

made in either case for the quantity of timber felled and burnt on private lands for settlement purposes. The Board has attempted to arrive at an independent estimate of the rate of consumption from data and statistics furnished to it during the course of its inquiry. The export of white-pine for the years ending 31st December, 1909 to 1916, inclusive, are as follows :—

	Sup. ft.
1909 .. .. .	44,056,987
1910 .. .. .	49,561,238
1911 .. .. .	52,085,566
1912 .. .. .	60,613,339
1913 .. .. .	44,129,376
1914 .. .. .	53,743,069
1915 .. .. .	50,739,409
1916 .. .. .	42,783,369
Total .. .. .	398,012,353

During the same period the Dominion exported 2,943,248 cwt. of butter, and sold locally approximately 1,600,000 cwt. Allowing two boxes to the hundredweight and 8 ft. in each box, this would represent a consumption of 73,000,000 ft. of timber. Our cheese-export for the same period totalled 4,951,896 cwt. Allowing fourteen cheese-crates to the ton and nine crates to 100 sup. ft., this would represent 38,500,000 sup. ft. It is estimated that about 68,000,000 sup. ft. have been used locally during the same period for other purposes. Adding these figures to the quantity exported (398,000,000) gives a total of 577,000,000 ft. approximately used industrially. Allowing loss in conversion at 33½ per cent., it would give a total of 865,000,000 ft. for eight years, or an annual average total consumption of 108,000,000 sup. ft. (approximately). If the rate of consumption is maintained at this average, and if our remaining supplies of white-pine are all available for milling, they will last another nine years. Even if the consumption is taken at the estimate supplied by the Lands Department—viz., 92,000,000 sup. ft.—our white-pine reserves will be exhausted in a little over ten years. The position is therefore serious, and the dairying industry is justified in focussing attention on a matter that so vitally affects its interests.

THE NATURE OF THE NEW ZEALAND FORESTS.

As far as the Board has been able to ascertain, there are no large white-pine forests left standing in New Zealand, but white-pine exists in scattered patches or mixed with other forest-trees. The Commissioner of Crown Lands at Wellington supplied the Board with interesting figures showing the proportion of white-pine situated in the Wellington Land District, where he was able to speak with some accuracy. The areas selected were, in his opinion, representative of the rest of the province, and are probably typical of the distribution of white-pine throughout the rest of the forestry of the Dominion.

No.	Area.	Situation.	Percentage of White-pine.
	Acres.		About
1	335	Between Manunui and Main Trunk line .. .. .	26
2	1,910	Vicinity Owhango .. .. .	30
3	165	" .. .. .	24
4	175	" .. .. .	22
5	340	" .. .. .	22
6	450	" .. .. .	59
7	200	" .. .. .	8
8	1,251	Raurimu .. .. .	24
9	913	Near Horopito .. .. .	10
10	742	Between Ohakune and Raetihi .. .. .	22
11	734	Near Ohakune .. .. .	2
12	258	Hihitahi .. .. .	8
13	350	" .. .. .	7
14	1,401	East of Mangaweka .. .. .	56

Where in the past white-pine formed pure forests of that tree alone, it was usually found on low-lying swampy ground. These swamps, when the forest had been removed and the soil drained, formed the richest agricultural land, of high value for dairying purposes. The mixed forests now standing where the white-pine is the predominating tree are frequently situated on good agricultural land, and where areas of this nature of bush have passed into private hands the temptation is great to get rid of the timber at the earliest possible moment and turn the land to practical productive purposes. So strong has been this impulse that settlers have seldom waited for the advent of the sawmiller to clear their ground, but have felled the bush in large areas, grassed it, and stocked it with dairy herds. The high values that are now being received for dairy-products will further accelerate the destruction of the bush on privately owned lands for settlement purposes. Where white-pine is still found on swampy lands, the suitability of such lands for close settlement when drained is a strong plea for the removal of bush forthwith, especially in view of the pressing demand for and limited area of first-class land in New Zealand.