

PLANTING OF TREES IS DISCUSSED

E. C. CLIFFORD OF THE FOREST SERVICE DELIVERS INTERESTING ADDRESS.

As one of the series of lectures before the students of the University of Montana by members of the staff of the forestry department, with headquarters in Missoula, E. C. Clifford, chief of planting, yesterday morning spoke on "Tree Planting in the National Forests." Mr. Clifford handled his subject in an interesting manner, speaking as follows:

Forest Planting.

Tree planting is said to be the earliest known form of applied forestry which existed in this country, before the term forestry was in use, or had a place in our dictionaries. It had its origin in the desire of people to improve their homes, streets and parks by the planting of ornamental trees and shrubs. Since this was done mostly in scattered slumps or rows for ornamental purposes, it was, strictly speaking, more a form of arboriculture than true forestry, as now understood, as the latter involves the planting of trees in compact bodies, usually on large areas for protective or productive purposes.

However, this early tree planting had a very important place in relation to forest planting, as it was the inception of planting, caused and strengthened the desire for artificial tree production, gave a wide spread to the knowledge of the best methods for carrying out the work and produced a demand for nursery stock. The existence of a demand naturally led to the origin of commercial nursery business with a resultant increase of knowledge on the subject and improvement of stock and methods of planting the same.

The business of raising trees for commercial purposes has been an existence but a short time, but the profits obtainable and the growing demand has led to a great increase, both in the number of nurseries and of trees planted each year.

Old Custom.

True forest planting has been in practice in European forests for over 100 years, and the foresters have used and depended upon it in laying down and carrying out their elaborate forest policies. In most cases, planting is the largest item of expense, when natural reproduction is not depended upon. The direct planting is employed, in Switzerland, about one million, three hundred and ninety thousand acres of state and corporation forests, there are eight hundred acres of nurseries, and in 1906, twenty thousand pounds of seed were sown and half a million trees were planted with an expenditure of one hundred thousand dollars for reforestation, and plans were approved for the expenditure for the following year of three hundred thousand dollars, two thirds of which was to be granted by the government.

In the United States, forest planting has existed hardly a decade as yet, but has made a phenomenal growth during that time, as evidenced by the increased demands for advice received by the forest service and the large trade in nursery stock.

During the six months in which a record was kept in the Washington office, over twelve hundred letters were received and answered, coming from every state and territory in the Union, and ten foreign countries. As a result of advice given, about twenty thousand acres have been planted by private parties, and 892 detailed planting plans prepared by the service. One nurseryman shipped last spring to Nebraska alone, four hundred thousand jack pine seedlings, and plans have been made for sowing three thousand acres in Florida with seed of the long leaf pine of the south Atlantic states.

Increased Activity.

Throughout New England and the middle states there is a greatly increased activity in tree planting, both by corporation and private individuals. It has become an established branch of the government of twelve states, or over one fourth of the total number. These states employ state foresters, who administer the state lands, give advice and assistance to private individuals and in several instances they are in charge of state forest reserves, which are being replanted from state nurseries, which also furnish seedlings at cost to small landowners.

Railroads have been particularly active in this line, having been driven to it by the waning supply and increased cost of material for ties and poles. The Pennsylvania system has lately employed as forester the man who was formerly in charge of the planting work of the service, whose chief duty is to plant up their waste lands. The Santa Fe is planting a tract of over eight thousand acres in California with Eucalyptus for the production of ties, poles and car stock. The Eucalyptus planting industry alone is rapidly assuming large proportions in that state, several companies have been formed for planting large areas and many land-owning companies are taking it up as an inducement to sale.

Having briefly reviewed the history and growth, let us take up the work itself, and first under this head should come the necessity of planting.

The Necessity.

Since the national forests are intended to conserve to the highest possible degree the natural resources upon which agricultural and industrial development are dependent, and since water, lumber and grazing are the great assets of the west, the beneficial effect of national forests conservatively and judiciously managed are greater than the majority of people may be aware, and it is clearly one of the most important duties of the government to protect and improve them to the greatest possible extent.

