

chain: 518,225 trees were put in by a combined system of pitting and planting at one operation; the plants were small and easily carried, and the pits were dug with the planting-spade, being only about half the size of the usual pit. Where the growth of fern is very heavy this system cannot be recommended, as the old pits are difficult to find when replacing failures, and the trees themselves are hard to see when clearing growth among them. Where the ordinary-sized pit is used it serves to maintain a small cleared space immediately around each of the young trees, and thus makes any subsequent work amongst them easier to carry out. Owing to the roughness of the area planted during the past season, the greater portion of the trees had for a considerable distance to be packed on horseback.

A sum of £48 14s. 10d. was spent in survey-work; the boundaries of all the different blocks being accurately fixed for the preparation of the new plans.

In maintenance-work the heaviest expenditure was incurred in clearing growth amongst the trees. As the country now being planted is all heavy fern land, this work is annually increasing, and consequently a larger staff has to be employed to cope with it.

By ploughing and disc-harrowing, the fire-breaks were kept in good order; and some necessary pruning was done amongst the larch and Oregon pine. In the oldest block of blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) about 20 per cent. of the trees were a fast-growing wattle, which completely outstripped the blackwood in rate of growth, and threatened to seriously damage them. This was caused by mixed seed having been supplied to us, and in seedling state the two species were so similar in appearance as to cause the mixture to go unnoticed. These trees have been planted for about six years, and the wattle ranged from 40 ft. to 60 ft. in height, so that it became necessary to cut them out in order to protect the more valuable blackwood. The thinnings were converted into firewood, of which there was nearly 100 cords, and this will be sold as opportunity affords.

Pits to the number of 698,000 are now available for the coming season, when it is expected that slightly over two million trees will be dealt with. Owing to the dry weather experienced during the summer months, the trees planted during the past season have made slightly less than the average growth, but the percentage of failures is no greater than that of previous years. The number of deaths were greatest amongst *Pinus radiata*, which were fast-grown tender plants, and planted on country at a considerable elevation where they were much exposed to the cold winds which prevailed for some time just after planting. Amongst *Eucalyptus Stuartiana*, which were planted on a similar class of land, there are also rather more failures than usual. Practically all the land suitable for this species has been planted, and any plantings of eucalyptus made in the future will be confined to very small areas. Although the growth made by the larch is very poor, very few deaths have occurred, and the same may be said of *Pinus Laricio* and *Pinus ponderosa*, but the growth made by both the latter species is better than that of the larch. Small plantings of Douglas fir and *Thuja gigantea* have both done very well, but the same cannot be said of the redwood, which, being on bare ground, were cut down by frost soon after planting. Two severe frosts in October checked the growth of the larch over a considerable part of the plantation, but the trees had quite recovered by the end of the year. Amongst the established trees no effects of the dry weather are noticeable, and the rate of growth has been quite equal to that of previous years.

A statement of the expenditure incurred during the year is attached.

Schedule II.—Statement of Expenditure.

	For Year.	To Date.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Planting operations and maintenance—		
General utilization	68 17 7	68 17 7
Tree-planting	483 5 5	4,854 1 4
Pitting	708 19 7	5,280 3 4
Clearing	1,000 13 10	6,864 11 5
Cartage of trees	21 17 7	281 18 5
General upkeep of plantation	1,332 13 10	6,520 9 6
General repairs	70 0 4	649 12 5
Horse-feed	150 19 2	697 5 6
Permanent works—		
Fencing	21 7 6	1,085 14 10
Roadmaking	..	1,011 6 11
Formation	118 4 10	764 8 4
Buildings	..	1,069 3 7
Water-service	86 8 9	86 8 9
Stock, implements, &c.—Tools, implements	85 19 9	597 4 5
Supervision and clerical—		
Salaries—		
Supervision of free labour	268 0 6	1,566 18 9
„ prison labour	195 0 0	863 1 1
Nurseryman's proportion of clerical assistance	47 0 0	..
	4,659 8 8	32,261 6 2
Estimated value of prison labour (apportioned in above items)	957 0 3	5,687 15 10
Actual expenditure	£3,702 8 5	£26,573 10 4