

This proposal ensures—(1) Continuous and sustained revenue to the Native owners in perpetuity; (2) a sustained timber-yield and a high state of productivity; (3) the best use of the land; (4) it eliminates the future and possible problem of landless Natives; (5) it provides suitable, agreeable, permanent, and remunerative employment, and opportunities for Native settlement.

THE FOREST INDUSTRY OF NEW ZEALAND.

It is in the public interest that the timber industry in New Zealand be placed on a permanently stable and prosperous basis, for its secure and steady operation is of vital concern to the public. An abrupt reduction of the *per capita* consumption of timber below the current rate (about 300 ft.) would seriously curtail the economic development of this young country, which is just now on the threshold of a great era of expansion. Moreover, the future needs must be secured within New Zealand, for timber-importation will not be possible in a very few years, except at excessive famine prices. There must be an equal sympathetic and helpful attitude towards the milling industry in every contact with it by the public and by all governmental agencies of whatever character, if the public is to expect earnest, wise, and successful effort in the industry to perpetuate itself. The timber-producing industry, the public, and the Government service can work out a relation in which the interests of all are protected, and a thorough understanding replaces hostility, antagonism, and distrust.

As an earnest of the desire of the Government to inaugurate a better condition, the following expresses in part how many of the disabilities under which the timber industry labours could and should be removed by public action: (1) A progressive and businesslike method of marketing public timber with a view to stabilization of prices of forest products; (2) a well-ordered system of forest administration; (3) a progressive transportation policy; (4) equitable taxation; (5) a definite and stable export and import policy; (6) diffusion of knowledge among the consuming public as to production and consumption of timber, and the proper value and usefulness of various qualities and kinds of timber; (7) assistance to the industry in matters of research and investigation, &c.; (8) establishment of training courses in logging and milling engineering.

The milling industry, on the other hand, if a better condition is to be secured, must consider the following problems and their solution. How to—

- (1.) Satisfy the legitimate and reasonable timber needs of New Zealand at reasonable prices.
- (2.) Secure the highest reasonable efficiency in exploitation and manufacture by maintaining a high standard of technique in woods and mill.*
- (3.) Develop a system of marketing and distribution by which every community receives its wood needs.
- (4.) Co-operate in the protection of forest areas against fire.
- (5.) Maintain a decent standard of housing and working-conditions for labour.†
- (6.) Co-operate with the Forest Service in the working-out of the problems of forestation.

The writer recommends that the Forest Service be authorized to carry out a complete and exhaustive investigation into the economic position of the forest industry and its relation to the public and to the public forests, in order that it may be in a position to deal justly and equitably in the promulgation of standards, rules, and regulations. In this study the following phases should be covered:—

- (1.) Development, past and present.
- (2.) Organization and federation.
- (3.) Concentration of control and ownership of timber land.
- (4.) Relation of the various forest manufacturing centres to domestic and export business.
- (5.) Prices, past and present, and future trend.
- (6.) Labour problems.
- (7.) Incidence of taxation.
- (8.) Distribution, marketing, and sale of products.
- (9.) Standards of manufacture and milling economy.
- (10.) Burden of royalties and other public charges and their relation to selling-prices.
- (11.) Probable influence of silvicultural regulations in adding to the cost of forest products to the consumer.
- (12.) Probable future of the industry.
- (13.) Credit facilities and financing procedure.
- (14.) Manufacturing-costs.
- (15.) Constructive improvements possible.
- (16.) Visible commercial supplies of timber in each district.
- (17.) Speculation and trafficking in timber lands.

* It was with a great deal of pleasure that the writer inspected the operations of a Southland mill. This highly efficient plant has developed a very diverse market for its products, viz.: Pack-saddle elements from short lengths; packing-cases, boxes, and crates from low grades; mine-sleepers, legging caps and sills, all from low-grade inferior side cuts; fence-droppers, stakes, from slabs; car and coach sills, interior coach finish; agricultural-implement bars, and furniture stock; broom-handle bars, cheese-crate heading; battens, siding, lining, and flooring, and other general building-material; cask timber for staves; brush-backs; logs and railway-sleepers.

† The present system of migratory milling (the average life of a sawmill operation in New Zealand is seven years) does not give the forest worker stability of employment and a "chance at home." Housing and sanitation are often outrageous, and living-conditions intolerable. Under these conditions the timber-worker easily becomes voteless, landless, womanless, homeless, restless, discontented, and radical. To a large extent this problem may be solved by the development of the central-milling idea, which will permit of a more adequate and efficient operation, ensure suitable and livable working-conditions, reasonable educational facilities, and stabilization of definite communal centre.