Throughout the entire semiarid west the question of water supply is the important one in determining the amount of agricultural development in regions where irrigation must be depended upon for crop production. Many of the watersheds for large irrigation projects established or in progress of construction are badly denuded by destructive lumbering and

fire. Cities, individuals and associations derive their water supply from many of these national forest watersheds, both for domestic and agricultural purposes, and it is upon these poorly protected slopes that the forest service is conducting its principal operations in improvement by planting and sowing with the purpose of not only insuring the permanence of the supply, but eventually increasing the available amount of water. The effect of forested and non-forested slopes in relation to run-off of water is an axiom too well known to require discussion.

Second Object.

The second object to be gained by planting is that of increasing the timber supply on areas that are entirely or partially treeless, as is the case over large portions of the middle west. In this section thousands of farms and many towns are entirely dependent upon an imported supply for their lumber, posts, poles and firewood which gives rise to high prices and an increasingly greater demand upon the rapidly waning supply in the timbered sections.

This condition led to the creation of the Nebraska and Kansas national forests, principally as planting forests where extensive operations are being carried on in planting, with the purpose of eventually producing a supply of timber for local needs. The forest service work as administered previously in the Washington office, and as it will continue to be in the newly formed districts, falls naturally into two classes, co-operative planting and national forest planting. The former, as the name indicates, takes up the assistance and advice given to private individuals, state and federal organizations, upon requests for information received in the office. As there are no district offices in the east, this work in all states east of the Mississippi will continue to be handled from Washington.

Each district office will furnish information and assistance in response to all requests from the states in their respective districts.

The national forest planting will also be handled by the district offices for those national forests which are in each district, with the exception of large and important matters that effect the work as a whole. The district work itself necessarily consists of two co-operative phases, office and field work.

Routine Matters.

Work in the office consists of the routine matters, such as correspondence and distribution for use on the different forests, personnel of the working force, preparation of plans for planting and sowing, installation and directions for the maintenance of experimental nurseries and planting stations.

In the field work, inspection is made of the conditions on the forests, and the working out of plans and suggestions and assistance given to the local officers in making revisions of previous plans, in carrying out important projects, and studies are made in order to prepare reports as a basis for future action. The field work thus gives an important knowledge of actual conditions which is very essential to best results.

We have now considered only the growth and organization of planting, and now let us see how the work is actually done.

This may be best shown by taking it up progressively from the first step in the operation. In order to raise trees the first thing necessary is to secure the seed.

Seed collection is done mostly by the forest rangers except when there is a larger amount desired from some locality than they are able to secure, and in such a case, temporary labor in such a case temporary labor directed by rangers or other officers.

Reports Made.

Early in the season reports are sent in by the rangers to the supervisor, who approves and then forwards them to the district office, and later on, when plans are completed, the supervisor is informed of the quantity of seed needed from his forest. Meanwhile careful watch has been kept of the condition of the cones, and as soon as they take on the proper color, examinations of the seed are made, and if they show plump and firm, collecting is begun.

Many different methods are employed in securing the cones from the trees, according to the species. The light colored incense cedar of California opens its small cones and sheds its seed as soon as ripe, and the cones cannot be successfully gathered. This difficulty is overcome by spreading canvas blankets beneath the trees and then shaking and pounding the branches, the loosened seed being collected from the cloth below. This can be done only on very calm days, as the seeds, being light, having long wings and every breeze fills the air with flying seed for many feet around.

Cone Collecting.

With trees like the lodgepole pine, which retain the closed cones on the branches for several years, collecting can be done at any convenient time, but it is necessary to cut the cones or knock them off with poles. In most cases it is necessary to climb the trees to cut the cones, and oftentimes this is not a very safe or pleasant task. Cones always have a habit of growing at the tree tops and branch tips, and often, after climbing up forty or fifty feet by the use of climbing irons, the collector must worm his way through a network of close growing branches, getting numerous needles and pieces of bark down his neck and many punctures in his clothing and peace of mind. When collecting from the tall trees of California, such as the sugar pine, yellow pine and big cone spruce, the cones are up 100 feet from the ground, and it needs a steady nerve and a sure hand, as a rotten piece of bark will allow the spur of the climbing iron to slip or the fingers to break loose, and the collector may be seriously injured or killed. The cones of the big cone or cutleaf pine, which are green, often weigh six or eight pounds, and when falling from the top of a tall tree are not conducive to comfort if intercepted by a person's head.

