

6. ESTABLISHMENT OF MAN-RAISED FORESTS.

State Forestation.

The State's contribution for the year to the Dominion's artificial-forest reserve has again exceeded that of previous years. 19,924 acres of new State-forest plantations were formed, and the total area planted in trees from the commencement of operations in 1896 up to the 31st March, 1927, aggregates 98,891 acres.

The areas planted during the year comprised poor land of little value for farming purposes; hence the State-forestation operations have put to profitable use another 20,000 acres of the waste lands of the Dominion. At Riverhead the forestation of a large area of poor gum land close to and accessible by water, rail, and main highways to the City of Auckland was commenced. Following successful experimental planting, a start was made to afforest the waste land surrounding the Waipoua Kauri Forest. The remainder of the planting for the year was connected with the extension of the State plantations, more particularly described in the following summary:—

Summary of Operations on State Plantations during the Year ended 31st March, 1927, and Total Area planted.

Forest Plantation.	Number of Trees planted.	New Area planted.	Total Area planted in Trees, 1896-1927.
		Acres.	Acres.
Riverhead	42,500	53	53
Kaingaroa	7,647,100	12,729	52,735
Hanmer Springs	921,150	1,530	7,121
Balmoral	1,956,050	2,991	7,658
Blue Mountains	1,057,075	1,288	2,268
Greenvale	520,325	720	3,646
Experimental group	438,515	613	1,739
Plantations on maintenance basis	152,050	..	23,671
Totals	12,734,765	19,924	98,891

Local-government Forest Activities.

Local-government bodies continued the formation of commercial forests, and established 1,462 acres of new plantations during the year. In the North Island twenty local bodies planted 255 acres in areas ranging from 1 acre to 53 acres, and twenty-one obtained trees from the Service for planting for shelter or beautification purposes. In the South Island twenty-five local bodies planted areas ranging from 2 acres to 500 acres, making a total area for the year of 1,207 acres. The Dunedin City Council again headed the list with 500 acres, followed by the Selwyn Plantation Board (325 acres) and the Christchurch City Council (76 acres). The area of Crown land set aside for tree-planting purposes by local bodies was further increased by 144 acres during the year.

Industrial Companies.

Five industrial companies established 130 acres of plantations during the year. Of these, four were coal-mining companies who realize that it is wise to make provision for their future requirements of mining-props.

Tree-planting Companies and Syndicates.

The boom in the formation of private and public tree-planting companies and syndicates, which commenced definitely in 1923, reached its climax in 1925, and only three new companies were formed during 1926. Of the thirty-six private and public companies registered in New Zealand, eighteen continued or commenced planting operations during the year, and established 51,242 acres of new plantations. Of this area, 50,937 acres were planted in the North Island and 305 acres in the South Island, bringing the total area planted to date to approximately 70,000 acres.

Forest-extension.

The interest of the people of the Dominion in tree-growing is well maintained. The numerous applications for advice from intending planters, and the increased sales of tree-seeds and nursery stock, show that during the past year this interest was more real and active than ever before. Forest Service sales of young forest-trees to farmers, proprietary companies, local bodies, and others reached the new high level of 4,760,490, exceeding the previous highest recorded sales by 534,316; while domestic and overseas sales of tree-seeds rose to 3,861 lb., an increase of 1,169 lb. on the record total for the preceding year. In addition to the sales, 24,590 trees and 190 lb. of tree-seed were distributed to schools free of charge. If planted 8 ft. apart the trees disposed of by the Service would be sufficient for the establishment of 7,040 acres of artificial forest.