

TREE-GROWING.

A very good crop all round has been secured. The softwood trees and eucalypts generally are well up to standard. The total quantity of seed sown was 1,423 lb., with an estimated crop of 9,000,000 plants.

Open-bed sowing without shade or covering was tried at Rotorua and Kaingaroa with good results. The season was wet and thus favourable to this method, but further trials will be made. A fine crop of pondosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) has been secured this year, and present appearances indicate that the crop is of the true type. A trial planting with seedlings from this crop will be made early in the coming planting season, as many of them are large enough for successful permanent planting now.

UNDERPLANTING.

Some four hundred redwood plants were used in underplanting larch on Whakarewarewa Plantation with good results. It is proposed to use about ten thousand for the same purpose during the coming season.

THINNING.

Whakarewarewa Plantation.—Approximately 16 acres of *Eucalyptus Risdoni* were thinned under permit. The demand for milling-timber determined the rate of thinning, as there was practically no demand for the material fit for firewood only.

General.—Thinning is undoubtedly urgently required at Whakarewarewa and Waiotapu Plantations.

DEER IN PLANTATIONS.

This pest continues to make itself felt in spite of fairly consistent shooting. For the first time on record these animals invaded the Rotorua Nursery, and it was very fortunate that serious damage was not done to the young plants in the seed-beds. Seven head were located and destroyed. During the year a total of fifty-one were shot, at a cost to the Service of £11 1s. 4d. About twelve miles of access tracks were opened, to allow of free movement through the worst-infested areas, at a cost of £116. Arrangements have now been made for three good shots to spend a week or two in the plantation during the shooting season, and our own employees will also continue to destroy as many as possible.

FIRE PROTECTION.

Owing to the wet state of the weather during the summer the danger from fire was less than usual. Patrolmen and lookout men were engaged as previously, and fire-breaks maintenance and extension attended to. The costs at the various stations were as follows :—

Plantation.	Area. Acres.	Cost per Acre. s. d.
Whakarewarewa	8,037	5 2
Waiotapu	7,010	3 0
Kaingaroa West	11,615	2 3
Kaingaroa Plains	17,588	2 3
Total	44,250	Average 2 7½

The question of internal fire-breaks is now being seriously reviewed, and a definite policy regarding same will shortly be formulated. Owing to the large area which is rapidly accumulating the problem is one of considerable importance.

MAINTENANCE.

Clearing round trees, repairs to fences, buildings, &c., were fully maintained, and the costs work out as follows :—

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EQUIPMENT.

In pursuance of the policy to motorize the transport service as far as possible, sixteen horses were sold, and two Ford 2-ton trucks and two Fordson tractors were purchased. Generally speaking, it can be stated the motorization is a movement in the right direction.

During the year three Hauck burners were purchased, and these have proved most useful in burning rubbish and weed-growth on difficult places on the fire-breaks. The first cost is somewhat high, but providing the life is fairly long this is a very valuable piece of equipment.

BUILDINGS.

At Rotorua and Kaingaroa buildings were altered at small cost to accommodate the motor trucks and tractors.

At Kaingaroa West a station was erected for the forest ranger in charge, and tenders have been called for by the Public Works Department for the erection of a similar type of cottage for the forest ranger in charge of Whakarewarewa Plantation.