

had been hanging fire for so long that most millers considered that it had died a natural death. An explanatory circular has been issued by the Board with a copy of the Gazette notice to every saw-miller, but the main items in the regulations are that the maximum price of timber is definitely fixed in each district, the auctioning of timber is prohibited, and it becomes illegal for timber merchants to sell timber without a license. This practically means that the Timber Broker and "pocket-book man" will be put out of business. Recent Press comment has drawn attention to the lifting of the building regulations, but immediately on top of one set of regulations being withdrawn these new price fixing and licensing regulations are issued. Is the timberman fortunate or unfortunate to be the object of so much attention on behalf of the Government? Our own impression is that all these regulations are merely a hindrance to normal trading, and though it was probably necessary to regulate all classes of trade during the war period, surely we are now reaching a time when all these artificial restrictions on trade should be done away with as speedily as possible. However, if the timber industry is to be bound in every direction by cast-iron regulations as to prices, prohibition of export, and so on, surely it is also necessary that it should be likewise protected from unfair foreign competition and dumping. The question is often asked: "Why is the timber trade singled out for such undue attention?"

Our Wasted Heritage.

The Government have received strong support for their new, but sadly belated, policy of forest conservation, from an American visitor, Professor Wilson, Assistant-Director of the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard. The Professor concluded last week a tour of New Zealand, in company with Captain Ellis, Director of Forestry, which extended from North Auckland to Bluff, and included the West Coast from Hokitika to Nelson. As the result of his inspection of forest conditions in the Dominion, he held up his hands in horror. "The thing that has appalled me," he told a Wellington interviewer, "is the awful waste, the awful destruction of timber that has gone on, and is still going on, throughout your country. I am appalled and shocked. I cannot find words to express adequately how I feel about this awful waste of the country's heritage. Your forests here could be, and should be, your greatest source of national wealth, and the way they have been destroyed almost leaves me speechless. Except on the Canterbury Plains, where there never were any trees, I don't think that, with the possible exception of about twenty miles in the Buller Gorge, I have been out of sight of stark, burnt trunks the whole time I have been in New Zealand." It was the senselessness of the destruction that particularly distressed him. He recognised that bush covering good agricultural land had to go, but it should be marketed, not

burned. But it appalled him that bush on land that would never be good for grazing or agriculture—mountain tops, and rough hilly country—should also have been burned off, to give place to an impenetrable tangle of gorse and blackberry. "I have seen land that would not feed a sheep to five acres cleared of thousands of pounds' worth of timber," he said. "It will not even feed a sheep to five acres for more than four or five years. As soon as what little foodstuff is in the soil is exhausted, that is the end of it." From these bare hill-tops the scanty soil is often washed away, rendering them absolutely barren, while, though Professor Wilson did not specifically mention it, the stripping of the natural covering of the watersheds must affect the rainfall, the flow of the rivers, and in time the climate. The worst of it is that the process of wasteful destruction is still going on. A contributor to the *Post* describes a recent "splendid burn" on the Gowan Crown settlement in the Buller Gorge, where valuable bush, containing a quantity of fine rimu, went up in smoke and flame in a day, in order that one of the settlers might effect the "improvements" which the Government make compulsory. Settlement cannot, it is true, wait for the milling timber to be cut and marketed, but it is only unable to do so because, as the *Post* points out, settlement is often in advance of the transport facilities necessary for getting the timber out, and for the cause of that one has to go back to the neglect of past Governments in the matter of roading. There is, however, no use in crying over the bush that has been so sadly wasted; what remains is for the Government to profit by the folly and stupidity of the past, and give sane conservation of the existing bush, and scientific reafforestation a much more important place in their policy than has hitherto been deemed necessary.

When You Are Gone.

Plant a tree. You found several here when you landed on this old earth and you've seen a great many cut down during your time. You have probably cut down a few yourself. The children who are born after you have passed on have a right to find a few trees standing. But they will not if every person who passes through this vale of tears cuts down a few and forgets to plant any. Plant a tree. Plant a dozen of them, and then you will have done something for the generations who follow you, even as some one did something for you ages ago.—*Fort Lauderdale Herald*.

The Gum Tree.

The forests now existing must be cared for and their products distributed with due regard for conservation. They must be surveyed so that the Government will not have to depend upon vague estimates as to the forest resources of the country.—*Boise News*.