

APPENDIX A.

(1.) REPORT UPON AFFORESTATION OPERATIONS IN THE NORTH ISLAND.

(By H. A. GOUDIE, Superintending Nurseryman for the North Island.)

During the year an area of 1,835 acres was planted, thus making the total area of plantations in the North Island 23,627 acres. The estimated number of trees raised from seeds during the year is 1,903,000, while the total raised at Rotorua Nursery since it was established is 62,946,000. The progress made, although not as good as desired, can be considered satisfactory when the difficulties due to the war and other adverse conditions are taken into account. The tree-seeds which were ordered in America for sowing in October reached New Zealand in the “Makura” during the influenza epidemic, and after being carried back to Australia were delivered late in January, when it was too late to sow them. This has caused a shortage of trees to show in the past year’s operations, and will delay the return to the normal rate of progress for one year.

LABOUR.

During the early part of the year labour was scarce, and there was not sufficient available until the beginning of summer. A number of former employees are now being repatriated, and casual hands taken on during their absence with the Expeditionary Forces are being gradually paid off. The employment of returned soldiers, which is referred to at length in the report upon Waireka Camp, has enabled a certain amount of extension-work to be undertaken which would otherwise have been impossible. It is but right to state that this class of labour has not been cheap, and that the cost of work done at Waireka Camp has exceeded the cost of similar work done at the other stations. While this is regrettable, it is recognized as unavoidable, because a fair percentage of the men employed have been unfit to undertake heavy work. Light movable huts are now being built for the accommodation of the soldier workmen. These will be much more durable and certainly more comfortable than the tents they at present occupy.

PRISON LABOUR.

Following is a summary giving particulars of prison labour since 1900, the year in which the policy of employing prisoners on afforestation-work was first adopted. Kaingaroa is now the only prison-labour station, and the work done there during the past year may be regarded as very satisfactory.

Summary of Prison Labour.

Station.	Year.	Period.	Total Value of Work performed.		Average Daily Number of Men employed during Period.	Average Value of Work per Man per Year.	
		Years.	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Whakarewarewa Plantation ..	1904-17	12·58	12,518	7 10	12·86	77	7 7
Waiotapu Plantation ..	1900-13	12·08	24,665	2 6	30·22	67	11 3
Kaingaroa Plains Plantation ..	1918-19	1·00	2,793	2 1	32·90	84	18 0
” ..	1912-19	6·08	12,618	4 8	23·06	90	0 0

Since the prison camp at Kaingaroa was established 6,000-odd acres have been planted, and if the present rate of progress is maintained for another three or four years all the land within working distance of the camp will have been used. It is hardly necessary to state that the longer the present camp can be economically used as a centre the better. The establishing of a camp is a laborious and costly matter, and there are not many suitable sites on this reserve where the water necessary for camp use and shelter for the buildings could be obtained. In order to prolong the present camp as a working centre it is suggested that a small mobile camp be established which would accommodate half of the number of prisoners now employed—this camp to be always kept within a radius of about three or four miles distant from the main camp and moved along as required. It is probable that if this suggestion were adopted the present camp could be used for from eight to ten years. There are details in connection with this proposal which concern the Prisons Department, and which need not be discussed here. Suffice it to say that the present camp is well equipped with necessary conveniences, and that the arrangements of the proposed auxiliary camp need not therefore be other than of a simple and inexpensive character.

SALE OF TREES TO FARMERS.

The number of trees disposed of during the year to farmers was 193,522, and the seeds, which were supplied in various-sized packages, amounted in the aggregate to 132 lb. The decrease in the demand is probably due to the scarcity of farm labourers, this view being amply supported in correspondence with applicants. The introduction of the system of supplying *Eucalyptus* plants in trays was fairly successful; freight and packing charges were naturally much heavier, but the plants reached their destination, whether by rail or steamer, in much better condition. Trees supplied free of charge to soldier settlers numbered 22,500. In order to get the concession, applicants were required to supply means of identification, such as their regimental number, date of discharge, and name and number of their section of land.