

Balance-sheet.					£	s.	d.
Total expenditure	..	..	..	..	25,944	17	0
Less Property Account	..	..	..	..	1,990	4	1
Cost of operations	..	..	..	..	£23,954	12	11
3,097½ acres planted (average age, 6½ years)	..	..	..	..			
Estimated value of plantation per acre	..	..	..	..	10	4	0
H. HOWE, Plantation Foreman.							
R. G. ROBINSON, Superintending Nurseryman.							

DUSKY HILL PLANTATION.

(Area, 845 acres; altitude, 400 to 800 ft.; commenced operations, 1898.)

Weather conditions being favourable for tree-growth, it is possible to make satisfactory references to progress generally at this station. On the 18th November, however, a heavy frost cut back the tender growth of *Juglans regia*, which of late years has been so often checked that the production of commercially valuable walnut timber in the locality cannot be looked for. The high winds experienced about the middle of January had also a detrimental effect upon the foliage of *Larix europaea* and *Pseudotsuga taxifolia*, and throughout the blocks of these varieties many leaders were broken. Conspicuous amongst the fast growers this season are English ash and Norway spruce, and, where the conditions are suitable, these varieties are keeping well together, and give every promise of success. The spruces have much improved in colour this year, and even in the most exposed situations the headway made is more uniform than for some years past. Most irregular is the growth of Oregon pine, even where leaders have not been interfered with, and over certain blocks may be seen specimens some 15 ft. in height, whilst the surrounding trees planted at the same time perhaps range from 3 ft. to 6 ft. This apparent novel circumstance is attributed to the different strains of seed procured, and illustrates the importance of selection. On the lower levels the autumn foliage of *Larix europaea* is more natural this year, and an inspection of the trees revealed a decided tendency of the needles to adhere more strongly to partially affected twigs than in the two previous seasons. This fact would indicate the probability of the complete recovery of larch should favourable conditions continue. On the other hand, trees occupying the more elevated positions still retain their sickly appearance, which is most noticeable from December to April. Probably the average rate of growth throughout the larch compartments amounts to 18 in. Remarks written formerly on *Pinus Laricio* may again be applied. Since replanting after the fire of 1906 the *Pinus Laricio* have made steady uniform progress, and the partial shelter thus afforded is also promoting a more vigorous growth of oaks, which were allowed to remain where their presence was desirable.

Our under-planting experiments are not being attended with the desired amount of success. There appears, however, a reasonable prospect of *Thuja plicata* eventually finding the conditions congenial, although the rapid headway of this cedar in its youth is checked in consequence of the network of larch roots and extraordinary dry state of the soil immediately beneath the humus.

The idea of replanting small areas previously planted with trees that are showing no response to shelter is being steadily kept in view, and 8,250 pines, as detailed on Schedule V, were this year planted out with good results. Probably 3,000 trees will be similarly dealt with during the ensuing season.

General.—In addition to conducting the necessary cultivating-work in connection with the fire-breaks, five depots containing fire-fighting appliances were installed here. The costly work of removing decayed lateral branches from larch and pines is now being undertaken only for a narrow strip fringing the various blocks. The effect will add greater efficiency to fire-barriers.

Less damage is now being done to trees by the red deer, although occasionally it is necessary to stalk the animals that have gained access to the enclosure. By the combined agencies of gun and dogs three stags were destroyed.

Several improvements were made to enable maintenance-work to be carried on more expeditiously, and the addition of a small scullery to the foreman's house is much appreciated.

A sum of £367 18s. 1d. was incurred during the year, which advances the total expenditure to date to £13,553 6s. 1d.

Appended are various supporting statements.

Schedule II.—Statement of Expenditure.

	For Year.			To Date.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Planting operations and maintenance—						
Tree-planting	..	..	..	3,094	16	2
Pitting	..	..	..	3,619	2	7
Clearing	..	..	..	496	5	11
Cartage of trees	..	..	..	216	12	8
General upkeep of plantation	..	125	16 1	2,821	17	3
General repairs	..	4	2 8	74	18	1
Horse-feed	..	15	2 1	145	18	7
Permanent works—						
Fencing	..	..	..	258	2	3
Formation	..	..	..	366	7	2
Buildings	..	26	15 11	430	7	5
Stock, implements, &c.—Tools, implements	..	10	1 4	163	13	10
Supervision and clerical (salaries)—						
Supervision of free labour	..	160	0 0	1,430	10	0
Proportion of Superintending Nurseryman's salary and clerical assistance	..	26	0 0	434	14	2
	£367	18	1	£13,553	6	1