

PREPARATIONS FOR 1921 PLANTING.

Preparations for planting at Kaingaroa Plains and at Kaingaroa West are well in hand. The approximate percentage of each species it is proposed to plant is as follows: Douglas fir, 52·5 per cent.; *Pinus ponderosa*, 20 per cent.; *Pinus radiata*, 23·4 per cent; *Pinus strobus*, 0·8 per cent.; *Pinus Laricio*, 3·3 per cent.

ANNEXURE No. III.—A REPORT UPON AFFORESTATION OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH ISLAND.

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During the year an area of 319½ acres was planted, thus increasing the total area planted in the South Island to 12,392½ acres. That the new area planted is so small is accounted for by the fact that practically half of the total number of trees transferred to the plantations was utilized in replacing failures over several seasons' planting-areas, this phase of operations having, as a result of the shortage of labour and an inadequate supply of the required species, been necessarily somewhat neglected for a considerable period.

Trees raised in the nurseries during the year are estimated at 3,616,700, while the total raised to date is 48,521,796. Tree-raising was carried out under somewhat unfavourable conditions, the spring season being generally very late, while in the summer each district experienced more or less protracted periods of drought, which had an adverse effect upon the growth of nursery stock. The total number of trees in the nurseries on the 31st March was 6,110,900, and the output for the coming season is estimated at approximately 1,600,000.

The results obtained on the plantations are generally good, the percentage of failures amongst recently planted trees being considerably lower than that of the previous year.

LABOUR.

Labour has been plentiful throughout the year, and it has been possible to undertake much work that had of late years been neglected, and to expedite preparations for the approaching season. It is satisfactory to note that the class of labour available has shown marked improvement over that of the previous year, the somewhat shiftless workman who accepted employment and quickly became dissatisfied having been gradually replaced by a much steadier and more efficient type. Preference in filling vacancies has again been given to returned soldiers, many of whom have proved worthy of consideration and evinced a desire to take forestry work as a permanent occupation.

SALE OF TREES TO FARMERS.

Trees to the number of 113,115 and tree-seeds aggregating 20½ lb. in weight were supplied to farmers and local bodies during the year. Full advantage of the opportunity to obtain trees free of charge was taken by soldier settlers, who secured approximately one-third of the total number distributed. Owing to the shortage in *Pinus radiata* and *Cupressus macrocarpa*—species for which a heavy demand was experienced—100 applications for some 80,000 trees had to be refused. Approximately 250,000 trees have been reserved for the requirements of farmers and local bodies during the coming winter, and, as numerous applications are now being received, it is anticipated that this number will be fully booked.

GRAZING OF SHEEP ON PLANTATIONS.

Sheep have again been grazed on some of the older plantations with good results, the expenditure in connection with the upkeep of fire-breaks having by this means been reduced to a minimum. At Hanmer Springs a neighbouring runholder was granted a lease, for a limited number of sheep, of the older part of the plantation, while at Conical Hills the grazing was done, as formerly, with a departmental flock.

REVENUE.

The amount of revenue derived from the South Island plantations and nurseries during the year was £1,435 8s., details of which are given hereunder. The increase of £331 18s. over the previous year's revenue was derived chiefly from house-rentals. A slight increase in the sale of trees and firewood will be noted, while a corresponding falling-off occurred in the revenue for wool and sheep.

	£	s.	d.
Trees (113,115)	273	15	9
Sheep	457	4	3
Wool and skins	59	15	1
Firewood, poles, &c.	243	14	5
Grazing	29	19	6
House-rentals	363	4	0
Sundry recoveries	7	15	0
Total	£1,435	8	0