

Acreages of Trees planted.

Name of Tree.	Area.	
	Pure.	Mixed.
	Acres.	Acres.
<i>Pinus Laricio</i>	116	..
„ <i>ponderosa</i>	73	..
„ <i>radiata</i>	162	..
<i>Eucalyptus</i> (species)	14	..
<i>Pseudo-tsuga taxifolia</i>	3	..
Poplars	9	..
Total	377	..
	377	

RANFURLY NURSERY, CENTRAL OTAGO.

(Area, 49 acres; altitude, 1,400 ft.; established, 1896.)

The past season, although not constituting a record for the amount of precipitation, has nevertheless been a wet one up to a certain point. The total rainfall for the year was 23·04 in., which is 6·83 in. in excess of last year's fall. The wettest period occurred between the months of September and December. Rain was recorded on 115 days during the year, and frost on 101 days.

As far as nursery-work is concerned the season cannot be said to have been altogether satisfactory. Although a wet season is usually welcomed in the district by farmers in general, the larger portion of the rainfall occurred at a period when we could ill spare any lost time—that is, in the spring, when every day must be made the most of for the transplanting of trees, &c. The peculiarly sticky nature of portions of the nursery breaks under the slightest excess of moisture created a difficulty in handling over a million seedlings in time to allow them the full benefit of spring growth. A late start was made with lining-out operations—viz., 1st September—and during October there were only ten days on which this work could be gone on with. Consequently this meant that transplanting was relatively later than usual, and that the later-planted seedlings were really too far advanced to handle with any prospect of success. *Pinus ponderosa* has done fairly well, but in *Pinus Laricio* a rather large percentage of deaths must be recorded. These two species constituted the bulk of the trees lined out this year, and only small quantities of other species were handled. Unfortunately, last year's sowing of *Pinus radiata* was a failure, and therefore none were available for lining out. The total number of trees, cuttings, &c., handled for the season amounted to approximately 1,213,000. It is estimated that some 700,000 trees will be available for transfer to plantations during the coming winter, and, though this number is disappointing when compared to the number of trees lined out, it constitutes a record output for this station. The total number of trees transferred to plantations, settlers, &c., for the year amounted to 587,888. Of this number, some 29,160 trees of various species were supplied to settlers, *Pinus radiata* constituting almost half the number. Very satisfactory reports have been received from time to time as to the success of the trees planted.

Seed-sowing.—This operation, like the lining-out, was retarded by wet weather, and, although in normal seasons it is carried out during the months of August and September, this season it was commenced on the 9th November and completed on the 13th. The ordinary seed-bed ground was not available this year, and a portion of one of the nursery breaks not usually utilized for this purpose was made use of. This had not been previously manured, and owing to the wet weather mentioned could not be worked to the usual fine condition necessary. Consequently the resulting crop of seedlings is not up to expectations. *Pinus Laricio* is again specially poor, but only a small quantity of this was sown, owing to a shortage of seed-frames. *Pinus ponderosa* has done well, as has also *P. radiata* and *P. Banksiana*, while the remainder can only be considered fair. The total number of seedlings resulting from a sowing of 134½ lb. of seed is approximately 866,000.

General.—Several improvements and alterations which were contemplated had to be abandoned owing to the necessity for economy; but the installation of a 3½-horse-power engine and pumping plant has filled a long-felt want. Its usefulness, however, has not been demonstrated to full effect on account of the wet season experienced. The water is pumped to a storage-tank placed on a stand 20 ft. high, and it is also arranged for pumping direct to seed-beds, so that good pressure is always available. A chaffcutter has also been fitted up and geared to the engine, and, although its capacity is not large, it leaves us independent of outside assistance, which is always difficult to obtain in this district when most required. One or two minor