Other Methods.

Wherever possible, advantage is taken of lumbering operations and cones are secured cheaply and cheaply from the felled trees, but generally this cannot be reckoned with, and other means must be employed. The easiest and most rapid method is the one made possible by the assistance of one of nature's seed collectors, a small and very industrious animal,

in connection with this method it has been reported from authentic sources that at the right time of the year, in some of Uncle Sam's national forests, a large, husky, 200 pound forest ranger has been seen skulking along on the trail of a small emaciated red squirrel.

Whatever the truth of this assertion may be, it is certain that squirrels do play a very useful part in seed collection. Being by nature very wise and industrious little animals, they hoard up each fall large quantities of pine cones, in hollow logs and stumps, and under rocks and brush heaps, in moist places along streams and in damp hollows. These places are often used for many years and the accumulated cones are often betrayed hiding places, as they frequently amount to many bushels.

Wisdom Shown.

The wisdom of the little collectors is further shown by the careful choice of moist situations and their care in digging holes and covering up the cones, since by keeping the cones damp and protected from the sun, they cannot open up and lose the seed and their granary is kept supplied with food for the winter months. Occasionally several bushels of cones may be secured in this way from one hollow but a few feet in radius.

At first sight, it may seem to be a hardship on the squirrels and certain benevolent minded people have severely criticized the service for depriving squirrels of their food supply, and leaving them to starve. But it really is not the case, since there is always an abundance of cones left on the trees, many of the better places are not found at all, there is always time for them to replenish the supply and each squirrel stores up many more cones than he can possibly use. They also feed upon buds, tender bark and other seeds, so that the only result of any moment to the squirrel is the very commendable one of stimulated industry.

Burying Habit.

German foresters frequently take advantage of the burying habit of squirrels in securing production of certain nut bearing hardwoods. Clean strips are cut through groves, and the nuts buried in the opening are a great help in starting new growth.

As fast as the cones are secured they are placed in sacks near a road or trail, and when collecting is finished in the evening the place where sacks are hauled or packed to a central point, where the work of seed extraction is begun.

In extracting seed, a location is chosen near the camping place, preferably at a ranger's headquarters, old cabin or some warm protected spot with a small area of level land. If the cones are of a species that will open readily in the sun they are spread on canvas or burlap in layers and exposed to sunlight for a few days, being frequently stirred to insure even drying. As fast as they open up they are beaten and raked over to free the seed, the empty cones are raked off, the seeds removed and all partly opened cones spread out again for further drying.

Closed cones, like lodgepole pine, do not open readily from heat of the sun alone and artificial heat is necessary. This is supplied by spreading them in shallow trays in a tight room and one or two stoves are kept going about 125 degrees until the cones are opened up.

Large heavy cones, like the couler and digger pine, are stood on end on blankets in the sun, after cutting off the cone base with a hatchet.

Used Goals.

One collector in New Mexico extracted seed by placing the dried cones in a barrel, and then shaking and chasing goats around over them to shake out the seed.

When all the seed has been secured it is placed in small sacks and rubbed and beaten to free it from seed wings, then winnowed and screened and placed in sacks for storage or shipment.

Nearly 2,000 pounds of seed were collected this year in this district, nearly all of which will be used during the coming spring and fall, the remainder being shipped to other districts.

The next step is seed sowing. This is done both in nurseries and directly on the ground, where reproduction is desired.

Forest nurseries are used to secure strong plants for establishing a stand in situations where soil or climatic conditions may be unfavorable to securing good results by field sowing. Nurseries are divided into two classes, small experimental nurseries, which have not yet justified enlargement, and large planting stations where good results have been obtained, have enabled the work of seedling production to be placed on a fairly large basis, and one man, with such assistance as is necessary, is constantly engaged in tree growing. Sites for nurseries are chosen in regard to their accessibility, convenience to areas needing planting, and natural conditions favorable to growth of seedlings.

