

MILLED FOREST AREAS

By Rakau.

SOUND principles of scientific forestry are infringed immediately tree-planters tinker with the pure indigenous timberlands by introducing foreign species. This process of interplanting with alien trees has unfortunately begun in New Zealand to the disgust of all those who treasure the unspoiled vegetation of the land. In State and municipal-owned bush in certain districts, where the timber-millers have taken out the large trees, and where the young growth should be allowed to assert itself undisturbed, this offence against Nature is perpetrated. It is a strange state of mind, this indifference to the rightful claims of the vegetation that is native to the soil.

In other countries the foresters recognise the superior value of their own timbers. In Java the teak forests are reproduced, generation after generations of cutting, without admixture with inferior foreign trees. Every country with a scientific forestry system strives to reproduce its timber trees and the whole forest life. But here all kinds of fantastic tricks are tried.

Rimu trees, the second most valuable timber in the land, are being replaced in one area with the comparatively worthless *lawsoniana*, which is really best fitted for shelter belts and hedges.

KEEP THEM PURELY NATIVE.

The writer has noted much well-grown *lawsoniana* in the Waikato and other districts lately, and undoubtedly it makes a first-rate hedge, it grows so thickly and so close to the ground. But as a timber-content tree it is of negligible worth; it cannot seriously be considered a fit substitute for the splendid rimu.

Even in water-supply reserves, where felling and milling should not be permitted on any pretext, the natural timber covering of the hills is not respected. Anything, everything is better, apparently, and so we find the local bodies in charge allowing interplanting with all kinds of inferior foreign trees, in the hope that they will smother the young native growth. The vigorous indigenous saplings will probably survive all right, but the spectacle of such an ill-matched woodland will sicken the lover of the real New Zealand forest life.

The admixture of native and alien species is not only unscientific as a forest scheme but is an offence against the ancient laws that made our forests and renewed them from century to century. Alien species of any kind introduce new problems, probably new insect pests. The only safe, and slightly, plan is to maintain the indigenous life untampered with. Exotics have their own rightful and separate place.

A SCENIC HIGHWAY

THE AKATAREWA—RIKI-O-RANGI ROAD.

THIS road, the great scenic route of Wellington, penetrates a ruined forest, where not a tree should have been destroyed. On the very top of the watershed, at an altitude of 1400 feet, there is a shocking scene of destruction caused by the operations of timber fellers, who have left acres of bush in dead timbers and broken trees. The road is wonderfully well engineered, but what will be the use of such a scenic way when the bush is destroyed? Forest

is still being milled and motor-cars on the road frequently meet lorries loaded with rimu logs—a scandalous sight in those water supply catchment ranges.

There is time to save it yet, or a good deal of it. Not another tree should be felled. There Nature is the best forester. All that is necessary is to protect the forest from fire and animals and it will continue to reproduce itself as it has done for centuries until men came to ruin it.