

95. *Recreation in State Forests.*—The popularity of State forests for general recreational purposes was maintained during the year. Members of tramping clubs and similar organizations are the main visitors, but deer-stalking also drew a large number, doubtless in a measure due to the favourable market price for deer-skins.

Waipoua Forest was again a centre of attraction, and local officers of the Service gave assistance in facilitating tours of inspection by interested parties. The control of a popular forest known as Totara Reserve, in the Pohangina Valley, about twenty miles from Palmerston North, was vested in the Palmerston North City Council during the year and will be developed by that body for recreation purposes and form part of the Pohangina Valley Domain.

Other suitable State forests in various parts of the Dominion were visited by picnickers and campers during the holiday season, but inclement weather in the South during that period somewhat restricted their numbers and confined them largely to the forest edge.

During the holidays all the more popular State forests were under continuous patrol by the Forest Service staff and no fires or serious damage to State forest were reported.

96. *Forest Privileges.*—(a) *Grazing Privileges:* Grazing licences and leases now number 222. Twenty-five new licences were granted, 16 surrendered, and 6 transferred.

(b) *Mining Privileges:* Thirty-nine applications for mining privileges in State forests under the Mining Act, 1926, and 4 applications for coal-mining rights under the Coal-mines Act, 1925, were granted by the Mining Warden. Although these rights and privileges are not granted under the Forests Act, 1921–22, the holders are subject to the same obligations as the holders of State forest privileges with respect to the protection of State forests, and in all cases the attention of applicants is directed to the provisions of the Forest (Fire-prevention) Regulations 1940 and amendments.

97. *Library.*—During the year 350 books and pamphlets were added to the Head Office library, bringing the total holdings to 9,814. The provision of additional shelving space has enabled a start to be made on a complete reorganization of the library and index.

98. *Post-war Development and Expansion.*—Further areas acquired during the year for new exotic forests or managed indigenous forests totalled 12,500 acres, bringing the area acquired since 1940 to 85,600 acres. Areas under negotiation for purchase at the end of the year amounted to 56,800 acres. Inclusive of the latter, 110,000 acres are still required to complete consolidation of existing State forests and to provide new exotic forests in timberless districts, thus bringing the total productive managed forest area up to 870,000 acres, as provided for in the post-war plans.

During the year basic reports on 55 managed forests were prepared. These reports crystallize the broad intention and policy regarding each managed forest and form the basis of the State Forest Service projects under the regional plans announced by the Ministry of Works.

Progress of land acquisition has been slower than was anticipated under the plans, but this has proved of little moment, because, even on established forest, silvicultural and other works could not be commenced on a large scale owing to the dearth of labour offering. When the post-war plans were drawn up, it was anticipated that large numbers of returned servicemen could be absorbed into forest employment, but this did not eventuate. The average number of employees required under the plans is 3,500 for the first five years up to March, 1951, but at the recent rate of engagement this average number will not be reached until about 1953. The number of employees at the close of the year was 1,630, as compared with 1,300 at the end of March, 1946, and 1,000 in March, 1945.