

“blight,” caused by a combination of insect and fungus, is welcomed by a great number of settlers as a means of eradicating young manuka invading pasture lands. The indigenous manuka, however, is of such great value, both as a nurse for forest seedlings and as an excellent vegetative cover for preventing soil erosion, that the State Forest Service has constantly deprecated suggestions that the “blight” should be assisted towards spreading over the whole Dominion. Eradication of the manuka would lead to soil erosion on a disastrous scale.

(9) *Climatic Damage*.—The weather during the year was unmarked by extremes, the winter being mild in most areas; consequently, damage to State forests from climatic and other natural causes has not been severe. Winds of dangerous violence have not occurred, though local damage has been reported from Waitangi, where *P. pinaster*, *P. caribea*, and *P. taeda* growing on exposed ridges suffered breakage of leaders and lateral branches. On Kaingaroa Forest a 5-acre plot of Douglas fir suffered wind damage when a *P. radiata* windbreak was removed, and further wind-throw seems likely. Slight wind damage to pines (*P. caribea*, *P. taeda*, and *P. patula*) occurred in Rotoehu, where some trees were wind-blown. Similar damage has been reported from Hanmer and Balmoral Forests, Canterbury.

January frosts in Southland affected areas of recently-planted ash and poplar in Berwick and Beaumont Forests, the species being sited in valley bottoms. Similar damage occurred to two-year-old spruce in Milton Nursery. At Taurewa, November and December frosts nipped the new growth of 1948 planting *P. laricio*, which species has suffered similarly in this area in the past.

An isolated report of snowbreak and a little flood erosion have been reported from Southland and Westland respectively. Erosion on a small scale in protection forests in Southland has been reported, and it is noteworthy that the primary agents are browsing pests such as deer and goats. Reduction in their numbers will see the disappearance of beaten tracks and bared ground, and subsequently a return to normal forest conditions.

Fire damage, &c., is dealt with in Chapter VIII under “Fire Control and Communications.”

(10) *Forest Offences*.—There were 38 convictions for offences against the forest laws. Fines imposed amounted to £73 10s., and costs and damages totalled £1,968 13s. 8d. Particulars of these offences are given in Appendix IX.

The heaviest fine this year, £15, was imposed for operating an engine not fitted with an efficient spark-arrester, and in this case the sum of £36 10s. 6d. was recovered as fire-suppression costs. There were 8 convictions for the unlawful cutting and removal of forest produce, two involving large amounts of produce valued at £1,428 19s. 1d. and £296 19s. 6d. respectively.

FOREST MENSURATION

The following table shows the number of areas and the quantity of standing timber appraised by conservancy staffs for sale during the past three years:—

Year.	State Forests.		Maori Forests.		Other Forests.		Total. Board Feet.
	Number.	Board Feet.	Number.	Board Feet.	Number.	Board Feet.	
1946-47 ..	129	116,697,000	22	43,567,000	19	7,756,000	168,020,000
1947-48 ..	160	121,532,000	24	54,239,000	14	6,295,000	182,066,000
1948-49 ..	181	118,755,000	26	56,939,000	33	11,067,000	186,761,000