Protected Beds.

In these nurseries, the seed is sown in beds where it is protected from the hot sun by screens. If necessary, cared for by the nurseryman until of sufficient size, and then they must be taken up and set out in what are called transplant beds, to produce strong stock with good root systems, and the nursery beds are then re-sown. As soon as the transplants are of sufficient size they are taken up, tied in bundles of convenient size and packed on animals, or shipped by express to the planting site.

There are at present eight large planting stations in operation on the national forests with a capacity each year from 300,000 to 2,000,000 trees annually, and a total of 7,000,000 trees sufficient to plant approximately 6,000 acres each year. These planting stations are located in seven different states. The Lytle creek station is on the Angeles national forest near San Bernardino in southern California. The present capacity of the station is 300,000 trees annually, the principal species being the Jeffrey pine, incense cedar and deodar cedar from India, which have proven to be the most desirable. The purpose of planting on this forest is for the protection of city watersheds and irrigation streams where water is more valuable than anywhere else in the United States, being limited in amount and freely utilized on the intensely productive lands of the citrus belt. Trees will also be distributed to the other forests in southern California.

A capacity of 300,000 trees annually, on the pine forest, and the principal species of western yellow pine and red fir, with small quantities of other species for experimental purposes. The planting is done on city watersheds and at the heads of streams important for irrigation.

In Idaho there is a station on the Peacocks forest, near Pocatello, Idaho, with a capacity of 500,000 trees, and the planting is for the protection of a city water supply, and it will be used as a distributing point for supplying planting stock to other forests in southern Idaho.

The largest planting station is located on the Nebraska national forest in the Sandhills section of western Nebraska, where planting is done on the treeless sand hills for the production of timber and to serve as an object lesson to the people of the region. The annual capacity of this station is about 4,000,000 trees of the western yellow pine, jack pine and Scotch pine. There is also a planting station in Kansas, with a capacity of 300,000, established for the same purpose.

On the Gila national forest, near Fort Bayard, N. M., is located the Fort Bayard planting station, with a capacity of 400,000 Western Yellow pine. Planting is done on important watersheds influencing streams that furnish water for irrigation in an important section, and stock will be distributed from here to Arizona and southern New Mexico.

There is another station in New Mexico on the Pecos national forest, with the same capacity, which furnishes nursery stock for planting on both city watersheds and headwaters of irrigating streams. It will supply nursery stock for the northern part of the state.

Utah Station.

In Utah there is another large planting station on the Wasatch forest, near Salt Lake City, and planting is done on the watersheds of the city water supply and the streams irrigating the fertile Salt Lake valley with its many productive farms. The capacity of this station is 1,400,000 Western Yellow pine and red fir, and it will be increased to two or three times that number, as conditions have proven very good for the work. Large numbers of trees will be shipped to the neighboring national forests, and a transplant nursery will be operated as a substation to the main nursery.

There are also several small nurseries in operation for experimental purposes, some of which will be enlarged into planting stations. A large planting station with a capacity of 1,000,000 trees is to be installed this spring on Muskert creek near Boulder, Colorado. This station will furnish trees for planting on the denuded watersheds of that forest, and serve as a distributing point from which trees will be sent to the forests of this region.

While 4,000 acres is but a small area, compared with the total that requires reforestation, it is important chiefly through the valuable information that has been gained in the solution of a difficult problem, which, being entirely a pioneer task, has necessitated working it out by actual practice.

Promising Areas.

