

REPORT ON THE AFFORESTATION OPERATIONS IN THE NORTH ISLAND.

(By the Superintending Nurseryman, North Island, Rotorua.)

During the past year afforestation-work has been energetically carried out, the area afforested being 1,913 acres, thus bringing the total area in the North Island under planted forest to 18,230 acres. In the Rotorua Nursery 2,600,000 trees were propagated from seed, the principal species being Corsican pine, Monterey pine, Douglas fir, yellow-pine, *Eucalyptus Macarthuri*, and *Eucalyptus resinifera grandiflora*. The number of trees raised is just about half of the normal annual production of this nursery, this being due to the necessity of curtailing expenditure in consequence of the great war now being waged in Europe. The stock of trees now in the nursery is estimated at 9,096,000. To date 58,459,000 trees have been raised, of which number 49,363,000 have been transferred to plantations, &c.

The weather experienced during the year has on the whole been good, although the hot dry weather in the month of February caused a considerable number of losses at Rotorua Nursery and also at Kaingaroa Plantation. At the other stations not only are there few losses amongst the trees planted during the winter, but the growth made is very good, this being largely due to the protection afforded by the heavy growth of bracken which came up amongst the trees.

PRISON LABOUR.

The average daily number of prisoners employed has been slightly more than last year, and the average value of work per man is considerably greater. There is ample accommodation for twenty more prisoners at the Kaingaroa camp, and as there are abundant means of profitably employing all the men the camp will hold I would strongly urge that a special effort be made to fill the camps and maintain the number of men throughout the year. Following is the usual tabulated information concerning this class of labour:—

Summary of Prison Labour.

Year.	Waioatapu Plantation.			Whakarewarewa Plantation.			Kaingaroa Plains Plantation.		
	Average employed.	Total Value of Work.	Average per Man.	Average employed.	Total Value of Work.	Average per Man.	Average employed.	Total Value of Work.	Average per Man.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1900-1	20-00*	170 0 0	8 10 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
1901-2	18-00	437 18 6	24 6 7	..	..	..	..	..	..
1902-3	22-59	904 12 11	40 0 11	..	..	..	..	..	..
1903-4	30-00	902 3 0	30 1 5	..	..	..	..	..	..
1904-5	43-00	1,562 0 0	36 6 0	11-00†	332 13 7	30 4 10	..	..	..
1905-6	42-56	2,440 8 5	57 6 9	14-19	771 8 4	54 7 3	..	..	..
1906-7	35-62	2,978 0 0	83 12 1	11-50	762 11 0	66 6 2	..	..	..
1907-8	38-64	3,878 7 6	100 7 5	15-05	1,103 5 2	73 6 1	..	..	..
1908-9	32-83	3,496 19 2	106 10 4	13-16	971 10 0	73 16 5	..	..	..
1909-10	27-81	3,164 19 2	113 16 0	10-89	789 7 6	72 10 10	..	..	..
1910-11	23-45	2,390 7 1	101 18 7	10-44	957 0 3	91 13 4	..	..	..
1911-12	17-04	1,750 5 0	102 14 3	11-16	934 19 9	83 15 7	..	..	..
1912-13	15-20	1,198 16 9	78 17 5	9-51	931 3 2	97 18 3	..	..	..
1913-14	..	..	..	11-66	1,019 17 3	87 9 4	12-36	1,113 5 0	90 1 4
1914-15	..	..	..	15-56	1,225 16 7	78 15 7	17-45	1,676 8 8	96 1 5
1915-16	..	..	..	15-38	1,717 15 11	111 13 9	19-23	1,784 12 4	92 16 1
Totals ..	..	25,274 17 6	..	..	11,517 8 6	..	..	4,574 6 0	..
Averages	30-35‡	..	68 18 9	12-72§	..	77 1 2	16-34	..	93 6 3

* One month's work.

† Nine months' work.

‡ 12·08 years.

§ 11·75 years.

SALE OF TREES TO FARMERS.

The scheme which was inaugurated during the year of assisting farmers in the growing of plantations and shelter-belts proved very successful, if we are to judge by the number of applications received for trees. Although the price-lists were not circulated until the month of July, eighty-five applications were received, resulting in 58,650 trees being supplied. The prices charged were sufficient only to cover the cost of growing, packing, and delivery to the Rotorua Railway-station, and the revenue received amounted to £89 9s. 3d. In the majority of cases the trees were received in a satisfactory condition; but in a few instances, where more than two days were occupied upon the journey, the eucalypts did not carry well. All the pines, with perhaps the exception of Monterey pine, can be safely transported even if the journey occupies several days; but the Monterey pine, like the eucalypts, is rapid-growing, and the soft sappy growth is liable to become heated if the plants are confined in a close case for a long period. For the benefit of farmers who cannot, owing to the distance from Rotorua, have plants safely sent it may be possible to offer seeds from which they can propagate the trees they require. If the scheme were adopted seeds would be supplied which are true to name and, as far as is possible, gathered from acclimatized trees.