

The first function received some prominence in earlier years through the activities of a Forest Extension Officer stationed in each Island during the period 1921-29; while, as regards the second of these functions, a minimum standard of protection and management had been insisted upon by the Timber Controller, both during and subsequent to the war years, in respect of those private forests for which consent to utilization was given. During the year under review, however, the Timber Emergency Regulations were revoked, and, in consequence, the working plans which were approved by the Timber Controller will now continue in force solely at the discretion of the forest owners. In their own interests, however, the forest owners concerned would be well advised to adhere to the provisions of the simple working plans which they were required to prepare.

Work under this heading will be chiefly the dissemination of information and advice, but in approved cases assistance may be given by means of monetary advances or loans; in the latter case, however, legislation may be necessary. The provision of assistance and advice to certain forest owners, with possibly some measure of control, appears to be overdue. Now that the forests are reaching middle age or approaching maturity, it is evident that some are largely in derelict condition due either to understocking or to other forms of neglect; and sound forest protection and management practice should be applied to these potential assets before it is too late. Last year's report referred to a resolution of the Empire Forestry Conference of 1947 urging Empire Governments to take early steps to ensure that private or commercially owned forests and woodlands are managed in accordance with the principles of sound forestry. Unfortunately, at present only a few of the numerous private, local-body, and company forests in this Dominion are under expert forest management.

The problem is primarily not so much one of ensuring local timber-supplies, though that is a consideration of very great importance, but rather one of land-use; of encouraging forest use of odd corners on farms, of waste portions of local-body reserves, and of other lands unsuited to farm use. In this connection, a resolution of the 1947 Empire Forestry Conference stressing the urgent need for a clear-cut land planning policy, and the establishment of a supreme land-use authority, was dealt with in last year's report.

FOREST EXTENSION

(1) *Planting*.—Indications are that although many landholders express interest in the planting of waste areas, there are comparatively few instances where that expression of interest has been translated into action. Progress appears to be hindered by shortage of labour for planting; by fear of destruction of planted areas by fire; by anticipation of onerous taxation on forest produce; or by actual difficulty in procuring trees for planting. As a result, planting by individual farmers and others is virtually limited to the provision of only the most essential farm shelter, as distinct from both general shelter and woodlots for the production of local timber requirements and logical use of small waste areas.

(2) *Private Nurseries*.—In some, if not most, districts, demand for forest trees exceeds supply, for large-scale planting nurseries appear to raise forest trees of only half a dozen species, normally as a side-line and rarely in any considerable quantities. Few specialize in raising forest trees for sale, but some nurseries, in accordance with sound business practice, do raise large quantities of forest trees under firm forward order. It is confidently anticipated that forest extension work will further increase the demand for planting stock, highlighting the desirability of early consideration being given to the production of certified seed as a means of protecting tree-planters.

FARM FORESTRY

Numerous requests for advice, some forwarded through the Department of Agriculture, have been dealt with. Quite frequently the inquirer has asked for trees to be supplied from State nurseries; but the sale of such trees was discontinued in the year 1929 under an agreement between the Forest Service and the commercial nurserymen.