

the Rangitaiki River, about fifteen miles east of the railway. I understand that of the State forest area about 140,000 acres are planted, but the departmental officers will be able to say exactly what is the area.

*Mr. Hanson:* Make it 130,000 acres.

*Witness:* Well, the whole of the balance is to be planted within about two years. Private companies: The Afforestation Proprietary, Ltd., on the route of the railway, 25,000 acres: that is on both sides of the railway. They have 10,000 acres planted. They are prosecuting their planting very rapidly, but I cannot say when it will be finished. The New Zealand Timberlands, 5,000 acres, of which 3,000 acres have been planted. Kaingaroa Syndicate, Ltd., 8,450 acres: this is largely planted, but I cannot give you the acreage planted. Timberlands, Ltd.: This is a company distinct from the New Zealand Timberlands. It holds 41,240 acres; it is an Australian company. Its holding is about fifteen miles east of the railway. It is largely planted, but I cannot give you the exact area. Then there are two other companies holding areas further away. There is Matahina, 19,000 acres, and Edgecumbe, 24,000 acres. These lie about twenty-five miles east of the railway. Of course, there are smaller areas of private plantations, such as my own. I have about 300 acres which I have planted myself. My experience of the growth of timber there is that it is very rapid. I have myself built an out-building from timber milled out of trees grown in fourteen years from the seed. The ground-plates are from *Eucalyptus globulus*—that is, ordinary blue-gum; the boarding is 12 in. by 1 in. *Pinus insignis*, grown in fourteen years. But that is not possible in a plantation where the trees are planted only 8 ft. apart, because the roots are soon in competition. These were planted out in a paddock by themselves. With regard to the immature timber in the Government plantations about which we have heard, I want to suggest that that timber is very useful for fruit-cases, small-size timber battens, scaffolding, telephone-poles, fencing-rails, and fencing-droppers. There is a large market for that. It can be used also for mine-props and firewood, besides the use of it for pulping. I may say that my neighbours have used the larch poles for their telephones and for their stock-yards with great success, and those poles strapped on to totara posts in the ground have outlasted the Australian hardwood poles imported at great expense. Some years ago—on the 16th November, 1921—I inspected a plantation at Matamata planted by the late Mr. Firth, and then being milled by Messrs. Cashmore Bros. From an area of between 20 and 24 acres they had then cut 2,250,000 sup. ft., and they estimated that 250,000 ft. were left. The trees were of great height, straight, and remarkably free from knots. They had cut trees with up to 140 ft. of milling length, and 4,000 ft. from one tree. I went through their books and took out the average of nineteen trees, and the average content was 1,332 ft. Those were trees just as they occurred in the book. Eighteen selected trees which I took out averaged 2,191 sup. ft. to the trees. I measured the distance between the stumps and found they had been planted 15 by 10, 12 by 12, and 10 by 6. The age-rings showed them to be between forty and forty-seven years old.

5. *Mr. Jenkins:* What sort of trees were they?—Half the plantation was *Pinus insignis* and the other half was *Pinus maritima*. The timber was beautifully straight. I have never seen a finer sample than the flitches cut out of this bush. In Mrs. Storey's bush, near to Hamilton, the trees were planted about 1870 by Captain Claude. The area is 7 acres. The quantity of timber was 600,000 sup. ft. Besides that, there was 200,000 ft. taken for firewood. Some of those trees yielded 5,000 sup. ft. per tree. I may say, further, that this timber was cut for the inside decoration of the Farmers' Auctioneering building; it was polished, and it has a remarkably handsome appearance. Now, this is a telegram from Christchurch, published in the *N.Z. Herald*, dealing with *Pinus insignis*: "*Pinus insignis*, in spite of the many criticisms made of it, has some strong supporters among members of the Christchurch committee of the New Zealand Forestry League. At a meeting of that body instances were quoted to show that *Pinus insignis* is a valuable timber. Some which had been grown at Pigeon Bay gave a return of £700 an acre, less cost of milling and marketing. One member said he had found the timber grown under proper conditions quite durable and satisfactory. Houses built in St. Leonard's district twenty years ago were in better condition at present than buildings of the same age constructed of rimu." With regard to the other timber available in the district, at the present time timber is being brought down to the Rotorua Station from the Waikare Bush, both sawn timber and posts and sleepers. I may say there is a traffic of twenty-seven motor-lorries on the Rotorua-Taupo Road at the present time.

6. How many of them are carrying passengers?—None. These are motor-lorries bringing native totara from the Waikare Bush.

7. Are they 3-ton trucks?—No; the authorities will not let them run on that road. These trucks take a 1½ tons load. They can operate with nothing but the best heart totara; all the secondary timber is being left in the bush.

8. *Mr. Semple:* Is that because it will not pay them to bring it out?—Yes, and because of the restriction on the load; that is a great trouble. The distance to Waikare Bush from Rotorua Station is between fifty and sixty miles: that is the distance the timber is being hauled.

9. What is the estimated quantity of timber in the bush?—The Natives do not know, and I am sure I do not know. Another bush being worked is at Te Whaiti, in the Urewera; that is about fifty miles from Rotorua Station. I have here a letter from the New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Co., Hamilton, dated 16th September, 1929, which reads—

DEAR SIR,—

In reply to your letter of the 12th instant, it is estimated that there is about 70,000,000 sup. ft. of white-pine timber in the block at Te Whaiti from which we have recently commenced to draw supplies. In addition to the white-pine there is 30,000,000 sup. ft. of building-timber—viz., rimu, matai, and a sprinkling of totara.

At the present time we have over 300,000 sup. ft. of sawn white-pine stacked and filleted at the Te Whaiti Mill awaiting delivery. The whole of this timber is required for the manufacture of containers for butter and other dairy-produce.