

REPORT.

INTRODUCTORY.

The year 1928-29 constituted a new record for State afforestation in New Zealand and for the British Empire, and one which may not again be reached in this Dominion. This was the establishment of 57,406 acres of new plantations, an increase of 22,300 acres as compared with the previous year, or nearly treble the area planted during 1926-27. This abnormal increase was due to the necessity for providing employment for those out of work during the winter months, by way of an increased and accelerated planting programme involving the engagement of approximately 1,300 labourers at the peak period.

The total area administered by the Forest Service is now 7,776,915 acres, or approximately 12 per cent. of the superficial area of the Dominion. It is considered, however, that this should be substantially increased to ensure a reasonable margin of safety.

The trade depression through which the milling industry has been passing is clearly reflected in the reduced timber-sales for last year, involving a further marked decrease in forest revenue. The re-establishment of this important primary industry is, however, slowly but surely progressing, and there are already signs of increased acceleration in this direction.

The sales of trees and seeds continue to decline slightly, but this was not unexpected.

The major operation of the Forest Products Branch was a thorough investigation of the wood-pulp and paper industry. This matter is referred to in detail in a later portion of this report.

The increased and varied operations of the Service have created a very busy year, and have taxed all members of the staff to their utmost capacity. Without this loyal support and co-operation the results herein recorded could not have been attained with such a degree of efficiency and economy.

CHAPTER I.—THE STATE FORESTS.

1. GENERAL.

Summary of Areas under Control.

From the figures shown in Table 1 it will be seen that the net increase in the area under control for the past year is 68,426 acres. The area under permanent State-forest reservation was actually increased by 91,461 acres, but this was offset by a decrease of 22,836 acres of provisional State forests which were made available for settlement or other purposes.

TABLE 1.

STATE AND PROVISIONAL STATE FOREST AND FOREST RESERVES.—AREA (IN ACRES) AT END OF FISCAL YEAR, 1929.

Land District.	Area at End of Fiscal Year 1927-28.			Changes in Area during the Fiscal Year 1928-29: Net Increase.			Area at End of Fiscal Year 1928-29.			Percentage of Area of Land District in Per- manent and Provi- sional State Forest and Forest Reserves.
	State Forest.	Provisional State Forest.	Forest Reserves.	State Forest.	Provisional State Forest.	Forest Reserves.	State Forest.	Provisional State Forest.	Forest Reserves.	
N. Auckland	116,303	57,105	..	799	132*	..	117,102	56,973	..	3.9
Auckland ..	380,172	490,478	2,316	54,571	170*	..	434,743	490,308	2,316	11.3
Gisborne ..	87,696	209,388	11,160	..	..	..	87,696	209,388	11,160	8.75
Hawke's Bay	113,637	1,500	5,254	32*	..	199	113,605	1,500	5,055	4.1
Taranaki ..	69,757	46,175	40,455	..	571	..	69,757	46,746	40,455	6.52
Wellington ..	461,096	113,818	14,007	2,348	3,063*	..	463,444	110,755	14,007	8.34
Nelson ..	27,715	1,975,415	8,470	4,198	631*	..	31,913	1,974,784	8,470	42.74
Marlborough	89,497	120,625	12,062	..	..	..	89,497	120,625	12,062	8.04
Westland ..	2,190	1,712,117	119	..	19,411*	..	2,190	1,692,706	119	43.9
Canterbury ..	329,424	..	319	22,599	..	..	352,023	..	319	3.8
Otago ..	133,888	332,350	2,108	6,978	..	..	140,866	332,350	2,108	5.25
Southland ..	136,497	605,376	..	..	..	..	136,497	605,376	..	9.44
Totals ..	1,947,872	5,664,347	96,270	91,461†	22,836*	199*	2,039,333	5,641,511	96,071	..
	7,708,489 acres			68,426 acres			7,776,915 acres			

* Decrease.

† Net Increase.