

increased the total value of work carried out by the Justice Department since the initiation of prison labour at Hanmer Springs to £6,849 17s., as summarized hereunder :—

Estimated Value of Prison Labour.

	During the Year.			Since 1903 to Date.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Planting trees	130	1	6	2,641	0	4
Preparing pits	166	13	4	2,096	16	8
Clearing	39	18	9	927	8	9
General upkeep	106	8	9	516	9	6
General repairs				153	1	9
Horse-feed				15	10	0
Fencing				80	1	6
Formation	25	10	0	293	16	6
Buildings				125	12	0
Totals	£468	12	4	£6,849	17	0

SELWYN PLANTATIONS, CANTERBURY.

Although a shortage of trees was experienced at the South Island stations in consequence of an unfavourable growing season, the projected operations of the Selwyn Plantation Board were not affected, and it was possible to forward nearly 100,000 trees from the Hanmer Springs Nursery to Reserve 1757, Hororata, where they were received in excellent condition, and planted out by three State employees. Of the 85,000 *Pinus Laricio*, 12,000 *P. ponderosa*, and 465 *P. radiata* operated with, about 90 per cent. succeeded; and when it was recognized that coarse cocksfoot covers the whole area, this growing percentage must be regarded as very satisfactory. At Chaney's, where some 20,500 marram-grass sets have now been put out, and are well established, the dunes are quickly becoming less troublesome; and, by gradually extending the scheme originally advocated, no further sand-encroachment need be feared. The proposals for the coming year include the planting of some 90,000 *Pinus Laricio* and *P. radiata* at Ardlui Road Reserve, and some 10,000 *P. radiata* on the gorse-infected area at Chaney's. In conjunction with Overseer McIlwraith, several experiments with the hardier *Eucalypti* will also be undertaken, whilst other works having an important bearing on the future planting scheme of the Board are also being aimed at.

TREE-PLANTING ON SAND AREAS AT TARRAS AND CROMWELL.

During the spring of 1911 the Department allocated a small expenditure towards the planting of pines and marram-grass to restrain the drifting sand at Sandy Point, Tarras. In addition to covering the terraces with marram-grass, which has succeeded beyond expectations, an experiment in lining-out some 3,000 pine seedlings on the sandy surface was conducted. Some 1,950 *Pinus radiata* and 550 *P. muricata*, having developed sufficiently for permanent planting, were last September utilized in creating shelter-belts at Tarras and Cromwell. An excellent growing-percentage has eventuated, and the Mayor of Cromwell, in a recent reference to the success of the undertaking, states that fully 95 per cent. of the 500 *Pinus radiata* planted on the sand area has succeeded. An almost equally good report is received on the Tarras undertaking, although should the enclosing fence, even for a brief period, become inefficient by being undermined by rabbits, which are numerous in the locality, the measure of success will be speedily discounted. An experiment to test the possibility of using the hardier trees for creating a wind-barrier on abrupt, gravelly river-faces resulted so disappointingly that any further outlay in this direction cannot be recommended. In return for assistance rendered, a few hundred of the smaller plants were distributed to adjoining property-holders for the formation of shelter-belts about their homesteads.

GENERAL.

A conference of officers connected with the Forestry Branch was held in February of the present year, when methods and conditions were freely discussed. The benefits derived from such periodical meetings are obvious and might be continued with advantage to all concerned.

An opportunity being afforded me of visiting America and the Continent of Europe to attend a Forestry Conference and study afforestation matters generally, every effort will thus be made to acquire the most modern ideas for diffusion amongst officers.

The collecting of timbers and seeds is being persevered with steadily, and since the despatch of 380 specimens of woods to the Auckland Exhibition some seventy additional specimens, principally hardwoods, from various sources have augmented the present collection. Cone-collecting for educational purposes is receiving some little attention, and in this connection the best thanks of the Department are due to Mr. T. W. Adams for his assistance.

No changes have occurred in the official staff, to whom my best thanks for cordial and able assistance are due.

OUTLINE OF PROPOSALS FOR 1914-15.

During the coming year arrangements are being made for the planting of about 2,750,000 trees, in addition to conducting the necessary maintenance-work, as outlined hereunder :—

Conical Hills Plantation.—Probably 900,000 trees will be used here in extending the planted area and replacing previous failures. A moderate expenditure will also be devoted to the usual maintenance work.