

keep up a constant war with them, in order to prevent damage being done to the young trees. At this work a prisoner has been almost constantly employed, and with traps, poison, and dogs something like two hundred rabbits a month have been destroyed. These pests take a heavy toll of the trees when newly planted; but when once the trees become established, and the bracken and other weeds spring into growth again, they keep more to the open fire-breaks, where they find sufficient feed without molesting the trees. One of the buildings at the old camp-site was thoroughly renovated and a room added by a carpenter prisoner, for the use of the plantation foreman.

The foot-bridge across the Waiotapu Stream was strengthened in order to permit of light buggies and motor-cars being taken over it. The bulk of the material for this work was obtained in the bush reserve near Galatea, and the work was done by a prisoner.

Free Labour.—The total area of the plantation enclosures is 7,695 acres, while the distance round the outside boundary is something like fifteen miles. Such an extent of country could not be profitably worked from the prison camp, and for this reason free labour has been employed. During the year the average number of free men employed daily was 10.38, and their work was mostly situated at the remote parts of the block some miles from the prison camp. In addition to the general upkeep of the plantation, the free men planted 324,525 trees on new area, and replaced failures in last year's planting to the number of 176,100. There were 855,025 pits dug, at an average cost of 5s. 9d. per thousand. Some years ago the Government decided to offer employment on this plantation to discharged prisoners who, when serving their sentences, had conducted themselves in an exemplary manner, and so far there is no reason for regretting the decision. Many of the men employed have given entire satisfaction in every respect; they all thoroughly understand the work; and that the employment is acceptable is evidenced by the number of applications for work received from prisoners whose sentences have nearly expired.

Extension of Plantations.—It is proposed to shift the prison camp to a site some thirteen miles distant from the present camp, where a block of 30,000 acres has been reserved for afforestation purposes. Preparations for this work have been in hand for some months; and as one of the first considerations is an adequate supply of water, this matter was the first one dealt with. Last winter a bore was put down, which has proved successful, and it has now been decided to dam a small stream in a gully half a mile distant, and lift the water by means of an oil-engine and a pump. Fifty acres of land have been ploughed, and will be enclosed shortly, the fencing-posts being obtained in a bush about four miles distant. The prison camp will be placed inside one of the small experimental plantations, where excellent shelter will be obtained from the prevailing winds. It is probable that the camp will be shifted between October and December next.

The expenditure for the year amounted to £1,818 15s. 2d.; details of which are attached hereto.

The following is a record of the temperature and rainfall for the year:—

Schedule I.

Month.	Rainfall.	Number of Days Rain fell.	Temperature.		Number of Days Frosts occurred.
			Maximum.	Minimum.	
1910.	Inches.		Degrees.	Degrees.	
April	1.40	2	72	25	6
May	4.30	13	67	24	8
June	4.83	16	66	23	14
July	5.54	19	64	19	10
August	3.98	12	64	21	11
September	1.35	11	70	26	7
October	2.37	11	76	22	4
November	3.07	9	82	30	1
December	1.66	9	80	30	1
1911.					
January	0.80	3	84	31	1
February	1.83	7	84	32	..
March	0.42	4	79	34	..
Totals	31.55	116	63

Schedule II.—Statement of Expenditure.

Planting operations and maintenance—	For Year.			To Date.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Tree-planting	993	19	3	6,251	19	9
Pitting	835	6	0	6,636	13	1
Clearing	394	7	3	5,966	0	0
Cartage of trees	56	10	3	529	17	5
General upkeep of plantation	710	2	10	4,158	15	0
General repairs	148	3	4	285	1	0
Horse-feed	179	16	4	676	16	6
Carried forward	£3,318	5	3	£24,505	2	9