

The growing of horse-feed also received attention, but the crop was below the average owing to the dryness of the season. Firewood to the amount of 116 cords was disposed of during the year at £1 per cord.

The grazing of sheep on fire-breaks proved a most profitable proposition, and the scheme is worthy of further extension.

The daily average of men employed throughout the year was 5·3, and the total expenditure was £940 2s. 3d.

BALMORAL PLANTATION, CANTERBURY.

(Area, 1,047 acres; altitude, 550 ft.; commenced operations, 1916.)

(A. J. Boydell, Plantation Foreman.)

Operations on this new plantation, which is situated about seven miles from Culverden, were commenced on the 15th May last. The land on this area is of an intensely stony nature, and was also covered with a dense growth of manuka-scrub, and before pitting or planting could be done a sufficient area to accommodate the trees in hand had to be cleared. A camp for the employees had also to be formed, and for that purpose four huts were transferred from Hanmer Springs, which were supplemented by four tents, thus providing accommodation for fourteen men. 500 acres of land was cleared of scrub and burned off. Pits to the number of 454,425 were opened, and 222,605 trees were planted, comprising the following varieties: *Pinus ponderosa*, *P. Benthiana*, *P. scopulorum*, *P. muricata*, and *P. austriaca*. A remarkably good strike took place among all varieties, which demonstrates that this waste land is eminently adapted for afforestation purposes. Pits to the number of 231,820 are now available for the reception of trees from the nursery, and it is estimated that 800,000 trees will be dealt with during the approaching season.

A length of 102 chains of fencing was erected, and 40 chains of old fence was converted into rabbit-proof fence. Material is now on the ground for the purpose of enclosing a further area for the approaching season's planting. An area of about 20 acres was enclosed for a horse-paddock, and a combined stable and vehicle shed was erected.

A good water-supply was obtained adjacent to the camp by sinking to a depth of 20 ft.

Rabbits were numerous on the area, but by poisoning and trapping the pest is well reduced.

The daily average of men employed throughout the year was 10·4, and the expenditure for the year amounted to £2,043 2s. 5d.

PART II.—NATIVE FORESTS.

(By E. PHILLIPS TURNER, F.R.G.S.)

OUTPUT FROM MILLS.

As far as was ascertained by the inquiries of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, the total output of timber for the Dominion was 352,500,000 superficial feet, but a considerable amount that was cut on private lands is not included in this. Of the above amount quoted the Auckland District produced 182,000,000 ft., Wellington 63,720,000 ft., Hokitika 50,211,000 ft., and Southland 24,500,000 ft. There was practically no native timber milled in Canterbury, and in none of the other six land districts did the amount milled exceed 8,000,000 ft. The output of kauri was about 52,000,000 ft. Slackness in the building trade, scarcity of labour, difficulty of export, and other war conditions have tended to restrict the output.

EXPORT OF NATIVE TIMBERS.

From the table supplied by the Comptroller of Customs it is found that during the year the export of native timbers was 77,515,856 superficial feet, of a total value of £419,935. In 1913 (the year before the war) the export was 63,547,459 superficial feet, of a value of £319,279. This shows that in spite of the shortness of shipping and other adverse factors resulting from the war the export of timber has largely increased.

IMPORT OF TIMBERS.

The amount of timber imported during the year (not including laths, rails, posts, and shingles) was 19,112,290 superficial feet, including 3,684,740 superficial feet of Oregon pine. The total value of all timber imported was £190,903. There were also imported 3,057 tons of tanning-bark, valued at £31,563. In 1913 there were imported 46,907,877 superficial feet of sawn and hewn timber, which, together with imported round logs, laths, rails, posts, and shingles, was valued at £504,882.