

permanent forests. It is still apt to be milled, and may be, if the timber is worth while, should the exigencies of the Service or some politician scheme for such cutting in fulfilment of election promises.

As showing how our native forests have been exploited without any effort at replacement in kind, the figures given by the Government Statistician of the foot-board measure each year can be converted into acres by dividing them by 10,000, which is the recognised average number of feet cut per acre in New Zealand. Such a calculation gives the following results:—In 1931, 21,000 acres were cut; in 1932, 14,000; in 1933, 15,000; in 1934, 17,000. In 1935 the Forest Service estimates that milling has excelled itself in that a total area of 25,000 acres has been cut and replaced with 12,000 acres of exotic seedlings.

Add to all this timber-cutting the destruction done by plant-eating animals in our forests, the damage done by fire, opossum trappers, and other less destructive agents, then one may perhaps be pardoned on coming to the conclusion that our native forests are doomed, unless our Forest Service is compelled to handle its charge under modern forestry methods, which have been so conspicuous by their absence in the past.

Short-sighted Exploitation.

The exploiting of the national heritage is not forestry. In New Zealand a Forest Service should be concerned with many matters besides milling timber—matters such as erosion and flood protection—but the value of the standing tree has apparently not occurred to our Service. Indeed it has been said that our Forest Service cannot look at a tree without estimating the number of millable feet it contains.

Other countries are bending their energies and spending vast sums to counteract the disastrous results of past forest destruction. We here are paving, and have paved, the way for similar great expenditure while our primary industries—the sources of our food supplies and other necessities—are menaced by excessive floods and devastation as a result of the past neglect to demarcate protection forests.

Revenue from Destruction.

What then are the results of the attempt to establish a Forest Service in New Zealand? A Service has existed by drawing revenue from the destruction of our native forests and thereby passing the cost on to the timber consumer such as the house-builder. At the same time large insignis pine plantations have been established which are of little or no value as protection forests, and are nearly all situated where they are of