

This valuation was closed at Cullen the 31st of October 1690 years, and subscribed as follows. (Signed) Patrick Ogilvie, A. Duff, Patt. Duff, Alexr. Hay, Jo. Innes.

Much might be said of the great increase in the valuation of the county at the present day when compared with the valuation based on the Acts of 1667 and 1690; and much might be said on the great change on the personnel of the proprietors in the course of 200 years and more, but these and other interesting topics must rest for a more convenient season.

Fir Wood, Banff.

Reference was made to the fact that recently a report was prepared on the Fir Wood, Banff, by Mr P. Leslie, Aberdeen, District Advisory Forest Officer. It was considered that it would be of much interest in future if the report were preserved, and it was agreed to print it in the Transactions as follows:—

The Banff Fir Wood, the property of the Royal Burgh of Banff, is situated on an exposed ridge about 1 mile south of the Moray Firth coast in the neighbourhood of the town of Banff.

The wood is at present stocked with a mixture of Scots Pine, Larch, Silver Fir, and Beech. In the central portions Scots Pine is the predominating species, but the outside fringes along the northern and eastern sides of the wood consist chiefly of Beech.

The situation is very exposed and is swept by northerly and easterly winds, which blow inwards from the Moray Firth, and also by milder winds from the west and south-west.

The effect of the northerly and easterly gales is very clearly to be seen in the manner of growth of the trees forming the fringes on north and east, which have been bent inwards away from the outside of the wood, and are unilaterally branched in the same direction. Further from the edges of the plantation the individual trees deviate less markedly from the normal shape, and there seems no reason if suitable species are planted why it should not be possible to obtain a fairly satisfactory crop of timber from a considerable portion of the area. In order, however, to obtain the best results it would be necessary to maintain the Beech fringes to the north and east and also along

the western edge of the plantation as a permanent shelter belt.

The size of the wood is 14,593 acres, which is too small an area to be treated on strictly silvicultural lines.

From a purely commercial point of view the best course would be to realise the whole of the timber with the exception of the protective fringes to be left round the edges, and replant with Corsican Pine, a species which is more adapted to being grown in wind-swept regions near the sea coast, than the native Scots Pine.

An alternative proposal at present under the consideration of the Town Council is, however, to have the wood treated mainly as an amenity wood, and if it is decided that the method of management should be chiefly determined by amenity considerations, it is suggested that the areas to be felled at any particular time should not exceed one or two acres. Commencing with the south-eastern portion of the wood the fellings might gradually be extended towards the opposite corner, an interval of not less than 10 years being allowed to elapse between each felling. Under this method of treatment the Corsican Pine would also be the species chiefly relied on for restocking of the wood, but small areas might be planted with species like *Pinus Sylvestris*—the common Scots Pine, *Abies grandis*—the grand silver fir and *Picea alba*—the white American spruce, in order that the wood might in course of time have a more diversified appearance than would be possible if only one species were used.

The protection afforded by the permanent shelter belts of Beech surrounding the plantation on the more exposed aspect should contribute greatly to the success of the young plantations, and in order that the protection thus afforded should continue to be as effective as possible any gaps which have been formed by the death of the older trees should be again replanted with Beech. On the northern side of the wood, inside the fringe of Beech, a considerable number of the Scots Pine trees have died out during the past 10 or 12 years, and the blanks so caused seem to have been filled up with a mixture of Austrian, Corsican, and Mountain Pine. Unfortunately, however, probably as a result of their not having been properly enclosed many of the young trees have been destroyed, and it is suggested that the whole of the area should be replanted a second time

with Corsican Pine, and the plantation protected by a strong wire fence.

It is necessary that all the young plantations should be protected by good fences until they have reached a stage when they can be safely opened to the public. Although the freedom of access to the wood will, in this manner, be considerably restricted, there will be little cause for complaint if care is taken while forming the plantations to arrange for a series of paths traversing the wood in various directions.

When a portion of the wood has been felled, the ground should be at once restocked, and there should be no difficulty found in getting the young trees to establish themselves if the brushwood has been cleared off the ground or burned.

The Corsican Pine is a difficult tree to transplant owing to its lack of fibrous roots. Portions of the area with a strong growth of grass to be planted with this species should be carefully "screefed" preparatory to planting with 1 year 1 year transplants, which should always be planted out towards the end of April. In the case of the other species which it is proposed to plant throughout the wood in small groups, 2 year 1 year transplants would probably be found the most suitable type of plant to use.

(Signed) P. LESLIE.

11th June 1918.

The meeting closed with cordial votes of thanks to the authors of the papers.