

The quantity of New Zealand timber produced in the Auckland Province (including the Poverty Bay area) during the year ended 31st March, 1926, is recorded as 141,927,000 sup. ft. Auckland Province in that year also drew supplies by sea from other parts of New Zealand, and from Wellington Province by rail. When allowance is made for these facts and for the exportation from Auckland it appears that the imports have represented about 10 per cent. of the total timber available for consumption in the province.

Cedar and redwood are used in the Auckland District for joinery purposes, but more particularly for weatherboarding and exterior construction of dwellings. The price of cedar and redwood weatherboards in Auckland has recently been from 40s. to 44s. 6d. per 100 sup. ft. ex merchants' yards. The price of the competing local weatherboards sold under similar conditions is 54s. 6d. to 57s. 6d. per 100 sup. ft.

Rough merchantable Douglas fir in scantling sizes is sold to builders in Auckland at around 22s. 6d. ex wharf and 26s. 6d. to 27s. 6d. ex merchants' yards. This timber competes with second-class kauri at 22s. 6d. and O.B. rimu at 23s. 6d. per 100 ft. ex yard. Douglas fir is also very largely used for concrete boxing in competition with local *Pinus insignis*, which is sold at from 14s. to 20s. ex truck. The low-grade Douglas fir for this purpose is sold at 18s. ex wharf and 22s. 6d. ex yard. Douglas fir also finds extensive sale in large sizes and long lengths for heavy constructional and building work, for which purpose local timber is not readily obtainable, and certainly not at competitive prices.

Imported timber for manufacture into butter boxes, cheese crates, and fruit cases has been brought into Auckland in much reduced quantities during 1926-27. The imports during 1925-26 for these purposes were nearly 3,000,000 sup. ft., and during 1926-27 these were reduced by at least 1,500,000 sup. ft.

The importations into Wellington, Napier, Wanganui, and New Plymouth of timber (other than Australian hardwoods) have been as under:—

						Sup. ft.
Year ended 31st March, 1923	..	..	..	..	..	1,633,000
„ 1924	..	..	..	..	..	5,003,000
„ 1925	..	..	..	..	..	4,512,000
„ 1926	..	..	..	..	..	14,352,000
„ 1927	..	..	..	..	..	18,991,000

These figures show that there has been a substantial increase in the quantity of timber imported into this area, more particularly in the past two years. In comparison with the Auckland District the most noticeable increase in Wellington importations took place in 1925-26—a year later than in the northern area. This fact would appear to have relation to the building activity in those districts, the strong demand in Auckland having arisen somewhat earlier than in Wellington.

Douglas fir, cedar, and redwood have during the past year been the chief species imported, while importations of hemlock have also been considerable. The following table shows the importations of the various species during the years in question:—

Year ended 31st March,	Douglas Fir.	Cedar.	Oak.	Spruce.	Hemlock.	Other Kinds.*	Total.
	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.
1923 ..	1,190,000	†	†	†	†	443,000	1,633,000
1924 ..	3,780,000	49,000	634,000	Nil	Nil	540,000	5,003,000
1925 ..	2,976,000	230,000	665,000	Nil	Nil	641,000	4,512,000
1926 ..	4,470,000	2,058,000	973,000	657,000	1,790,000	4,404,000	14,352,000
1927 ..	5,423,000	4,619,000	864,000	203,000	1,795,000	6,087,000	18,991,000

* Consists mainly of redwood butter-boxes, cheese-crates, and petrol-cases. † Figures not recorded separately.

The quantity of New Zealand timber produced in the Wellington, Taranaki, and Hawke's Bay Provinces during the year ended 31st March, 1926, was approximately 75,000,000 sup. ft. These provinces in that year drew supplies from Westland to the extent of nearly 16,000,000 sup. ft. When allowance is made for exportation and for the fact that portion of the Wellington provincial production is railed into the Auckland area, the importations in the year ended March, 1926, represented approximately 15 per cent. of the timber available for consumption in the area referred to. The production figures for the year ended March, 1927, are not available, but records of timber railed out of the Main Trunk area show a material decline as compared with 1925-26. Considering this fact in comparison with the increase in the imports, it is clear that imports in 1926-27 must have represented a larger proportion of the timber coming on to the markets of this area than was the case in 1925-26.

It is noteworthy that as between 1925-26 and 1926-27 the quantity of New Zealand timber received into the City of Wellington actually increased from 20,164,000 sup. ft. in 1925-26 to 23,635,000 sup. ft. in 1926-27. It is evident, therefore, that as between these two years no falling off in the demand for New Zealand timber has taken place in the Wellington urban area. As has already been stated, the evidence indicates that the general demand for timber in Wellington City and suburbs has been greater during the past year than in 1925-26, and this increased demand has evidently been shared between local and imported supplies.