

supplied the board with interesting figures showing the proportion of white pine situated in the Wellington Land District, where he was able to speak with some accuracy. The areas selected were in his opinion, representative of the province, and are probably typical of the distribution of white pine throughout the rest of the forestry of the Dominion. The figures are:—

Area. Acres.	Situation.	Percentage of White Pine About
335—	Between Manunui and Main Trunk Line	26
1910—	Vicinity Owhango	30
165—	Vicinity Owhango	24
175—	Vicinity Owhango	22
340—	Vicinity Owhango	22
450—	Vicinity Owhango	59
200—	Vicinity Owhango	8
1251—	Raurimu	24
913—	Near Horopito	10
742—	Between Ohakune and Raetihi	22
734—	Near Ohakune	2
258—	Hihitahi	8
350—	Hihitahi	7
1401—	East of Mangaweka	56

"Where in the past white pine formed pure forests of that tree alone it was usually found on low-lying, swampy ground. These swamps, when the forest had been removed and the soil drained, formed the richest agricultural land, of high value for dairying purposes. The mixed forests now standing where the white pine is the predominating tree are frequently situated on good agricultural land, and where areas of this nature of bush have passed into private hands the temptation is great to get rid of the timber at the earliest possible moment and turn the land to practical productive purposes. So strong has been this impulse that settlers have seldom waited for the advent of the sawmiller to clear their ground, but have felled the bush in large areas, grassed it, and stocked it with dairy herds. The high values that are now being received for dairy products will further accelerate the destruction of the bush on privately owned lands for settlement purposes. Where white pine is still found on swamp lands, the suitability of such lands for close settlement when drained is a strong plea for the removal of bush forthwith, especially in view of the pressing demand for and limited area of first-class land in New Zealand."

What the Enquiry Demonstrated.

During the course of the inquiry it was demonstrated to the board that in working mixed bush it is impossible to leave any particular milling trees unfelled for future bush operations, as the felling of trees other than white pine would damage and destroy the white pine trees to such an extent that they would die. Even in a mixed bush, where the white pine predominated, the removal of other than white pine timber might so alter conditions that the

white pine left standing would seriously deteriorate. Some white pine was so situated that it could not be milled profitably for local consumption owing to heavy transportation charges but it escaped those heavy charges when reported. For example, it would be impossible for box factories situated in the North Island profitably to use for the local market the white pine brought from the West Coast of the South Island. The Crown, in parting with its rights in timber areas to sawmillers, has imposed no restriction as to export, and moreover, it was fully aware of the fact when parting with the timber that the white pine when cut would be exported. Relying on the good faith of the Crown, the millers had invested large sums in necessary plants, tramways, etc., for the purpose of milling white pine, which timber, if thrown on the present local market, would have no value at all, but which found a ready value in the export trade. The dairying industry requirements absorbed about 45 per cent. of the output of the log; the remaining portion of the output of the log was in size and qualities for which no ready sale existed in New Zealand, but which in the Australian market brought almost as high a price as butter-box sizes.

"Although we can never expect to get any timber equal to white pine for the packing of dairy produce, yet another timber must be utilised, as in the near future our white pine will be exhausted," continues the report. "It is imperative that experiments that have already been made with some timbers should be continued. The board heard a good deal of evidence on the matter, and found that the following timbers had turned out quite satisfactorily under test for both butter and for cheese crates—viz., taraire, tawa, pinus insignis, poplar, beech (*Fagus Menziesii*), Oregon pine, and Canadian spruce. Inquiries made in Australia from the New Zealand Government agent showed that just prior to the outbreak of war thousands of butter-boxes were manufactured from scandia-board, a wood-fibre produced in Gothenburg, Sweden. This substitute is reputed to be capable of carrying about double the weight of ordinary wooden boards."

The Board's Recommendations.

1. That the Government should determine without delay what its policy in regard to forestry generally is to be, as it is impracticable to pursue in regard to white pine a policy different from that applied to the other timbers of New Zealand. If the Government determines upon a policy of scientific conservation and afforestation, a course which the board strongly recommends, no time should be lost in giving effect to such decision. Until the Government's decision be arrived at it is recommended that the various Commissioners of Crown Lands should meet periodically and decide on a policy to be pursued in regard to leasing or withholding from sale or lease the remaining blocks of timber on Crown Lands.

2. That the Dairy Division of the Agricultural Department be requested to make exhaustive tests