

Reference to the importance of and the climatic influence wielded by protection forests was made at some length in last year's report and need not be repeated here ; but before this section of the report is concluded it seems fitting to mention the harmonious relations which exist between this Service and the Department of Lands and Survey. That Department is ever ready and willing to assist in the work of forest-conservation by giving sympathetic consideration to any reasonable request for the permanent reservation of bush-clad country not suitable for farming, and, needless to say, without such valuable and sympathetic co-operation the aforementioned results could not have been achieved.

Urewera Country.—In order that the formulation of a future policy of management and control of the Urewera country, which lies to the south of Whakatane in the Bay of Plenty, could be facilitated and the position viewed in its proper perspective, a joint inspection by officers of the Lands and Survey Department and the State Forest Service was made during the period under review. The total area dealt with was approximately 650,000 acres, of which 482,000 acres are Crown land, while the remainder is Native land. The matter is now under consideration by the Departments concerned, and it is hoped to come to an early decision respecting the future control and treatment of this forest.

3. FOREST RECONNAISSANCE, DEMARCATION, AND SURVEYS.

Indigenous Forests.

Forest Inventory.—The necessity for observing the strictest economy in field expenditure has limited the extent of the work performed, but nevertheless preliminary surveys were carried out in the vicinity of Kaituna Gorge (Nelson) and in Okarito and Upper Ahaura Districts (Westland) for investigational purposes and to secure more reliable data with regard to the stands and quantities of timber in those localities. More work of this nature will be undertaken from time to time as finance and opportunity permit. The work of assembling and recording the data relating to the State kauri resources of the Dominion has been completed, and plans are now in train for placing the kauri forests under permanent forest-management.

Forest Reconnaissance.—Some 3,400 acres were explored and partly cruised, containing 15,500,000 ft. board measure of timber.

Demarcation.—Over 3,000 acres of State forest boundary-lines were cut and measured.

Timber-cruising.—In State and provisional State forests 10,000 acres, containing 67,015,000 ft. board measure were cruised. Cruises of 2,000 acres, containing 10,550,000 ft. board measure, were made for other Government Departments, and 630 acres, containing 4,940,000 ft. board measure, were cruised for private owners.

Afforestation Areas.

Topographical and Layout Surveys.—Over 8,800 acres were surveyed topographically with the plane-table and 7,000 acres were subdivided into compartments. A topographical survey was commenced of Whakarewarewa Plantation.

Preliminary Management Surveys of Exotic Forests.—This work was commenced early in 1934 (*vide* last year's report) and was advanced another stage during the year by completing the field-work of the exotic forests in the Wellington Conservancy. It is hoped to extend operations at an early date to embrace the South Island forests also.

4. FOREST ATLAS.

During the year forty-six general-purpose plans were added to this record, while 494 additions were made to the forest atlas and 102 to the forest register.

Additions to nineteen plantations plans were made ; eight new species plans and two topographical plans were prepared ; two species plans were renewed, while thirty-nine species plans were coloured to indicate the species planted.

A total of 102 compartment survey plans were prepared on a scale of 5 chains to an inch.

The Railway and Public Works Departments prepared for Service use 355 helio prints and 257 photostat prints.

For some months the draughting work of the Department was seriously disorganized by the fire which occurred in Head Office just before the close of the year 1933–34, and was further retarded by shortage of staff due to sickness and the sudden death of one officer.

5. STATE AFFORESTATION.

Tree-planting was mainly confined to Kaingaroa Plains (Rotorua Region), where approximately 9,400 acres were planted, and to Golden Downs (Nelson Region), where the total new area planted was 1,424 acres. Owing to a variety of causes, the 1934 projected planting programme of 23,000 acres mentioned in last year's report could not be adhered to, and the season closed with a total new planted area of 12,211 acres, the lowest for many years.

As announced in several previous reports, State tree-planting on a large scale is being gradually reduced. This is inevitable, as no new afforestation areas are being acquired, while the existing ones are in most instances planted up. It is anticipated that about 17,000 acres will be afforested during the current planting season ; of this total, 16,000 acres are located in Rotorua Region. The grand total of the Dominion's exotic forests, in round figures, is now 406,100 acres, of which, roughly, three-fourths are in the North Island.