

Output in Sawn Timber.

The Board of Trade has kindly furnished the following statement showing the actual output, in superficial feet, of the various kinds of timbers from New Zealand sawmills during the year ended 31st March, 1920: White-pine, 82,419,821; rimu, 145,584,203; kauri, 22,598,391; matai, 17,820,597; totara, 14,414,298; beech, 9,650,344; hinau, 4,247; taraire, 174,650; tanekaha, 54,328; pukatea, 200,000; *Pinus insignis*, 3,064,201; blue-gum, 80,000; kahikawaka, 50,000; silver-pine, 50,000: total output all classes, 296,165,080 sup. ft.

The output is 68,365,000 sup. ft. above that of the year ended 31st March, 1919, and shows greatly increased activity in the sawmilling business.

*GENERAL.**Forest Fires.*

It is pleasing to report that during the year there was only one case of destruction of forest by fire: this case was 100 acres of mixed forest in the Aorere district of Nelson.

Coal Shortage and Firewood.

In order to partially relieve the great inconvenience caused in Wellington by the coal shortage last winter a license was granted to the Munitions and Supplies Department to cut firewood in a State forest near Kaitoke. That Department fitted up a small mill at Thorndon, and since starting operations had, at the end of the year, supplied about 879 cords of firewood to consumers and dealers in Wellington. The wood was sold for about £2,339. The use of firewood for domestic purposes requires encouraging in every reasonable way, as, owing to the increasing value of coal, it may be advisable that the use of the latter should be largely confined to those purposes for which firewood would not be a satisfactory substitute.

Sir D. E. Hutchins's Report on New Zealand Forests.

During the year a valuable and exhaustive report by Sir D. E. Hutchins on the forests of the North was published. This is the second work written on our forests by this well-known authority, and the Dominion is much indebted to him for the invaluable work he has done for forestry whilst he has been among us. A further report by the same author is now being printed.

Forestry Department.

On the 1st September last what had previously been the Forestry Branch of the Lands and Survey Department was established as a separate Department, with the former Chief Officer as Secretary of the new Department; a small clerical staff was appointed, and, as there was no accommodation in the Government Buildings, offices were taken in a new building known as the Dominion Farmers' Institute Building.

Director of Forests and Chief Inspector of Forests.

During the year applications were invited through the High Commissioner for a Director and Chief Inspector of Forests, and on the advice of the British Interim Forest Authority Captain L. MacIntosh Ellis was selected as Director. Captain Ellis is a graduate in forestry of Toronto University, and has had extensive experience in North America, France, and Scotland. He reached New Zealand on the 17th March last, and immediately started an inspection of the plantations and indigenous forests. His report will appear in the annual report of next year.

Of the applicants for the post of Chief Inspector only one was considered to possess the necessary qualifications, but, as this one afterwards withdrew, this post has still to be filled.

General Staff.

During the spring a Research Officer and six Forest Inspectors, four of whom were ex-soldiers, were appointed. The Research Officer has been engaged upon a systematic investigation of the annual ring-growths of our chief commercial trees, and the Inspectors have been fully occupied in making inspections and reports on State forests, and also on private forests for which applications for licenses to fell had been made.

The reports of the Conservators of State Forests are appended hereto.

PART II.—STATE NURSERIES AND PLANTATIONS.*Trees raised and Area planted.*

During the year ended 31st March, 1920, trees to the approximate quantity of 11,724,000 were raised in the four State nurseries, and during the same period 3,710,900 trees were sent out to the various plantations and 277,235 to outside places.