

95. *Recreation in State Forests.*—The increased activities of tramping clubs and kindred bodies as members returned from military service were reflected in a greater number of visitors to State forests for general recreational purposes during the year.

Piano Flat Camping-ground, Southland, was placed in charge of a caretaker during the Christmas-New Year holidays, when campers occupied the ground. Hammer Forest again attracted visitors, eighty-five permits to inspect the forest being issued during the year.

Deer-stalkers comprised the greater number of visitors to indigenous State forests due to the continued high prices for deer-skins, and reports indicate successful and remunerative visits by many stalkers. Owing to the fire hazard, no sporting activities are permitted in exotic State forests.

All applications for permits to use rifles with a bore less than .303 in. were refused, in accordance with the long-standing policy of bird-life protection.

Owing to the high fire hazard which prevailed during February and March and the numerous outbreaks of fire, all permits to enter State forests in the Wellington Conservancy were cancelled by radio announcement and newspaper advertisement. Persons desiring to enter State forests were required to make further application to the Conservator of Forests, Palmerston North, and fresh permits were granted as soon as the fire danger passed. In other conservancies affected by similar conditions permits were also withheld during the danger period. It is regretted that this action had to be taken, but it was necessary to cope with the critical situation brought about by the numerous outbreaks of fire in various parts of the Dominion at a time when available staff were already fully occupied.

96. *Forest Privileges.*—(a) *Grazing Privileges:* Grazing licenses and leases now number 185. Five new licenses were granted, 3 surrendered, and 1 transferred.

(b) *Mining Privileges:* Applications for mining privileges under the Mining Act, 1926, totalled 33. Three applications were made for coal-mining rights under the Coal-mines Act, 1925. Although these applications are not granted under the Forests Act, 1921-22, the applicants are subject to the same obligations as holders of State forest privileges with respect to the protection of State forests, consequently their attention is directed particularly to the provisions of the Forest (Fire-prevention) Regulations 1940 and amendments.

97. *Library.*—During the year 528 books and pamphlets were added to the Head Office library, bringing the total number of publications to 9,579. Quarterly catalogue supplements have, as usual, been circulated to conservancies.

98. *Rehabilitation.*—Areas acquired during the year for planting of new exotic forests or treatment of existing unworked or partially felled indigenous forest aggregated 22,700 acres. The total area suitable for forest management of this nature and acquired since 1940 is 73,100 acres. At the end of the year 32,400 acres were under negotiation for purchase. As mentioned in last year's report, 77,000 acres are available for exotic planting on State forests proclaimed prior to 1940, and more than 200,000 acres require silvicultural treatment, such as pruning and thinning.

Planning for development and expansion during the five-year post-war reconstruction period has now been completed with respect to 53 managed State forests and 4 purely utilization projects. The plan provides for productive employment of 4,700 personnel (including salaried staff) by the fifth year, or a mean number over the whole period of 4,000. The total includes 1,250 wages-men and 450 salaried officers at present employed. Expenditure over the five years is estimated at £11,100,000, which includes £4,300,000 for existing works, an increase of £6,800,000. Receipts for the five years are estimated at £4,500,000, including £2,500,000 from present operations.

Although additional forests have been included in the revised plan, the totals of both financial and personnel requirements are similar to those mentioned in last year's report. This is mainly because the commencement of certain projects has been delayed owing to labour not becoming available as freely as was anticipated.