

This plan appears to answer well when applied with judgment; otherwise the nurses, on good soil would have made such progress as to interfere injuriously with the growth of the hard-wood trees.

The Highland Water plantation, with an area of 700 acres, was planted in 1869 and 1870. It is Scotch fir, and contains also a portion of some old wood planted in 1700. The growth of the fir is not rapid, but the trees look healthy, and there have been few casualties.

In the Slufter enclosure of 370 acres, the Scotch fir and oak, planted eight years ago, are doing very well, particularly in the lower portions of the plantation, where the soil is of a tolerably good character.

King's Garn Gutter contains upwards of 300 acres, and has just been finished so far as the nurses are concerned. They are Scotch fir and larch, in lines 8 feet apart, and 6 feet in the rows. This is to be filled up with oak, which is now ready in the adjoining small nursery, on the system already described. This land was formerly covered with a fine crop of oak, which was felled some years ago. The planting is done in the usual manner by day labourers, under the superintendence of a foreman and the assistant.

There is a very fine arboretum at Bolderwood Rails, containing specimens of many varieties of *Pinaceæ*, such as *P. Douglassii*, *insignis*, *nobilis*, *Cupressus lawsoniana*, &c., &c., and a large number of Deodars, which are doing very well on the higher and more exposed situations. The trees are from ten to fifteen years out, and present a very healthy and pleasing appearance.

Woods.—I visited ten different woods or enclosures of dates prior to 1835.

The oldest are known as Mark Ash, Burley, South and North Bentley, Salisbury, and Coppice of Linwood.

The Mark Ash old wood is principally composed of beech, of which there are magnificent specimens.

Burley contains a mixture of oak and beech, the former sown with acorns in 1700. One fine old tree, known as the Knight Wood Oak, is estimated to contain at least 13 loads, or 650 cubic feet of timber.

The South and North Bentley Woods contain a great proportion of the *sessiliflora* variety of oak, from acorns sown in 1700. The growth is considered fair throughout, but particularly good in the bottoms, which are sheltered from the prevailing winds.

The Coppice of Linwood contains what are known as "Pitt's Plantations," so called from a Mr. Pitt, who was Surveyor-General in 1775. These extend to nearly 300 acres, consisting of oak and beech, with clumps of Scotch fir, which appear to have been planted subsequently. The hard-wood trees are very poor, having been planted out without nurses, and much too far apart. In the adjoining enclosure of Salisbury the trees are much better, owing to their having been planted much thicker.

Of the younger woods I would particularize Aldridge Hill (1818), an oak wood with a belt of self-sown Scotch fir round the outside. Holm Hill (1821), extending over 285 acres, a fine oak plantation, with trees in the hollows or low-lying plantations running from 30 to 40 feet in height. Here I observed some fine larches, which had been felled owing to the commencement of dry rot, to which this tree appears very liable in the New Forest.

The paths and rides in the forest are well maintained, but in many places it is impossible to secure a firm roadway, owing to the boggy nature of the soil. More draining will be required as more enclosures are made and plantations formed.

The total revenue derived in 1870–71 amounted to £12,034, and the expenditure to £7,790, leaving a balance of £4,244 in favour of the forest.

Fencing.—Mr. Cumberbatch has adopted a very substantial and neat style of fencing, which I have not seen in use elsewhere. A ditch, 2 ft. 6 in. deep and 4 feet wide at the top and 2 feet wide at bottom, is excavated, and the earth thrown up inside, forming a bank of similar dimensions. On the top of this stakes are driven firmly in at intervals of six feet, on which are nailed bands of hoop iron about one inch broad, which is procured in lengths of 12 feet, at a cost of about £11 per ton. There are either two or three rows, according to the situation, and the lengths finish on alternate posts, so as to insure greater stability; thus, of two rows, the end of one length and the centre of the other would be secured to each and every post. The hoop iron and posts are thickly coated with tar, and there is a great advantage in no straining being required as with ordinary wire fencing, compared with which it has also the advantage of being much stronger, as noted in my Report on the Scotch Forests in the section devoted to this subject. The average cost complete is found not to exceed 1s. per running yard, which appears very moderate when we consider the rates of labour, the strength and neatness of the fence, and its great durability. The iron may, of course, be said to last for ever, and on any enclosure being thrown open, as described further on, can be used again elsewhere.

Short History of the New Forest.

I proceed to give a short history of the origin of this forest, with a description of the position of the Crown with regard to it, and of the principles by which its management has been controlled and guided. Such cannot fail to prove interesting and instructive to our officers, many of whom are now called on to deal with such subjects as rights of common, of pasturage, forestal rights of the Crown or people, &c., &c., for the first time. I must premise that I am much indebted to Mr. Cumberbatch for information on the subject, and particularly for his having kindly placed at my disposal for perusal three returns or reports on the subject, which deal with the whole matter *in extenso*, and copies of which I have since secured on payment. They are:—

- 1st. A return to an order of the honourable the House of Commons, dated 23rd March, 1863, containing a Statement on Royal Forests and Woodlands, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 24th April, 1863, of which I have prepared an abstract to facilitate reference.
- 2nd. A return to an address of the House of Lords, dated 21st February, 1868, containing copy of a Report on Royal Forests, ordered to be printed 10th March, 1868. And,