

BE WISE IN TIME, NEW ZEALAND !

DENUDED LAND DEMANDS TREES.

BY RICHARD W. WESTWOOD.

If one thousand men of the many thousands employed by the Ford Motor Company stood around all day and did nothing their places would either be filled with workers or the company would inevitably be in sore straits.

If the outfielders on a baseball team decided to stop chasing fly balls they would soon be replaced or the team would drop to the cellar.

If one regiment of an attacking division decided to quit fighting, reserves would have to be thrown in or the offensive would be lost.

If ninety million acres of land which once grew forest grow nothing but waste and the remaining forests are cut four times as fast as they are being replaced—!

Well, here we have four simple situations. The conclusions to the first three are stated, self-evident as they may be. It requires little thought to draw the conclusion to the fourth situation.

But there is a difference. The first three "ifs" are improbable situations. The fourth is not. Why not? Because the United States has about four hundred and seventy million acres chiefly, and, for the most part, exclusively suited for growing trees. It is wood or nothing, and how we make this acreage work is the answer to the extent and cost of our supply of wood.

We cannot do without wood. One of the most important keystones in our economic structure is of wood. It has created in large part our present high living standards. Its lack would endanger them. To date we have cut nearly three-fourths of our timber supply and our best and most accessible timber is gone. Some of this land has gone back to work, either at producing forest or something else. The rest,—close to one hundred million acres,—is doing nothing. It will never go to work at anything unless we plant trees on it.

And what is being done? The American Tree Association investigated and found evidence that about ninety million trees are being planted yearly. It sounds like a lot of trees, but it is only enough to reforest ninety thousand acres. It would take at least five hundred years, at this rate, to put the loafing acres back to work. In the meantime cutting goes on and fires continue to burn.

Within our present and projected National Forests there are two and one-half million acres that must be artificially reforested. In fact some of the States and some private owners are put-