

The area planted in both Islands was 1,972 acres. This area is less than the average, and is accounted for by the fact that, owing to an adverse season at Tapanui, there was a much reduced number of trees for planting out on the plantations supplied by that nursery. The total area now planted in both Islands is 37,416 acres. The following table shows the area planted prior to the 1st April, 1909, and the area planted yearly since that date:—

Island.	Planted before 1st April, 1909.	1909-10.	1910-11.	1911-12.	1912-13.	1913-14.	1914-15.	1915-16.	1916-17.	1917-18.	1918-19.	1919-20.	Total Area.
North	Acres. 7,802	Acres. 1,807	Acres. 1,575	Acres. 1,664	Acres. 776	Acres. 1,288	Acres. 1,416	Acres. 1,913	Acres. 1,918	Acres. 1,633	Acres. 1,835	Acres. 1,430	Acres. 25,057
South	Acres. 3,291	Acres. 891	Acres. 1,025	Acres. 902	Acres. 828	Acres. 537	Acres. 749	Acres. 764	Acres. 846	Acres. 1,020	Acres. 964	Acres. 542	Acres. 12,359
Total	Acres. 11,093	Acres. 2,698	Acres. 2,600	Acres. 2,566	Acres. 1,604	Acres. 1,825	Acres. 2,165	Acres. 2,677	Acres. 2,764	Acres. 2,653	Acres. 2,799	Acres. 1,972	Acres. 37,416

PRISON LABOUR.

At Kaingaroa Plantation (Rotorua district) the average number of prisoners employed was 23·62. The total value of the work done by prisoners during the year was £2,499 1s. 5d., and the total area planted was 658 acres. The total value of the work done by prisoners in the North Island since 1900 is now £52,300 16s. 5d.

Owing to the fact that the Prisons Department requires its prisoners for the farming, draining, and other operations which that Department is carrying on elsewhere, it has been arranged that the prisoners will be removed from Kaingaroa about the end of July. It has been found that Maoris have a special aptitude for plantation work, and they will in the future be employed at Kaingaroa Plantation.

DISCHARGED-SOLDIER LABOUR.

Discharged soldiers have been employed as labourers at both the North and South Island plantations during the year, and at present the total number is fifty-three; but before Christmas the number was more than double this. From the point of view of the Department the employment of this class of labour has not proved altogether satisfactory, as a large number of the men look upon tree-planting as merely a stop-gap occupation and remain only a short time at the work.

DAMAGE BY DEER.

In both the Rotorua and Tapanui districts deer have become a serious nuisance in the plantations, and though forest officers are permitted to shoot them on the plantations it is both difficult and expensive to keep these pests in check. Dr. Sommerville has shown that in the Scottish Highlands deer have in many localities, by eating the seedlings, completely prevented the regeneration of Scots pine. These animals are likely to become a serious trouble in our own native forests as soon as management operations are started in them, and it will be necessary to take strict measures to control them.

TREES TO FARMERS AND LOCAL BODIES.

The total number of trees disposed of to farmers and local bodies was 277,235, which is a large decrease in the number disposed of last year. The decrease was mainly due to the restrictions imposed by the Railway Department on the carriage of goods, and to a shortage of plants resulting from a bad season in the South.

The reports of the Superintending Nurserymen for the North and South Islands are appended hereto.