

pose of exploiting mahogany and furniture woods. At the same time the checking and inspecting of the stumps of all these trees felled has to be gone through. The young mahogany seedlings are also seen, and from the number of these it is known whether sufficient have been planted to take the place of those cut down. The very rapid growth of these trees can here be studied to advantage; trees now 40 feet high have only been planted a few years. The relative value of the direct planting of seedling trees as compared with the natural regeneration of the forest by self-sown seedlings can be observed with ocular clearness. In one part of the forest one sees natives standing on a platform hacking away with an axe into a huge 50 foot mahogany; in another place a similar tree, fallen, its 90 foot bole already sawn into three round logs, while in a third locality may be seen a native, axe or adze in hand, squaring mahogany logs with a four foot side. Later in the season eighty or more natives are engaged in dragging one of these logs on round billets of wood (for rollers) along a track, roughly cleared to the height of a man, to the nearest natural waterway; still later (that is, in July or August, when the rivers rise, the logs may be seen floating singly down to the rafting place on the main creek, where rafts are made with logs four or eight abreast, each fastened to the next from a timber dog at either end, with cane. From here riverine natives, such as the Ijors, take the logs to the nearest river or ocean going steamer port.

The Timber Market.

The Forest Department has supplied the Railway, Marine, and Pub-

lic Works Departments with timber of various kinds. In some cases the timber is obtained by departmental working, and in others is cut by native contractors under the supervision of the department. In the first instance, the conditions under which timber is to be supplied to other departments are put before the Secretariat, and, when once the work has been begun, the local forest officer deals direct with the department concerned.

Forestry progress in Nigeria has been less tardy than in several other colonies, though many forests have been destroyed owing to lapse of time before the formation of a department. In 1904 there were eight, and there are now 24 administrative appointments. The amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria into one administration should accelerate the development of forestry. It is as yet only in its initial stages, and scarcely more than a thousand square miles of forests, out of nearly a hundred thousand which exist in some form or other, have been permanently set aside for further timber production. The revenue-earning capacity of the Forest Department has been somewhat diminished by the war, but with recent legislation more local revenue should be obtained, which should more than off-set any loss already sustained. Provided the financial position of Nigeria remains strong, the prospects of the Forest Department are quite bright.

Although Nigeria has by far the largest Forest Department, very similar conditions of service obtain in the other West African colonies of the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone; but there are no forest officers in the Gambia.