

REPORT

CHAPTER I—SUMMARY AND REVIEW

The salient features of the year's operations are summarized and reviewed hereunder :—

(1) *Forest Resources.*—Additional areas to the extent of 71,235 acres were placed under reservation as State forest, and 1,792 acres were withdrawn from reservation. The total area under reservation at the 31st March, 1949, was 9,355,000 acres.

(2) *Afforestation.*—The new area planted, 4,563 acres, was the largest since the year 1939-40. In addition, 1,334 acres were blanked and 832 acres replanted.

(3) *Forest Mensuration.*—Timber appraised during the year was the largest quantity in any one year since the inception of the Forest Service; the quantity was 187,000,000 board feet.

(4) *Working Plans.*—Preparation of working plans was accelerated by the adoption of an abbreviated type. At the close of the year 20 plans were in course of preparation.

(5) *Timber Sales.*—Total sales of standing timber amounted to 151,000,000 board feet, valued at £264,000. In addition, saw logs and peeler logs to the extent of 6,789,000 cubic feet, valued at £288,900 and equivalent to another 45,000,000 board feet, were sold to the departmental sawmills and to private sawmillers.

(6) *National Forest Survey.*—The forest survey covered 470,000 acres during the year, bringing the total area covered as at the 31st March to 1,695,000 acres. A broad provisional estimate of the total merchantable resources of podocarp timber on lands of all tenures is 5,000,000,000 board feet of standing timber.

(7) *Departmental Logging.*—Logging operations were expanded considerably during the year, and a total of 7,603,000 cubic feet of logs of all kinds was extracted, exotic species accounting for 64 per cent.

(8) *Departmental Sawmilling.*—A total output of sawn timber was almost 23,000,000 board feet, of which 13,139,000 board feet was sold, and the balance used for boxmaking and departmental building purposes. Exports amounted to 3,329,000 board feet.

(9) *Timber-production.*—Production of sawn timber for the whole of New Zealand reached an all-time record of 480,000,000 board feet, of which 168,000,000 board feet were exotic species.

(10) *Sawmills.*—Sawmills registered at 31st March, 1949, numbered 692.

(11) *Overseas Trade.*—Exports of sawn timber at 23,000,000 board feet were the highest since 1936, and total timber imports at 45,000,000 board feet the highest since 1930.

(12) *Forest Fires.*—There were 32 fires in State forests during the year, but this number was the lowest for a number of years, and the damage was negligible. Three sawmills were destroyed by fire, and one was damaged.

(13) *Employment.*—The total number of employees on State forests at the 31st March, 1949, was 1,936. Unfortunately, forest employment is characterized by a high rate of turn-over, for though 2,876 commenced work during the year, 2,670 terminated their employment, giving a net increase for the year of only 206.