

APPENDIX B.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS BY THE CONSERVATORS OF STATE FORESTS.

NORTH AUCKLAND.

R. P. GREVILLE, Conservator of State Forests (Commissioner of Crown Lands).

The timber industry generally throughout the North Auckland Land District during the past year has been very brisk, and the scarcity of supplies of sawn timber is every day becoming more acute. Notwithstanding the steadily increasing prices the local demand still keeps up, and great difficulty is being experienced in getting orders fulfilled. Many applications are being received to purchase Crown forests, and high royalties are being offered. Settlers are also now finding a ready market for small lots of standing timber hitherto rejected by sawmillers as being of no value owing to being inaccessible and costly to work.

Local Trade.—In spite of the high prices of timber and high cost of buildings and furniture, both trades have been kept very busy.

Export Trade.—The quantity and value of New Zealand sawn timber exported from Auckland and Kaipara ports during the year was as follows:—

	Sup. ft.	£
Kauri	3,919,610	45,763
White-pine	20,151,300	181,857
Rimu	2,346,887	19,123
Other kinds	4,399,959	17,921
Totals	28,463,707	£264,920

showing a decrease in quantity exported of 24 per cent. and an increase in value of about 15 per cent. on the 1919 returns.

Sawmills.—There are at present about twenty-two sawmills in operation within the North Auckland District, employing about 1,250 hands, and producing approximately 70,000,000 sup. ft. of sawn timber per annum. On the 5th January, 1920, a fire caused the entire destruction of a large sawmill in the Ponsonby district owned by Cashmore Bros. (Limited), and in addition to the loss of the mill and machinery, large stocks of sawn timber were more or less destroyed, resulting in an actual loss of about £5,000, and thereby also adding to the shortage of supplies of timber. The re-erection of this mill is not contemplated, but other sawmillers are proposing to erect one or two large mills in the North if satisfactory arrangements can be made for the purchase of private and Crown bushes.

Prices for Sawn Timbers.—The prices of sawn timber have substantially increased during the year, and at time of writing further increases are being made. The following is a comparative statement showing the increased prices of the various kinds of timber in one particular line of each since the year 1914 to March, 1920:—

	1914.	1920.	Increase
	s. d.	s. d.	per Cent.
Kauri	28 0	45 0	60·7
Rimu	25 0	40 6	62·0
Matai	23 0	41 6	80·4
Totara	25 0	53 0	112·0

Forest Fires.—The Crown forests in this district have been immune from fires during the year.

Timber-measuring.—The total quantity of timber measured during the year was 8,333,423 sup. ft., at a cost, including line-cutting and inspections of other timber, of 1·32d. per 100 sup. ft.

Timber-sales.—The sales of timber made by this Board during the year ended 31st March, 1920, are given below in superficial feet.

—	Kauri.	Rimu.	Kahikatea.	Totara.	Miscellaneous.	Total.	Value.
							£
Crown lands	37,244	..	..	..	40,000	77,244	95
National-endowment lands	892,493	200,000	..	4,310	..	1,096,803	2,507
Education reserves ..	576,652	60,000	148,772	..	..	785,424	1,410
State forests	2,250	..	..	..	..	2,250	3
Totals	1,508,639	260,000	148,772	4,310	40,000	1,961,721	£4,015

The total amounts received as timber royalties and rents for extensions of time during the years are as follows: Crown lands, £107 10s. 9d.; State forests, £426 15s. 6d.; national-endowment lands, £521 6s. 10d.; education reserves, £349 16s. 10d.; total, £1,405 9s. 2d.

Timber-floating Licenses.—Total licenses existing, 65; new licenses issued, 8; licenses renewed, 49; licenses transferred, 2; licenses lapsed, 9.

AUCKLAND.

H. M. SKEET, Conservator of State Forests (Commissioner of Crown Lands).

The general condition of the timber industry during the past year has been one of considerable difficulty. Timber-merchants have found it practically impossible to obtain adequate supplies to meet the demand, owing partly to the difficulty of obtaining sufficient skilled labour for bush operations, partly to difficulty of transit to the markets, and partly to the great demand that has arisen as the result of the resumption of building, both for commercial and housing