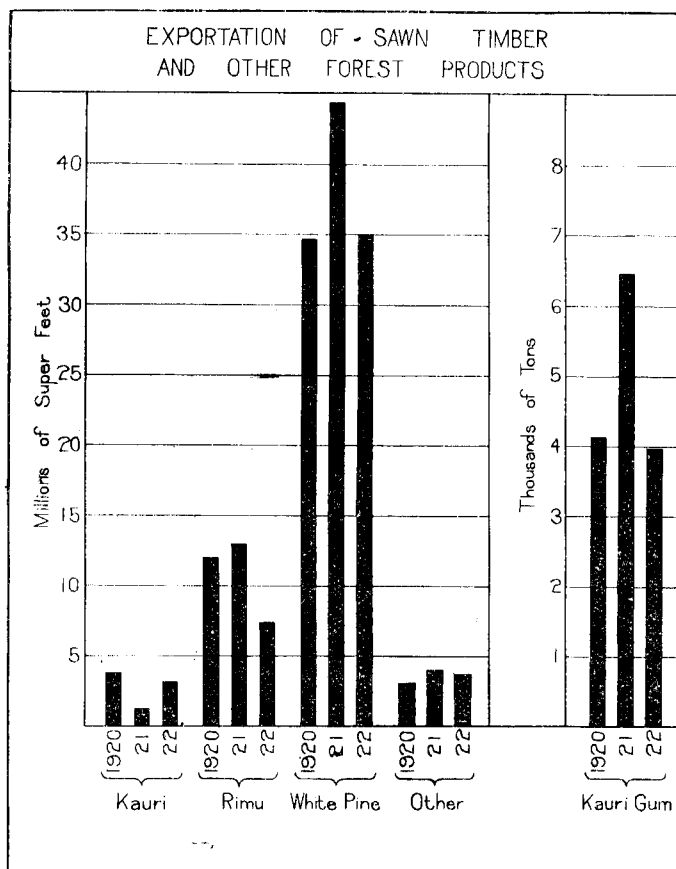


Other forest-products exhibit a still further increase in value. The figures quoted cover the values per ton for the years ended 31st December, 1919, 1920, and 1921. Tanning-bark—1919, £12 ; 1921, £17 16s. 11d. Kauri-gum—1919, £61 16s. 4d. ; 1920, £85 18s. 2d. ; 1921, £94 2s. 7d. Fungus—1919, £59 14s. 4d. ; 1920, £106 15s. 3d. ; 1921, £159 1s. 2d.



GRAPH SHOWING EXPORTATIONS FOR PERIOD 1920-22.

Markets and Prices.

For the period under review the general trend has been towards a price-reduction in conformity with decreased costs of production. Though continually increasing discounts on list prices have been obtainable from the beginning of the year, no general reduction was announced until the 24th March, 1922, when the North Island sawmillers made a reduction on certain classes of matai and rimu amounting to approximately 10 per cent. There are indications that the Westland and other South Island sawmillers will make a similar reduction early in April or May, 1922. The general slackening in demand for timber throughout the year is due in great part to inactivity in the building and constructional trades. Labour and material costs have combined to make building-costs so excessive that many new projects have been suspended until both have been reduced to a reasonable basis. Undoubtedly timber has been called upon to bear an undue proportion of blame for these high building-costs owing to the failure of the public to realize that only 18 per cent. of the cost of the house is accounted for by this material. The present time, however, is considered most opportune for building operations, as labour costs have been considerably reduced and timber-prices have been cut to the bone. Furthermore, sawmillers have avoided creating unemployment by working mills considerably in excess of market demands, with the result that large stocks of well-seasoned timber are available for immediate use. A sudden building boom is not in the interests of the community, as an artificial value is thereby added to both labour and material; but ruling conditions call for a steadily increasing activity in the building and constructional trade. This is essential for an improvement in the present economic position.

Trade-extension.

A close analysis of the statistics relating to the import of timber indicates clearly the general trend of the commercial world. Consumers are daily demanding more and better service from the manufacturers. The growing popularity of Douglas fir (Oregon pine) is due in a great part to the grade, seasoning, and strength guarantee which usually accompanies it, and is a stimulating factor in the efforts of the New Zealand manufacturer to sell the local timbers upon a similar basis. Such a service ensures not only more profit to the sawmiller, but better value to the consumer or purchaser. It is also evident that many opportunities still exist for the specialized use of many of the local timbers.