

THE KAUWHATA HORTICULTURAL STATION.

A much drier year than usual was conducive to the satisfactory carrying-out of all cultural operations at this station. However, the spring, though dry, was cold, and such conditions were entirely unsuitable for the settling and developing of certain crops.

Approximately 160 tons of dry bark were harvested in the wattle plantation, 60 tons being sold and the balance stored in sheds till required at the tanneries. A quantity of timber was disposed of on a royalty basis for mine-props, fencing-posts, and firewood. Returns from the plantations for the year were: Wattle-bark, £1,670 16s. 4d.; posts, £15 10s.; firewood, £113 11s.; royalties, £190 1s. 9d.; total, £1,989 19s. 1d.

In the vineyard the necessary cultural and maintenance work was carried out. While the season was not favourable for the setting and developing of some varieties of grapes, other varieties yielded heavier crops than usual. Owing to the cool weather experienced, the sugar content of the berries was very low, and an additional quantity of sugar will be necessary to bring the wine up to standard. About 2 acres of vineyard have been divided up for the purpose of carrying out manurial experiments, the results of which will be available later.

Wine-sales increased considerably during the year, the quantities sold being as follows:—

					Quantity. Gallons.	Value.		
						£	s.	d.
Frontignac	..	..	..	..	9,431	4,731	5	0
Madeira	..	..	..	..	3,211	1,604	0	11
Claret	..	..	..	..	289	176	1	3
						12,931	£6,511	7 2

This represents an increase of 6,210 gallons and £1,920 15s. 8d. in value as compared with the previous year's figures.

ORCHARD REGISTRATION AND ORCHARD-TAX.

This work has required close attention during the year. A total of 6,637 commercial orchards were registered and tax-demand notices issued to the occupiers. £1,502 was collected in orchard-tax and handed over to the New Zealand Fruitgrowers' Federation less cost of collection. The tax is computed at the rate of 1s. per acre, with a minimum charge of 2s. 6d.

REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION OF NURSERIES.

A total of 593 nurseries were registered and £593 collected in registration fees. A fair number of the registrations made apply to persons raising tomato-plants for sale. The Instructors report that the bulk of the nurseries are in a clean condition, and no trouble is experienced in carrying out the requirements of the regulations.

NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE.

Considerable preliminary work has been carried out by the Institute of Horticulture in collecting data relative to horticultural matters generally. The establishment of a central School of Horticulture, which has been referred to in previous reports, is a matter that is strongly advocated by the Institute. It is proposed to hold a fruit varieties conference during the coming winter, which will be attended by representatives of the Fruitgrowers' Federation, Nurserymen's Association, Institute of Horticulture, and officers of this Department.

NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTH SEAS EXHIBITION.

A suitable collection of fresh and preserved fruits, jams, pickles, wines, honey, &c., was secured by the Division for display in the Department's Court at this Exhibition. A special exhibit of New-Zealand-grown tobacco, kindly supplied by the National Tobacco Company, Auckland, attracted considerable attention, as well as the bee observation hive, which was kept in operation throughout the period of the Exhibition.

IMPORTED FRUIT, PLANTS, ETC.

The inspection of fruit, plants, &c., imported into the Dominion through the different ports of entry has been carefully carried out during the year. There was a slight increase in the total quantity imported, both of fruit and plants, as compared with the previous year. The Fruit Inspectors report that while the bulk of the fruit shipments arrived in good condition, the grading and quality of some lines left a good deal to be desired. Generally speaking, the fruit from the Cook Islands and Fiji was of good quality and well packed. The trade with Fiji shows a substantial increase in the quantity of fruit imported, and a continued improvement is noticeable in the quality and packing. Fruit imports for the year were practically free from fruit-fly infection, only a small quantity having to be condemned and destroyed on account of this pest. A number of lines found on examination to be infected with live scale and mealy bug required fumigation before delivery could be given.

Bulb-mite infection has again been prevalent in imported bulbs, and a considerable number of packages had to be condemned and destroyed on account of this pest. In view of this diseased condition of bulbs on arrival in the Dominion the whole question of bulb-importation is at present under consideration. Three experimental lots of bulbs forwarded in three separate shipments under special conditions have been received from England through the High Commissioner. These were for the