

enough, the evil effect was not fully visible for three or four days after the gale. Outside of State forest there was sporadic breakage of pine stands, one of the worst cases being an area of 35 acres of planted dune at Tangimoana, where a twenty-year-old stand of insignis pine caught the full coastal force of the gale. Thinning operations were actually in progress when this occurred and both wind-throw and wind-break were, in consequence, only to be expected. This area has now only a salvage value. Elsewhere in the same locality, private plantations suffered comparatively narrow swathes. Windfalls in remnants of indigenous forest were numerous.

52. *Forest Offences*.—Convictions for offences against the forest laws during the year numbered 49 (39), of which 39 were obtained under the penal sections of the Forests Act, 1921–22, 9 under the provisions of the Forest (Fire-prevention) Regulations 1940, and 1 under the Firearms Act, 1920. Fines imposed totalled £125 (£281), loss or damage recovered in addition to the penalty imposed as a fine amounted to £342 2s. 2d. (£541 19s. 1d.), and total Court costs and fees were £100 12s. 9d. (£62 19s. 6d.). Particulars of these offences are given in Appendix IX.

Though the convictions were more numerous than usual, the offences for the most part were of a minor nature. The heaviest fine imposed was £17 10s., whereas in the previous year one fine was £100. The sum recovered for unlawful cutting or for damage done by fire or otherwise was less than in the previous year, but in that year the total included an amount of £471 17s. in a single case (timber unlawfully cut and removed). Fire-suppression costs incurred were claimed under the Act in all cases of unlawfully lighting fires, and were seldom disputed or, if disputed, reduced. The largest amount so recovered was £93 14s. 8d. in connection with a fire that spread from an adjoining property into the Whirinaki State Forest (Te Whaiti).

There was a sharp increase in offences under the headings of unlawful lighting of fires. Twenty-six of the convictions were under the fire-prevention provisions of the forest laws, whereas in the previous year only 9 of the convictions were for fire offences. There was also an increase in the offence of unlawful cutting and removal of forest produce, but in no instance was the quantity cut or removed before discovery large: contrasted with the previous year's £471 17s. in a single case, the largest sum recovered on one information was £70 2s. The number of cases of unlawfully entering or hunting in State forests dropped to exactly one-half of the previous year's total. In all the cases where prosecution was undertaken, convictions were secured.

CHAPTER VII.—FOREST ENGINEERING

53. *General*.—Existing roads, bridges, and buildings and general engineering services have been satisfactorily maintained. Suitable labour continues to be in short supply.

54. *Roads and Bridges*.—Construction of new roads and bridges has been continued to assist the development of both exotic and indigenous forests. Work included under this heading comprises new roads formed, 80 miles 76 chains (of which approximately 36 miles were metalled); roads maintained, 959 miles; new tracks formed, 13 miles 43 chains; tracks maintained, 46 miles 66 chains; new culverts, 65; culverts repaired, 31; new bridges, 5; bridges repaired, 27. The work of stabilizing the foundations of the Motueka River Bridge was carried out under the direction of the Public Works Department, which also did 6 miles 54 chains of the new road-formation included in the total under that heading above.

55. *Construction Equipment*.—Equipment in use by the Forest Service includes 264 trucks, 81 tractors, 2 carryalls, and 270 items of miscellaneous plant, most of which is used for construction purposes. Other vehicles are 26 cars and station wagons and 94 fire-engines. As much of this plant was second-hand from the Armed Forces surplus equipment, the task of maintaining it in working-order presents some difficulty. It will be necessary to replace much worn-out equipment and acquire additional plant as soon as new machines become available.