

A pleasant function took place at Taihape on the 19th May, when Messrs Bush and Syme, members of the Rangitikei Timber Co., were entertained prior to their departure for London. The former has been a prominent member of the Company for many years, and is now the Chairman, whilst Mr. Syme is an old and respected member. Mr. W. G. Haybittle, ex-chairman of the Company, occupied the chair on the occasion, and presented Mr. Bush with a valuable gold watch and chain, and Mr. Syme a pair of binoculars on behalf of the Company. In a very eulogistic speech he wished them both bon-voyage, au revoir, and a safe return. Messrs R. W. Smith and Gleen, M's.P., were present amongst the guests.

### Australian Forestry.

A report drawn up by a Forestry Committee in the United States of America, and published in the American Journal of Forestry for December, 1919, contains some startling statements of considerable interest to Australia. Following are some of them:

The annual consumption of timber is one hundred thousand million superficial feet.

The present annual growth of timber is thirty-five thousand million superficial feet.

Eighty per cent. of the standing merchantable timber is privately owned, and ninety-seven per cent. of the annual cut comes from privately owned forests.

The national and State Forests cannot meet the situation.

A timber shortage already exists in the United States and is rapidly becoming acute.

Prices will continue to increase.

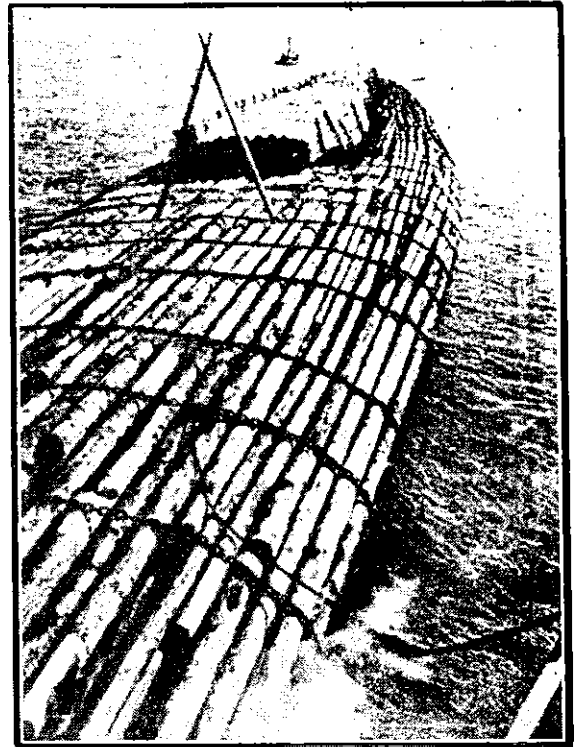
That these statements are not merely false alarms from those anxious to magnify the importance of forestry is evident from the assertion of leading southern pine manufacturers that within the next five to seven years more than 3,000 manufacturing plants will go out of existence on account of the shortage of timber.

There is, of course, in the above, the same old lesson for Australia, namely, that without the practice of forestry no country can maintain and improve its forest resources. America's lesson is one of the most recent, but the same was to be learned from a study of almost any country in the world, not excluding the Australian States. Our resources are almost negligible compared with those of North America, but in a minor degree we have a similar shortage of softwoods here.

New South Wales once contained millions of acres of cypress forest in the Central division; but to-day the forests which have been left to the control of the Commission are chiefly either grass paddocks, or stocked mostly with small undersized trees up to 9 inches in diameter. The present small demand cannot be met from accessible areas, and there is no possibility of meeting the greatly increased demand which a few years will bring.

The Hoop pine resources of New South Wales and Queensland were never very large, and their destruction in New South Wales has been such that what is left can yield only a drop in the bucket. Queensland, which has always put a greater value on Hoop pine, is more favourable situated at present, because there has been some regulation of the annual cut in the past few years, and indiscriminate exploitation and alienation have not been allowed. She will, however, be hard put to it to supply her own needs.

It is the old story oft repeated, and never taken to heart, except by a few people, who promptly be-



Transporting Timber on Pacific Coast. A Dair's Raft containing 5,000,000 feet of timber being towed from Puget Sound to Chile.

come classified as "faddists" or "theorists," not to be taken seriously by "practical" men.

There is, however, another important aspect of the matter which has to be impressed upon Australia, namely, that the days of cheap imported timber appear to be over, never to return, and that in consequence of rising prices our forests have increased in value. We have depended very largely on America for cheap timber, so much so that it may quite reasonably be argued that the absence of forestry practice there is responsible primarily for its absence here.

The United States handed over the bulk of its forest resources to the timber exploiter, who, being thus enabled to work on a very large scale and to produce cheaply, landed sawn timber in Australia at a price which rendered Australia's standing timber