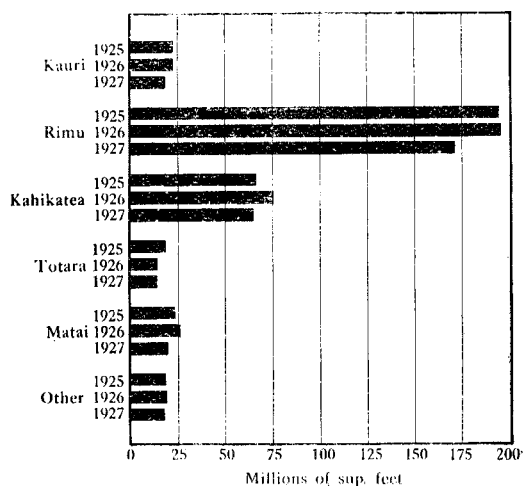
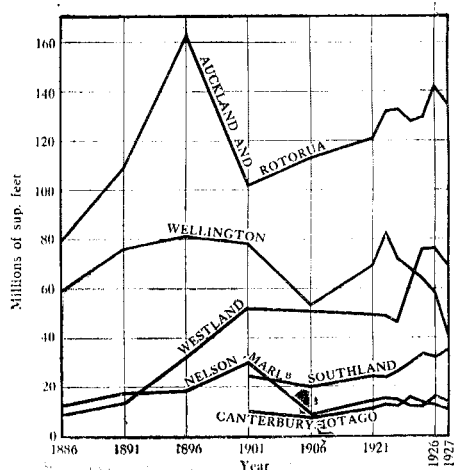




GRAPH SHOWING PRODUCTION OF ROUGH-SAWN TIMBER FOR YEARS ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1925, 1926, AND 1927.



GRAPH SHOWING TREND OF SAWN-TIMBER PRODUCTION BY FOREST CONSERVATION REGIONS FOR THE PERIOD 1886 TO 1927.

The trend of regional timber-production for the period 1886 to 1925 is shown in the accompanying graph. Auckland and Rotorua regions combined, together with Gisborne (*i.e.*, Auckland Province), maintained the premier position, although decreasing 12.6 per cent. in cut compared to 1926. Following the trend of the past four years, Westland now holds second place, having firmly replaced Wellington as second on the list. Wellington decreased most of the major provinces, and reflects not only the depression in trade, but also the rapid depletion of the easily accessible Main Trunk line forests. Southland again reported an increased cut, due not only to the early recovery from the recent slump, but also to the extension in operations of certain large millers in the district.

With the exception of totara, the production of all species for the year ended 31st March, 1927, was less than for the preceding period. It is also to be noted that, though totara reported a slight increase over the 1926 figures, the production, as in the latter year, fell considerably below that reported for the previous five years. Though rimu reported the largest actual decrease, amounting to 24 million feet b.m., this only amounted to 12.3 per cent. of the total cut of the species. The largest proportional decrease was experienced by matai, which decreased 7 million feet b.m., or 25.9 per cent. of the total cut.

The average f.o.r. mill value per 100 ft. b.m. (all species) for the year ended 31st March, 1927, was 19s. 2d., compared with 19s. 8d. for the preceding year.

Manufacturing Technique.

Manufacturing technique showed considerable improvement. Although mills were working at only a low percentage of their capacity, certain operators installed equipment of the latest types developed abroad, with a resultant marked improvement in their product, and correspondingly increased sales. Electrified sawmills and high-speed planers are typical improvements. As in former years, the Canadian type of log-carriage is becoming more widely known, with the increased milling of plantation timbers, portable rigs of the latest types are being installed.

Appreciation of correct drying practices is now being shown by an increasing number of operators. The propaganda on air-seasoning methods broadcasted by the State Forest Service are being noted by the industry, and throughout the country the practice of box-stacking, efficient filleting, and increased air-circulation throughout piles, can be clearly observed. Low pile foundations, in most cases within a few inches of the ground, the latter generally in a damp and sodden condition, remain the most serious defect in present-day milling practice. Although this statement has been reiterated in previous reports, it is felt that, as the matter is one of such vital importance and so easy to remedy, too much prominence cannot be given to it. In the dry kiln distinct progress has been made. A South Island merchant has already installed the first modern scientifically-controlled kiln to be erected in New Zealand, and at least six other operators intend to purchase similar kilns during the coming year.

Grading and marketing methods were studied, with the result that arrangements are now almost complete for inaugurating a uniform grading and classification system for the local industry, which it is felt will place native timbers on a fair competitive basis with imported timbers.

Exports.

The year ended 31st December, 1927, was the poorest experienced by the export trade for over thirty years, and followed the trend of the preceding year. It appears certain that from now onwards the trade will improve, although probably very slowly. The actual quantities exported for the last three years were 37,180,548 ft. b.m., valued at £425,928, in 1927; 41,953,879 ft. b.m., valued at £480,247, in 1926; and 51,549,439 ft. b.m., valued at £605,187, in 1925. Despite the rapid fall in quantity, however, the average f.o.b. value for all species maintained approximately the high level experienced in 1925, the figure for the three years being—1927, 22s. 11d.; 1926, 23s. 4d.; and 1925, 23s. 6d.