

MR. MCGARVA

To.

September 1958

Dr. Tivy, Mr. Moisley, Prof. Linton.

Good morning, Ladies & Gentlemen.

While it is true to say that there are a number of different purposes for forestry, for instance provision of shelter, prevention of erosion, regulation of the flow of water in catchment areas, and the provision of fuel, by far the most important so far as this country is concerned is the production of timber. In spite of that the de-forestation and, we hope, the reafforestation of the country is paralleled by the development of knowledge in scientific land treatment. The original large areas of natural forest were cut for agricultural and protective purposes over the centuries, until eventually, in 1918, the percentage of forest land in Britain was between four and five, the smallest in Europe. After the devastations of another war even now Forestry Commission plantations have only raised the percentage to 7.

It was not with the acceleration of erosion, or with the protective function of forestry in mind that modern forest policy was formed. Before 1918 it was held that Britain's timber needs could best be met by import but, since then there has been a movement towards more home production and under the Forestry Act of 1919 the F.C. was estab. as the central forest authority and charged with the general duty of promoting the growing of timber within G.B. Until a few weeks ago a great part of the policy was based on the defence requirement of timber. It was estimated that a 5 Mill. ac. forest holding would supply a third of our normal requirement or, as a strategic reserve, by temp. over cutting provide all the timber required in a national emergency over a number of years. Modern warfare has caused the abandonment of the concept and the policy is now based on the economic, social and ecological requirements of the country. In the pursurance of the obligations laid on them by Parliament the F.C.ers have now adopted as their policy the following objects:- 1. To extent the area of forest and increase the growing stock to provide as rapidly as practicable and adequate reserve of growing trees and thereafter/

thereafter to manage their forest estate with a view to obtaining the highest possible sustained yield both in quantity and quality. 2. To give attention to the aesthetic and protective as well as the productive role of the forest. 3. To build up and maintain a thriving body of forest workers and their families. 4. To foster sociological and industrial development ancillary to forestry. 5. To pay due regard to recreation, sporting interests, fauna and flora.

And now for a few figures. The total land area of Brit. is 56 million acres of which some $3\frac{1}{2}$ million are of forest land - of 7%. Of these $3\frac{1}{2}$ mil acres ~~25~~ mil. is privately owned and the rest by the F.C. ~~Half of this~~ In addition the F.C. holds another $\frac{1}{4}$ mil acres awaiting planting. The annual planting programme is 70 thou. acres p.a. In 1957 total expenditure was 12 mil.£, which with an income of £3 mil. made a net outlay of £9 mil.

Of our total population of 51 mil., 24 thou. are employed in forestry, 15,600 by the F.C. or 13 thou. forest workers, 1,700 tech. & prof. staff, and 900 admin. & Cler. staff.

Wherever possible unplanted areas are grazed and if the geography is suitable forest estates are formed into nat. for. Parks for the recreation of the public. Ardgartan forest lies within the Argylls nat. for. Park, one of the first such areas. By Loch Long you will have seen something of the recreational facilities offered in the camping and caravan grounds.

Ardgartan Forest, formed ~~from~~ ^{on} $3\frac{1}{2}$ farms, totals 20 thou. acres of which 5 have been planted and eventually $7\frac{1}{2}$ thou. will be planted, or one third of the total. Houses have increased in number from 14 to 47 and from a total of 47 the pop. has increased to 206 and is eventually expected to give direct employment to a further 100 or so. These advances, important as they are in this area of rural depop., have meant a fall in sheep stocks from 7 to 3 thou. The plantations are putting on an increment of 200 hft/acre/ annum - a safe figure - or £20 in value. The total forest then is at present annually

increasing in value by £100 thou.

Only one farm has actually been done away with. In most cases outlying shepherds houses have been given up and the farm is being worked from the farmhouse.

Our changing ~~transient~~ policy of integration with farming can be seen before you down Glen Cree. On your right is the solid block of plantations formed on the lower grazings prior to 1940. The hill tops, once ungrazed, are now grazed from the ends of the plantations. On your left a block planting system gives the farmer the advantage of sheltered low grazings. Today we would try to make a further improvement for amenity and forest protection reasons, by ~~breaking~~ breaking the angular form of the blocks. Mother Nature often seems to abhor a straight line and here wind and water act as her agents in giving us an uneven plantation edge if we do not plan in accordance with her wishes.