

No other cultivation would be required, the weeds being kept down by "cut and mulch" (see my "Australian Forestry"). Last year half a million blackwood-trees were planted in this way in the native forest in South Africa.

For the more open classes of New Zealand forest there is the introduction of well-selected eucalypts and wattles. The self-spreading qualities of these are well known.

Lastly, planting will have to be resorted to in the wild forest wherever natural regeneration fails. Foresters will make it the business of their lives to study the natural regeneration of the best native timber-trees, and to mark their *coupes* or felling-areas in the interest both of the sawmillers and natural regeneration; but the latter must sometimes fail, and then there will be nothing left but planting. We must remember that every native bush left unworked and unimproved is an idle capital returning no interest, and in this sense a national loss. We can only get it milled gradually as the country is developed, but the self-spreading valuable timber-trees of other countries may be got in at once. This is a big planting proposition. It will mean steady work extending over years.

Thus, to get the wild forest into order as profitable national estates much planting is necessary. The doubtful financial position of the present plantations is only what had to be expected, since the work has been done without the usual skilled direction. This is easily remediable; and it must be remembered that even although there may be loss on the first crop of trees in the present timber plantations, if natural regeneration can be managed there will be gain on the second and subsequent crops. And, further, it is quite possible that under skilled direction for future plantations, with a better selection of planting-sites, and the rapid increase in the value of timber in New Zealand, Government timber-planting (apart from that in the native forests) may give profitable returns, rivalling the returns from the improved native forests.

And when all is said and done, even although timber plantations (outside the "bush") may not be remunerative for many years, the State reaps indirect advantages which in a national sense will compensate loss. That is the general position in South Africa. Some of the plantations there will never return interest on their cost; but there are national grounds for their formation which outweigh other considerations—exactly as the Germans deliberately maintain their Spessart oaks, cut at a regular rotation of three hundred years. This is done because the Spessart oaks support certain important industries; and if South Africa never gets interest on certain plantations it has the satisfaction of knowing that timber representing the greater part of the one and a quarter millions sterling going yearly