the West Coast to Australia. The present policy would lead to the most disastrous famine New Zealand ever had experienced. Every organisation in the Dominion should support the Government in a scheme of afforestation, but it must be on commercial lines. In Otago there were millions of acres that could be replanted. He wondered if the country's gains from tens of thousands of cleared and grassed land in the Wairarapa was equivalent to the gain it would have had if the forest was left standing. The country was galloping to the bad at an alarming rate.

Messrs Harbutt, Mainland, and Black were appointed a committee to go into the question and frame a remit for the conference to submit to the Government.

Raetihi.

According to Mr J. Reed, secretary of the Timber Workers' Union, who has just returned from an organising tour of the country districts, the township of Raetihi, which was swept by fire last year, is now practically back to normal. There is but little evidence of the recent disaster. Many of the mills that were destroyed have been rebuilt, and other mills have come into existence. Mr Reed stated that there is evidence that the timber industry on the Main Trunk line is approaching a boom. The mills would probably absorb a great number of men, and so relieve, to some extent, the unemployment difficulty. The closing down of the flaxmills would release about 700 men, and it would seem that considerable difficulty will be experienced in placing these.

Historic Trees.

Sacrificed to the War.

The war made a phenomenal drain on the forests of France and England. Timber was required in enormous quantities for military purposes, and some of the most precious of trees, trees with great history interest have had to be destroyed.

One of the most picturesque and memorable pieces of work by the Canadian Forester Corps in England was the felling of the "William the Conqueror Oak," which stood beneath the king's window at Windsor.

For several reasons this was perhaps the most remarkable tree in the British Isles. It was more than 1000 years old. Authentic records show that it was standing as long ago as 900 A.D. The tree was thirty-eight and one-half feet in diameter at the base.

It was felled at the request of the king. Its heart was rotten, but it was still bearing foliage and yearly adding new wood. Care had been exercised through the centuries to preserve it, a circular fence screening it from the deer. It was sixty-five feet high, with a wide, branching top. With all their experience with trees the Canadians hardly knew at first how to get it down. Their ordinary crosscut saws are only five feet in length, but for this gigantic oak they need a saw some fifteen feet in length. Such a saw they ordered, and it was finally delivered, but not until the enterprising Canadian spirit had solved the problem. Into the heart of the trunk a hole was cut and a sawyer placed inside. The sawyer inside working with the fellow outside, cut gradually around the trunk until the ancient monarch fell.

The heart of the tree was cleaned out and the hole filled with cement to avert further decay. The wood is susceptible of the most beautiful polish and doubtless the main portion of the trunk will keep permanently. Some small souvenirs have been given away. Needless to say, they would command large prices if sold at auction. In a typically Canadian log cabin built for the king at Windsor, the mantelpiece is made of wood from the old oak. There is not a nail in it. The logs, which are of larch, are fastened with wooden pins. The roof is of bark, the floor logs were hewn with an axe, and they rest on pillars. No plane was used on any part of the building. The larch was the only tree that could be found straight and large enough for the cabin.

The Canadian foresters in Windsor park became acquainted with another extraordinary tree. It was a huge beech, with branches extending in a radius of sixty-eight feet from the centre of the trunk. Beneath its leafy roof on one occasion 2500 Canadian troops assembled for religious services.—Melbourne Exchange.

Southland Beech.

In August, 1918, the Southland and Otago Co-operative Timber Company forwarded to the State Forests Branch of the Department of Lands and Survey a sample of Southland beech (Fagus Menziesii) to be tested as to its suitability as a butter-box timber. The Department handed over the timber to the Dairy Division of the Department of Agriculture to be thoroughly tested, and the following letter conveying the result has now been received:—"I have the honour to inform you that the tests of the timber you supplied have been completed by the Dairy Division of the Department of Agriculture with quite satisfactory results. The report recommends that in order to ensure satisfactory nailing, the beech boards should not be less than half an inch in thickness. Some of the boxes made from the timber supplied were coated with paraffin wax and some were untreated. In both cases the test was satisfactory, but I would advise that in order that the timber should not lose the reputation now obtained, it will be wisest to have it always treated with the wax.—E. Phillips Turner, Chief Office." The importance of this matter (states a contemporary) lies in the fact that hundreds of millions of feet of beech are available in the Southland district.