

The Forests Bill.

In our last issue we noted that the Forests Bill had not received much comment or criticism from the Press, though the measure itself had received very wide publicity. Since then, however, the Bill has been through the hands of the Lands Committee, and many articles have appeared since its report therefrom strongly condemnatory of the fact that no provision is made in the Bill for adequate and proper examination of the remaining forest lands of the Dominion by experts of the Forestry Department before they are liable to be thrown open for settlement, and that such lands as are already proclaimed Provisional State Forests—as the Bill now stands—may be declared as required for settlement purposes on the recommendation of the Minister for Lands alone.

There seems no doubt that this new provision to a large extent defeats the work that has already been accomplished to the ends of Forestry by the proclaiming of very large areas of Provisional State Forests, and before these are again made available for settlement it would seem only right and proper that their chief suitability for permanent State Forests or for settlement should be adjudicated upon, not by the Lands Department which is a mere machinery Department, but by experts of the State Forest Service and the Agricultural Department jointly.

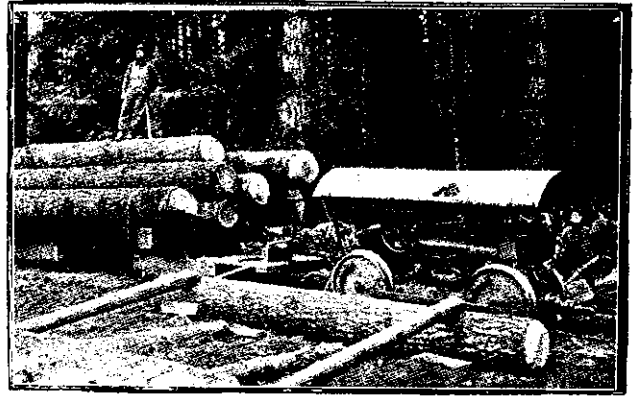
To overcome the friction which appears to exist between the Lands Department and the newly-created Forest Service, and in order to ensure that no further forest lands shall be made available for settlement and no further forests felled and burned without proper "demarcation," or the proper utilisation of timber resources of such bush lands as may be judged more suitable for settlement than for permanent forests, a reasonable provision would be to embody in the Bill a section to the effect that no further Crown Lands bearing bush shall be opened up for settlement until they have been reported upon as to their greater value as permanent forests or for agricultural purposes by a joint examination by experts of the State Forest Service and the Agricultural Department. There is not only the question whether such bush lands are best suited for agriculture or not, but if they are so judged there is the vital matter of the proper utilisation by milling and conversion of the timber which is at present standing upon them before they are opened up for settlement, and obviously the State Forest Service should retain control of these lands till the timber is removed.

We are indebted to the State Forest Service for copy of November issue of "Te Karere o Tane," the monthly departmental journal of that Service, but lack of space precludes our quoting many matters from it which are of interest to sawmillers.

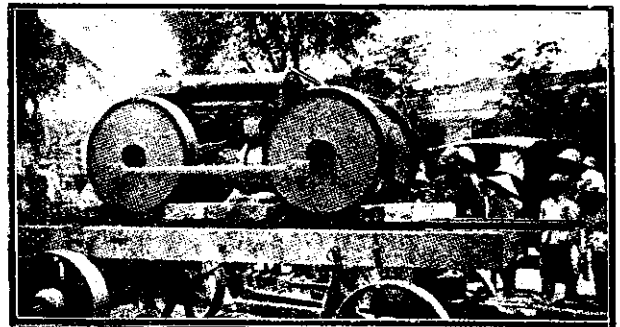
Tractors for the Sawmiller.

By the courtesy of Mr. R. B. Gibbons, of the Colonial Motor Company, Limited, we have been supplied with a copy of "Ford News" of September, 1921, containing illustrations and description of a Fordson tractor converted for use on rails. The illustration given shows this little petrol locomotive drawing quite a big load of logs, and following is the item in reference to it:—

"The Fordson locomotive is doing excellent work in the lumber camps of British Columbia



Fordson in the Woods.



This Fordson Locomotive is being shipped up country to the sugar plantations in Java. Great use is being found for this kerosene-burning locomotive on many light railways throughout the world.

and is proving very popular with the lumberman. It is being used principally for handling logs, cedar bolts, piles, poles, ties, lumber, rock, sand, cement, gravel and coal. It is also being used successfully for laying tracks and ballasting; also for track lifting and for transporting men to and from their work.

In order to convert the tractor into a locomotive it is necessary to remove the rear axles, differential gears and pinions, substituting therefor a solid axle with bronze bearings. A steel frame is next put round the engine and the whole mounted on four 33-inch wheels—cast from centres with steel tires shrunk on.