawmiller in the Northern Wairoa has a concession over certain forests in Manchuria.

With the decreasing supply of those timbers which were hitherto only esteemed as valuable, millers are beginning to use others not formerly considered. The shortening supply of kauri is producing an improved demand for mountain-rimu, which is good for building purposes. An attempt is also being made to utilize taraire for inside fittings; this timber has hitherto only been burnt, though it is pretty wood, and durable.

It is to be regretted that the millers do not fell the various timber-trees in winter when sap is down, as all timber lasts longer if felled in the winter. The difference in seasoning between kauri felled in winter and summer is very noticeable.

Another effect of the lessening supplies is that buried kauri-trees which are found in some parts a few feet below the surface are being unearthed and utilized in the mills. Some of these trees have a girth of 36 ft. and more, and must have been buried for hundreds of years, yet they appear quite sound, while over them there are in some cases to be found huge kauri-trees growing.

A visitor to the timber districts cannot fail to be struck with the waste of timber, especially kauri, that has taken place, though, probably, attempts will now be made to utilize some of this. There is also a great deal of mill-waste left on sawmill workings, which might be turned to commercial value.

The inevitable conflict of interests between timber and settlement is still in evidence, the Crown being urged to cut up and open for settlement land on which valuable milling-timber exists. In the past such lands have sometimes been offered loaded with the value of the timber, either in the form of a permanent addition to the capital value of the land, or as a debt to be paid by the selector to the Crown during a limited period of years. Neither method has proved satisfactory; in the first instance the occupier, when the timber is destroyed, complains that his valuation is excessive; while in the second case the recurring payments for the timber press hardly upon him at a time when all his financial and other resources are needed to bring his holding into a productive condition. Nor is it reasonable to claim that the Crown should dispose of the land without regard to the timber, which is frequently worth