

The Puhipuhi State Forest Reserve consists of some 10,000 acres, which at one time was covered with a splendid kauri forest. Since this has disappeared the land has gradually become covered with bracken and dead logs, both fallen and standing, as is usual upon cut-out forest areas which have been burnt out. Practically nothing has been done by way of farming the land, owing probably to the fact that only short leases can be granted so long as it remains State forest reserve. It is true that a little grazing has been done, but this has simply been the using of the growth which usually comes after a fire without any attempt being made to grass the land in a proper manner. In its present condition this large area is a real menace to the plantation areas, and this fact was amply illustrated last January when a fire burnt over some 500 acres of *Eucalypti* plantations. The fire started on unoccupied land about a mile from a 100-acre block of *Eucalypti* which is detached from the main area planted. It spread with great rapidity, and before the caretaker could procure assistance the whole of this area had been burnt. The next difficulty was to keep it from spreading into the main area of plantation, but owing to the strong wind carrying sparks from burning stumps and logs it eventually broke out here, and soon swept over the best portion of the plantation. For some months prior to the outbreak no appreciable quantity of rain had fallen. The whole of the district was parched, the grass paddocks were as bare as a ploughed field, and consequently fire was readily spread by means of sparks. With regard to the damage done, this is not so great as might be supposed. The fire must have burnt very quickly, and, except where rotten logs or stumps became ignited, it did not last long. This conclusion is inferred from the fact that the foliage, which, of course, is scorched and lifeless, is still adhering to the trees, and that the topmost leaves on many of the trees of 14 ft. to 16 ft. in height are untouched by the fire. Since the fire most of the trees have made numerous shoots from the base of the trunk, and if the old wood is lopped off it will soon be replaced by a new stem. This work is now proceeding. Prior to the fire good growth was being made by *Eucalyptus resinifera*, but most of the other species of *Eucalyptus* planted were doing very indifferently.

The expenditure for the year amounted to £235 5s., which includes the wages of the caretaker and the employment of extra labour for fire-fighting.

The daily average number employed during the year was 2.11.

A record of the temperature and rainfall follows.

Schedule I.

Month.	Rainfall.	Number of Days Rain fell.	Temperature.		Number of Days Frosts occurred.
			Maximum.	Minimum.	
1912.					
April	In. 5.40	19	Deg. F. 74	Deg. F. 38	..
May	3.57	10	66	34	..
June	3.31	16	62	36	..
July	9.95	20	62	33	..
August	5.15	16	61	31	4
September	4.77	20	66	38	..
October	2.24	16	71	36	..
November	1.30	11	75	39	..
December	0.47	5	86	42	..
1913.					
January	1.64	3	89	42	..
February	0.27	3	86	42	..
March	1.06	6	90	40	..
Totals	39.13	145	..	..	4

Schedule II.—Statement of Expenditure.

	For Year.		To Date.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Planting operations and maintenance—				
Tree-planting .. ..	...	...	1,106	1 11
Pitting .. ..	...	...	1,552	14 0
Clearing .. ..	...	...	963	17 0
Cartage of trees .. ..	...	...	179	13 3
General upkeep of plantation	201	10 11	3,339	3 9
General repairs	4	6 5	142	18 0
Horse-feed .. ..	...	...	33	16 3
Permanent works—				
Fencing .. ..	...	...	471	0 3
Purchase of land .. ..	...	...	10	4 3
Formation .. ..	...	...	36	13 0
Buildings .. ..	...	...	355	4 9
Stock, implements, &c.—Tools and implements	4	7 8	326	9 3
Supervision and clerical—				
Supervision of free labour	15	0 0	982	9 7
Clerical assistance	10	0 0		
	£235	5 0	£9,500	5 3

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