

*Marketing of New Zealand Timbers.*—An addendum to this report was presented by the British timber-trade representative, and, as his observations on the possibility of establishing markets in Great Britain for our more important timbers are of interest to sawmillers and timber-merchants generally, they are likewise quoted in full:—

“Kauri-pine (*Agathis australis*) has been sold in England for about forty years, but owing to the stopping of exports the sale has declined. This is a very useful wood where large sizes of clean wood are required, and although the cost has greatly increased there will still be a limited demand.

“White-pine (*Podocarpus dacrydioides*) was sold in England many years ago, but as this wood is required for butter-boxes the export has ceased.

“Rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) was introduced on the English market many years ago, but was not favourably received owing to other woods of a similar character being sold at a much lower price. This wood should be kept in the Dominion and not exported, as New Zealand will require all that can be produced for furniture and interior fittings of houses.

“Beech (*Nothofagus fusca* and *N. Menziesii*): Samples of these woods were sent to the Imperial Institute a few years ago, and reported on, but owing to the price being so much above English beech no market could be found. However, both of these are useful woods and may find a market in England for special purposes, such as motor-car bodies, &c.

“One feature against the export of New Zealand woods to the English market is the very high freight of 12s. per 100 superficial feet, which until recently was 15s.

“*Pinus radiata*: If every effort is made to produce as much clean timber as possible suitable for joinery-work, this wood will meet with great success. The knots being mostly sound, an ample supply of flooring-boards can be produced to replace imports of Scots pine from Europe.”

## 2. PRIVATE COMMERCIAL AFFORESTATION.

The total area acquired by private companies throughout the Dominion is approximately 213,200 acres, of which 202,800 acres, or 94 per cent., is situated in the central North Island punice region, extending roughly from west of the Rotorua-Taupo Road southward from Putaruru to Lake Taupo.

The growing of timber as a commercial enterprise was first undertaken in 1923, and rapid progress has since been made in the formation of softwood forests by a number of companies, sixteen of which have rendered returns to the Government Statistician indicating that 104,175 acres had been planted at 31st March, 1928. The following extract from the Monthly Abstract of Statistics for December, 1928, is quoted for general information:—

“Two kinds of organizations have been formed to carry out the various ventures. The first is the joint-stock company, where the property in the forests is vested in the company, each shareholder receiving a share of the profits according to the amount of capital contributed; the second is a private company registered with a comparatively small capital, but in which the investing public do not become shareholders. The company contracts with each investor that, in consideration of his paying the prescribed amount of cash, it will convey to him at the end of a given term a certain area of land duly planted according to a prescribed agreement. The interests of the investing public are watched over by trustees appointed by investors, and the lands concerned are conveyed by way of mortgage to the trustees until the time for conveyance to the investor arrives. Of the sixteen returns received from companies engaged in forestation operations during the year ended 31st March, 1928, six were from companies organized on the latter basis; but, though in the minority in point of numbers, their operations bulk very large in the figures for all companies.”

Detailed figures of last year's planting are not yet available, but it is understood that the objective of one company was 36,000 acres, so that on a conservative estimate it may be stated that the total acreage planted by all companies will equal at least 40,000.

This remarkable growth of private afforestation over the short period of six years will probably be recorded as one of the most outstanding developments in New Zealand within that period. Certainly it has been responsible for the introduction into the Dominion of large overseas investments, which have been substantially expended in labour-absorbing operations, principally during the winter months, but the degree of national benefit which will eventually be received depends upon the extent to which these funds have been wisely expended.

As apparently some doubt still exists in the minds of a section of the general public regarding the official attitude towards these enterprises, the policy of the Government may be summed up in a few words. The Government does not support nor grant a monopoly or concession to any company beyond extending generally departmental facilities or advice upon request, and co-operation in demonstrating the utility and profitableness of tree-growing. It does not, however, undertake to safeguard the interests of private investors, who must personally satisfy themselves with respect to the *bona fides* of any company in which they propose to invest.