

With such a limited amount of timber available, it is likely that most of it will be required for local consumption within the district. Two years ago the amount of milling-timber in Taranaki was estimated as about the same quantity as at present, but the apparent lack of diminution is probably due to the ability to make more accurate measurement.

There is supposed to be over 12,000,000,000 sup. ft. of timber in the *Wellington* District, of which one-third is rimu, the rest comprising principally matai and tawa, with a little kahikatea and totara.

Most of this timber is reported to be in the western portion of the district, situated in the famous forest of Waimarino.

In the detailed reports of each land district which follow there will be seen a special account of this forest, and from the rapidity with which sawmills are now being erected to work it, and the facility with which the North Island Main Trunk Railway can carry away the finished product, it is probable that a large portion of timber exported from the North Island for the next few years will come from this locality. Ohakune is the chief place in the Waimarino district where sawmilling operations are now and will be carried on, and the great store of magnificent rimu, kahikatea, and other timbers which grow in accessible positions should enable timber to be supplied under as profitable conditions as anywhere else in the North Island.

Another large forest is the Awarua, around and south of Taihape; but this has been so depleted of late years by contract cutting that its supply will probably be exhausted before very long.

The supply in *Marlborough* appears to have shrunk from 187,000,000 sup. ft. in 1907 to 171,000,000 sup. ft. in 1909, and this estimate corresponds with what is supposed to be the average annual output of 10,000,000 ft. Most of the present supply is in the Pelorus Valley.

About two-thirds of the timber is rimu, whilst more than half of the remainder is kahikatea. Then come matai and beech.

Probably little of the present supply will be available for use outside the district, although just now there is an export trade to Canterbury and Wellington.

For some time past the *Nelson* District has been expected to increasingly supply a large amount of timber for South Island use, and no doubt there does exist a large quantity of black, brown, and silver beech on the rugged country which forms the backbone of the district, but of the building-timbers chiefly in demand at the present time the available supply is somewhat limited. Only 530,000,000 sup. ft. of rimu is estimated to be growing in the district, 350,000,000 sup. ft. being on Crown land, but as in Marlborough, much of it cannot be worked save with great expense, owing to the inaccessible country on which it stands. Four-fifths of the available milling-timber is brown-beech (*Fagus fusca*), and with more general knowledge of its properties it will undoubtedly be largely milled in the future. The sawmilling industry does not appear to be in a very flourishing condition, and better-equipped mills and modern machinery and methods seem very desirable. No doubt, with increased demand for Nelson beech, these will follow.

*Westland* is now the mainstay of the South Island, and its fine reserve of native timber will undoubtedly prove increasingly profitable to sawmillers of the district as the years go by. Unfortunately, such a large proportion of the forest is on high land that it is somewhat unworkable, as what may be designated as outlying forest covers 700,000 acres, and mountain forest—that is, forest which attains a very high altitude—includes over a million acres, whilst only 750,000 acres are low-lying land.

In 1907 there was supposed to be 6,700,000,000 sup. ft. of milling-timber. Now, closer inspection reduces these figures to 5,625,000,000 sup. ft., four-fifths of which is rimu, whilst 375,000,000 sup. ft. of kahikatea and 60,500,000 sup. ft. of totara is included in the remainder.

Until the district is more developed by means of roads, railways, or steamer communication, it is impossible to profitably cut and sell most of this timber, and yet, if these difficulties could only be overcome, there is no doubt but that Westland would be a valuable source of supply for generations to come.

Its somewhat humid climate has the effect of inducing a natural regeneration of forest more easily than in any other district, and, although the valuable milling-timbers do not grow sufficiently rapidly to be taken into account during this century, yet for purposes such as the wood-pulp industry, &c., large areas should be used in this manner, and would partially affect the supply for the future, as it is estimated that the timber required for wood-pulp, being very much smaller than the ordinary milling-timber, will spring up again very rapidly, and that in ten or twenty years after an area has been cut out for this purpose the new growth will have replaced the old.

In the Grey County, out of an estimated area of 189,904 acres of milling-forest, 20,191 acres have been granted under sawmilling licenses. In the Westland County 417,156 acres are under milling-forest, of which 15,688 acres are granted under sawmilling licenses. The total number of sawmills in Westland at the present time is 54, of which 11 are not working, leaving 43 in active operation.

Two years ago *Canterbury* was supposed to have 85,000,000 sup. ft. of milling-timber, but now it is thought that only 32,000,000 ft. are available, of which 26,000,000 ft. is beech, principally black-beech (tawhai), and only 2,800,000 ft. of the remainder is kahikatea. Black-beech, however, is not so valuable as the silver-beech of Southland, and cannot be largely used for commercial purposes, though it is much availed of locally for bridge timbers, decking, sleepers, and fencing, &c. Unfortunately, a great portion of it comprises trees of very small barrel.

It will therefore be seen that the timber in Canterbury is not even sufficient for local requirements, and that, instead of exporting timber, there must every year be a constantly increasing demand for timber produced outside the district. At the present time most of the supply comes from Westland and Marlborough, though Oregon pine is now being imported by timber-merchants in Christchurch.