

reduced to about 700 trees to the acre. Where the height-growth does not exceed 10 ft. the trees are usually of an even growth, and a party of experienced workmen each take an alternate row, felling those trees that are not required, and, where necessary, marking the trees to be left on the adjoining row. Another party follows and deals with the rows left, cutting all trees but those marked. With the trees over 18 ft. high the procedure is different; the dominating trees are beginning to assert themselves, and the lower branches are brittle. Underscrubbing becomes necessary at this stage. Each man has a stout stick about 5 ft. long, with which he clears a way through the underscrub, taking care not to injure the trees, alternate rows being thus treated. Before cutting commences a competent officer with a short slasher marks all trees to be taken out. Underscrubbing costs from 11s. 6d. to £1 1s. per acre, according to the amount of undergrowth and the condition of the branches. Thinning out trees up to 10 ft. high costs from 7s. to £1 14s. per acre, and those from 18 ft. to 35 ft. cost from £2 to £2 16s. per acre, plus the cost of underscrubbing. Altogether 258 acres have been thinned for the season.

To enable a correct estimate of the areas in different species to be arrived at, the blocks are being subdivided into compartments, and when surveyed should prove useful in compiling a working plan for the pines and *Eucalypti*.

Alterations and an addition of one room and veranda were made to the officers' quarters, the whole providing very comfortable quarters. Huts for workmen are urgently required. At present the majority of the men reside in tents, and these are quite unsuitable for forming a permanent camp. The plantation has been worked by free labour for over two years, and the difficulty of getting suitable labour is increased by the want of proper accommodation.

Fire-breaks were kept free of all inflammable growth by ploughing, cutting, and burning. Tracks were made to provide quicker access to the different parts of the plantation in case of fire, and the number of these tracks will be increased as time permits. On two occasions during the year it was necessary to have the men out at night to combat fires close to the plantation. In order to reduce this to a minimum, it is proposed to burn off all scrub to at least 5 chains from the boundary-fences during the coming season.

The swamp from the horse-paddock to the creek on Blocks 4 and 5 was drained; this provided an outlet for surplus water, and also made it possible to form a convenient foot-track. A ditch was opened to provide a permanent water-supply for the No. 1 camp.

The horse-paddock at No. 2 camp has been down in grass for six years, and it is now necessary to have it renewed. Half the paddock will be ploughed ready for sowing in the spring. Paddocking for the horses belonging to workmen is necessary, as at times the men are required to work five miles from camp, making it necessary to have a horse to get about with. It is proposed to sow down the 16½-acre paddock on Block 4 for their use.

The average daily number of men employed during the year was 18·85. A record of rainfall and temperature is attached.

Month.				Rainfall.	Number of Days Rain fell.	Temperature.		Number of Days Frosts occurred.
						Maximum.	Minimum.	
1914.				In.		Deg. F.	Deg. F.	
April	..	..	..	6·60	16	72	22	7
May	..	..	..	3·33	15	68	18	13
June	..	..	..	2·76	11	60	17	19
July	..	..	..	3·13	17	59	15	21
August	..	..	..	0·26	5	60	15	25
September	..	..	..	1·65	9	66	16	18
October	..	..	..	0·95	5	79	21	10
November	..	..	..	1·56	9	74	18	7
December	..	..	..	1·52	7	82	26	8
1915.								
January	..	..	..	1·90	7	88	28	3
February	..	..	..	0·30	4	79	31	2
March	..	..	..	5·40	16	77	27	4
Totals	..	..	..	29·36	121	..	..	137

Summary showing Area of Waiotapu Plantation (7,166·80 Acres in Trees).

How occupied.							Acres.
Larch	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,310·85
Pines	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,663·50
<i>Eucalypti</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	180·50
Birch	..	..	..	..	..	..	11·95
Roads, tracks, and fire-breaks	..	..	..	..	..	..	312·30
Land unsuitable for planting, including swamps, creeks, horse-paddocks, and residence reserves	..	..	..	..	..	..	298·20
Unplanted land	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil.

7,777·30