

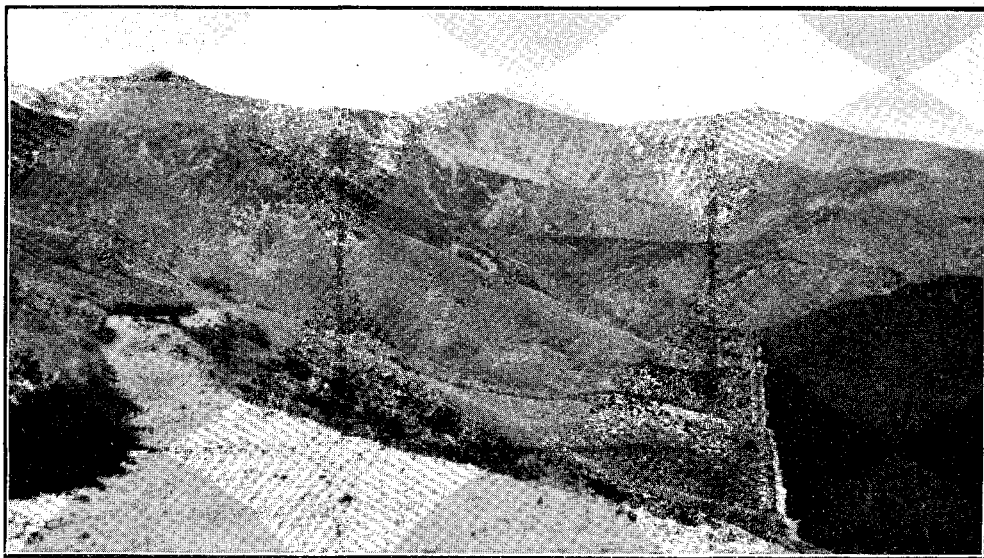
From the grand total of 157,480 skins approximately 50 per cent. were taken in the Wellington conservation region, where 478 licenses were issued. The Conservator of Forests, Palmerston North, reports that 420 applications for permits to trap in State forests were received and 264 permits issued. Three convictions for illegal trapping were obtained in this region, with fines amounting to £20, plus costs, £10 3s. Prior to the commencement of the 1926 trapping season instructions were issued to each Conservator of Forests to keep a close watch over trapping operations, with a view to safeguarding this promising industry from the danger of overtrapping. The consensus of opinion within this Service at the close of the season was that at least one close season should be observed in order to permit the opossums to multiply, and a recommendation upon these lines was made to the authority concerned.

It is generally recognized that the opossum does little or no damage to the forests, and this opinion is supported by the investigations recently made on beech forests by the Honorary Botanist to the Service, Dr. L. Cockayne, F.R.S., who has a comprehensive knowledge of the forests before and after the introduction of the opossum.

Native Birds.

Bird-life must have breeding-places, shelter, and food, and the forest furnishes this admirably. The fire-protection policy of the Forest Service, together with loyal public co-operation, has accomplished much in safeguarding the remaining refuges of New Zealand native birds.

The Forest Service has co-operated with the New Zealand Native Birds Protection Society in its work in connection with the preservation of our avifauna, and it is gratifying to record that Conservators report an increase in native birds. In the Wellington conservation region two cases of destruction of native pigeons were investigated, the offenders being fined £20 and costs in each case, and their firearms confiscated.



TYPE OF COUNTRY BEING PLANTED BY FOREST SERVICE IN HANMER SPRINGS DISTRICT.

Wild Pigs.

Funds for the purpose of carrying out poisoning experiments and payment of a bounty upon wild pigs killed in certain parts of the North Island were again provided by the Departments of Agriculture, Lands, and the State Forest Service.

In conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, a small experiment with poison was undertaken by this Service in the Waipapa Valley, north Wellington. Unpoisoned and poisoned pollard baits with a small quantity of oil of aniseed were laid, but no evidence was obtained that these had been eaten, although laid in places infested with wild pigs. At a later date a more extensive experiment was undertaken inland from the Wanganui River by the Inspector of Stock, Wanganui, in conjunction with a representative of the Wanganui River Trust. Carrots, potatoes, artichokes, and apples poisoned with phosphorized pollard, strychnine, or arsenic, and untreated baits, were laid, but again no indications were recorded that the baits had been eaten by the pigs. Experiments will be continued at seasonal intervals, and it is hoped that an efficient and economical means will yet be found to cope with this pest.

The State Forest Service in its capacity of organizing and controlling agent collected and paid out the bonus of 1s. per snout on 4,566 snouts in the Rotorua conservation region, and on 23,282 snouts in the Wellington region—a total of 27,848, compared with 2,026, 17,227, and 19,253 respectively during the previous year. A total of £1,432 9s. 2d., was expended in the payments of bounty and on poisoning experiments, while provision has been made for further expenditure on wild-pig control during the current fiscal year.