

forest plantations the cost would be enormous. Thus Victoria has some 4,000,000 acres of demarcated forest reserves, a small area according to European standards. To replant this area, taking actual South African figures of cost, would entail an expenditure of about sixty millions sterling, or 240 millions allowing interest at 4 per cent. up to a mean cutting-period of forty years.

This is not to say that forest plantations are unnecessary in New Zealand, though they are not so absolutely essential as in South Africa. To-day New Zealand requires large areas of the quickly growing *insignis* pine for packing-case timber, &c. This can be produced in twelve to sixteen years. It will supply a great want, and certainly give a good return on the outlay. Good *insignis* pine boxes have been produced for some years in South Australia. They sell there on the open market at a slightly higher price than the boxes made of imported pine.

Eucalypt plantations of ironbark, blackbutt, and tallow-wood, and the same trees introduced to the kauri forests in the North and spreading self-sown, are even more urgently required for railway purposes. There is little really good sleeper-timber in New Zealand forests. Tallow-wood and blackbutt grow faster than any New Zealand trees, and the best of the ironbarks certainly faster at first.

My personal leanings are in favour of exotics. I have been for the best years of my life planting them in South Africa. I should introduce self-spreading, valuable exotic timbers everywhere in the New Zealand forests, except in the scenic reserves preserved as parks for the native flora. It is sad to think that seventy-six years have been allowed to elapse in the history of civilization in New Zealand without introducing the quick-spreading exotic timbers, especially in such forests as those of the beech, where the stand of timber is low in quantity and quality; and this neglect is the more regrettable because these forests have a clean forest soil, so favourable for the purpose. When I first saw these neglected beech forests I had the vision of an unopened diamond-mine. So small a portion of the £40,000 now being spent yearly on forestry would have sufficed for the introduction of self-spreading exotics seventy-six years ago! Then there is the lesson of their growth to be learnt, the quality of timber they may produce under given conditions, their natural regeneration, and so on. This is all precious to the foresters of the future. It is a duty owed to posterity.

NEW ZEALAND FOREST PLANTATIONS.

The forest plantations that have been made by the Government in open country are the redeeming feature in all the story of forest waste and destruction in New Zealand. The growth of the