

The wholesale prices of timber in Dunedin were as follows: Rimu, O.B., 8 in. wide, 29s.; 10 in. wide, 31s.; rimu, heart, 8 in. wide, 35s. 6d.; 10 in. wide, 37s. 6d.; rimu, clean heart, 8 in. wide, 38s. 6d.; 10 in. wide, 40s. 6d.; black-pine (matai), all heart, up to 8 in. wide, 46s.; totara, all heart, up to 8 in. wide, 51s. 6d.; all the foregoing at per 100 sup. ft. An advance of 2s. per 100 is shortly to be made on these prices. Miro is the same price as matai, and kahikatea the same price as rimu.

The supply of timber in Otago should last probably 18 to 20 years yet. There is yet a fairly substantial area of unexplored and unsurveyed bush in this land district; but the probability is that the greater part of that is birch forest. Much of it, too, is rather inaccessible, and the expense of getting it out will be very heavy.

No part of the forest has been destroyed by fire during the past year.

SOUTHLAND.

THOS. BROOK, Conservator of State Forests (Commissioner of Crown Lands).

The general condition with regard to the timber and milling industry in Southland for the year ending 31st March, 1920, is not yet satisfactory, chiefly owing to the shortage of labour, most of the mills working half-handed, thus resulting in a small output. The demand for timber is very good, but the mills under present conditions are unable to cope with it. The demand for white-pine (kahikatea) and beech (*Fagus Menziesii*) is still increasing, but some millers are sending out green beech manufactured into cheese-crates, &c., which is not desirable, as it tends to injure the beech trade.

There are thirty-nine mills working out of forty-eight in working-order during the year, seven of which were in Crown land, sixteen in State forest, twelve private, two Native, one private and Crown, and one Native and Crown.

The quantity of each timber produced during the year was as follows: Rimu (red-pine) and miro, 10,000,000 sup. ft.; kahikatea (white-pine), 5,600,000; beech, 4,100,000; matai (black-pine), 400,000; totara, 350,000; total, 20,450,000 sup. ft.

The royalties and rents received were as follows: State forests, £2,380; licenses and sales of timber from national endowment, £50; licenses and sales of timber from Crown lands, £537; licenses and sales of timber from lands for settlement, £3; total, £2,970.

Merchants' price-list as follows: O.B. rimu and beech—up to 8 in., 18s. 6d.; up to 10 in., 20s.; clean quality, 21s. 6d. and 23s. 6d. respectively; heart, 23s. and 24s. 6d. Matai—up to 8 in., 21s. 6d.; all heart, 29s. Totara—up to 8 in., 26s.; all heart, 33s. Trade discount to merchants only is 10 per cent. if delivered in their yards, and 7½ per cent. if delivered to customer.

Although a decidedly dry year, there has been practically no destruction by fire of any maiden bush. The Otautau Sawmilling Company's mill, near Otautau, was burnt out, a northerly gale spreading the fire through 300 acres or more of old workings.

The timber areas in Southland are, as a rule, now being cleanly cut out, very little timber of any commercial value being left standing. The approximate average cost of producing sawn timber is about 10s. 6d. per 100 sup. ft.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (800 copies, £45).

By Authority: MARCUS F. MARKS, Government Printer, Wellington.—1920.

Price 1s.]