

# SAWMILLING SECTION.

[This Section is published by arrangement with the Dominion Federated Sawmillers' Association (Incorp.) in the interests of the Sawmilling Industry of N.Z.]

Editor: W. T. IRVINE.

The great demand for timber has been the means of increasing the number of mills, and on the West Coast we understand something approaching twenty are in course of erection. A Christchurch company under the title of the "Great Western Timber Co., Ltd.," has just issued a prospectus with a capital of £125,000 to operate about 10,000 acres of milling rights near Okarito—South Westland—and another large company has been formed to take over the Auckland Rimu Timber Co., Rotorua, and acquire the milling rights of increased areas of milling bush on Lake Rotoiti, to be called the Rotoiti Timber Co., Ltd., with a capital of £75,000. Notwithstanding the present shortage of timber, for building purposes, it would appear that the supply may catch up with the demand sooner than expected, in which case we may require to look for increased overseas trade. Millers are doing their utmost to supply local needs, but if these are met up to the limit of their capacity they cannot be expected to wholly discontinue trade with Australia, with the chance of cutting off a connection that may be of great value later on.

Building regulations have now been gazetted and it will be necessary to obtain a permit for the supply of cement, bricks, and timber for any building involving an expenditure of over £20. Local bodies throughout the Dominion have been supplied with application forms so that no unnecessary delay may occur, and they are authorised to grant permits for essential buildings such as dwellings and farm houses. Other applications for permits must be forwarded through the local Inspector of Factories, to the Secretary Board of Trade.

Since the new Award for the Auckland Industrial District came into force on 10th May, application has been made to the Board of Trade for an increase in the price of timber to compensate for the increased cost of production. A further new award is being applied for by the Wellington Timber Workers' Union, and also by the King Country Timber Workers' Union. Meantime wages have been steadily increased owing to various causes, and the millers in many instances have already anticipated the new awards. In consequence the Board of Trade has agreed to an increase of prices ranging from 1/- on half inch lining to 2/6 on heart lines and 3/3 on Kauri—which will take effect from 1st July. So far as the West Coast is concerned f.o.b. Greymouth prices have been increased 1/6 per 100ft., and owing to this and increased freight, the Christchurch merchants have increased their prices 3/- per 100ft.

The Timber Workers' Federation has just concluded its Annual Conference in Wellington, and the following are some of the resolutions that were passed, viz.:— "That the principle of an eight-hour day from mill to mill be approved for bushmen." "That the Government be urged to appoint Inspectors to inspect bridges, tram lines, and skids—to ensure safe working." "That boys under 16 years of age be prohibited from employment in bush saw-mills." "That the Government be asked to provide adequate pensions for all widows and orphans." "That the Bankruptcy Act be amended to ensure payment of wages, as a first claim against all estates." "That all Inspectors of machinery be instructed to see that breast bench saws are provided with a 'fin' to protect the sawyer—and that locomotives have effective brakes."

The Exhibition of Timbers produced within the Empire has opened in London and according to the cables India takes pride of place. New Zealand is mentioned but as the Forestry Dept. and the Government did not countenance an official exhibit, we presume private enterprise has done something to show the resources of this Dominion and the beauty of its timbers. Irrespective of any export restriction it is surely a good thing to show the natural products of all the Dominions, when an Empire exhibition has been organised for that purpose.

"The Needs of Forestry in New Zealand" was the subject of an address delivered by Captain M. Ellis, Director of Forestry, before the conference of the Council of Agriculture. In the course of his remarks he made special reference to landholders and their responsibilities. "It ought to appeal to farmers with particular force," he said, "that the unwise devastation of forest lands, apart from the immediate and terrible waste it involves, has done a great deal to accentuate the problem of coping with the onset of noxious weeds. Obviously land areas which, once stripped of forest, are incapable, or hardly capable, of yielding even poor grazing, are in many cases those on which noxious weeds find a breeding-ground, and flourish and spread unchecked. On the other hand, as forest restoration extends, much will be done to limit the range and spread of noxious weeds. In the existing state of the timber market, great importance attaches to the point that orderly methods will avert a great waste of timber, and at the same time that the development work which is required to put forests into a state of permanent production will permit the harvesting of timber which at present is