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Editorial Comment

Forest Manage- ment in New Zealand.

The first extensive report on New Zealand forests by Sir David Hutchins I.F.S., has been published. It deals with the kauri forest of the north, and also in a general way with forest management. The author's long experience of forestry in France, India and South Africa entitles his views to great consideration, and the Government took a wise step in securing the advice of so competent an authority. However, like most enthusiasts, his recommendations constitute the "counsel of perfection," and are made without full regard to important economic factors which do not come within his special sphere. It is significant, on this point, that Mr. E. Phillips Turner, Secretary of the new Forestry Department, in submitting the report to the Minister in charge of State Forests, remarks: "Mr. Hutchins has been afforded every facility to fully express his views and criticism, regardless as to whether the Departments concerned are in agreement with some of his conclusions, or are satisfied with the data on which some of those conclusions are founded." Mr. Phillips Turner does not go further, but those who thoroughly understand the kauri forests have already pointed out that Sir David Hutchins, in his insistence upon the point that popular opinion is wrong in regarding the kauri as a slow-growing tree, has proceeded hurriedly upon imperfect data. In the report of the Forestry Commission of 1913 it is stated definitely: "without exception our timber trees are of much slower growth than those used in forestry operations the world over," and that for this reason, "it is quite out of the question to practise any method of forestry that depends on their rapid regeneration." Yet this assumption of rapid regeneration is exactly the basis of Sir David Hutchins' elaborate calculations regarding the relative advantages of completely cutting out a timber area, or, as he suggests, going in for "selection falling," and leaving nature to fill up the gaps. This method