

A Fortune in Forestry

THE old expression "There's gold in them thar hills" is taking on new meaning in New Zealand, where utilisation of timber resources is daily expanding to bigger proportions. The old logging camps of Canada—where the cry of "Timber" from the toppers echoed out above the sound of axes, where the lumberjacks in their bright shirts fought, worked, and were heroic, and the great big saws came nearer and nearer—offered unlimited opportunities to story-tellers and novelists, but in general fiction did little to tell the true story of forestry. A more accurate picture of the timber industry in New Zealand is gained from a glance at the *Forestry* series of five talks to be presented by authorities on the subject from all YA and YZ stations at 9.15 p.m. on Thursday, February 28, and weekly thereafter.

This group of talks treats an important subject fully, but is not a silvicultural thesis, nor yet an anthology of generalities about trees. In his two talks, "Native Timber Trees" and "Managing Native Forests," G. H. Hocking deals with individual trees, principal elements in the commercial problem, and the community which trees form, the forest. The individual and the collective bodies have certain characteristics which indicate the best methods of utilisation, management and reforestation. This study of the raw product is essential, for as Mr. Hocking indicates, "unless we concentrate our limited resources on these more promising areas we run the risk of dissipating our efforts and achieving little."

The process of "counting heads" and taking waist measurements in several thousand acres of forest is no small task, and just how it is done is shown by A. P. Thompson in the third talk, "New Zealand Forest Survey." The series follows a life-history cycle and the seed-to-sawmill description is continued by A. L. Poole in his talk, "Continuing Native Forests." The final broadcast, "Harvesting Planted Forests," by David Henry, is more or less the *raison d'être* for the others. Though the study of New Zealand's forests is an important subject, its greater importance today is a result of the growing significance of timber to the national economy. Wool, dairy produce and meat may still be primary in the country's commercial consideration, but Mr. Henry points out that the world shortage of newsprint, and New Zealand's suitability for rapid growth of softwood forests are moving the timber and allied industries into front rank importance. He discusses the great future of the timber industries in New Zealand, and sums up: "However spectacular the progress in exports of forest products, and however solid the benefits to those who have invested in these industries, they will be small compared with the overall gains to our national economy." The "bush" of the trampers and shooters and holiday makers will not be lost, but out of the hills new wealth will be mined for the nation's benefit.

N.Z. LISTENER, FEBRUARY 22, 1952.



KAHIKATEA NEAR LAKE MAPOURIKA
"Out of the hills new wealth will be mined"

National Publicity Studios photograph