Sowing is done in reforesting such areas as promise to give good results without resorting to the slower and more expensive method of planting. The purpose of sowing so far has been largely experimental, to determine the desirability of methods, and possibilities of varying conditions. Where conditions of soil, moisture and ground cover are such that these seem likelihood of success, sowing is done by broadcasting the seed on snow and on prepared and undisturbed soil, both in fall and spring. Seed spots, or planting several seed in a place by making a shallow hill, is also utilized as a test of methods. Direct sowing of seed is by far the cheapest and most rapid method of sowing, and most essential in reforesting, in all cases where good results can be secured. But since the young seedlings must come up unprotected and take their chances in competition with grasses, weeds and in some cases natural growth of forest seedlings of an undesirable species, the chances for their ultimate development into trees are fewer when conditions are more than usually adapted to their peculiar needs. Nature's sowing is very prodigal, and is necessarily so since many whole seed crops are almost an entire waste, if soil and moisture conditions are not such as will insure germination and growth for the seedlings.

Planting as a whole is just beginning to emerge from the experimental stage of growth, and to assume a status of actual solid work on a basis that will guarantee good progress.

A Great Task.

In order to appreciate the size of the task that confronts the government in administering the national forests in this district alone so as to best serve the interests of the public, let us dip into the future a little, and consider what we have to do.

Reckoning 50 years of continuous work, the area requiring reforestation at the present rate of development that have come to the other states of the east the time will come when Montana will follow in their footsteps and adopt that policy which they have already done and secure areas for state forest reserves where protective planting can be done.

However, at the present time, a long step may be taken toward protecting the state's future welfare by giving the active support to the work that the forest service is doing. It is a big undertaking which will require hard work, extensive experiments and the expenditure of large sums, and for this reason it must be inaugurated and for the most part carried through by the government, but it rests in the hands of the private citizen as to whether it shall be prosecuted systematically on a scale of sufficient size to bring about its most beneficial results.

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Nature's Method.

Nature's method of reproducing forest crops is slow, often giving incomplete or undesirable growth after a long lapse of time. In order that forests may be brought to the best use, they are considered as crops due after a certain number of years, and in order that this crop may be secured with a good yield the forester must help by planting and sowing to produce what is called artificial re-

production, and in this case he is able to improve upon nature. The scope of work in this district is very large, at present, and will be increasingly so in the future as fast as larger appropriations by congress make sufficient funds available for the work. When we stop to consider that of the 25 different national forests in this district with a total acreage of over 31,000,000, 20,000,000 acres of which is in this state, and about 2,000,000 acres is in immediate need of reforesting, requiring approximately 4,000,000,000 trees, the work assumes large proportions.

Although it is doubtful if we shall live to see this area reforested and improved as it should be, there is good reason to believe that material progress will be made in the next few years, such that sufficient results will be obtained so that we can see something accomplished. For those who are interested in the profession of forestry, there is good opportunity for young men in the planting work of the forest service. Many men will be needed throughout the western states having national forests as nurseries to assist in the installation and maintenance of planting stations, seed collection and in planting and seed sowing. No one should contemplate going into the profession unless, fond of rough mountain life, prepared to do hard work and willing to put up with rather unpleasant conditions at times when the exigencies of the work may require it, as is frequently the case.

Some Requirements.

For requirements the applicant must be between the ages of 21 and 30 years; he should be at least a high school education, should be familiar with outdoor work and mountain life and strong and vigorous enough to stand roughing it, as it is no job for invalids.

When a position is desired application is made in writing to the civil service commission, Washington, D. C., with a request for information in regard to places and dates for holding examinations. These examinations are held along practical lines on such subjects as would be taken up in carrying out the work. If the examination is passed, the applicant's name is placed on the list of eligibles and appointment made as soon as vacancies occur. The best requirement and the deciding point in making a choice should be the one thing, sufficient liking for and interest in forestry as a profession. This is perhaps as true of forestry as any calling, for it is a most exacting one, but equally so it is fascinating for the disciple.

Now, having obtained an idea of the amount of work that there is to be done, the question comes up as to what is the need for doing it, and what will be accomplished by its completion.

Financial Point.

From a financial standpoint, which is the first one to be considered by a forester, we should be able to show that there is a profit to be gained. Figuring \$7.50 per acre for planting and \$3.25 per acre for sowing, at the end of 100 years a very reasonable income will be \$200 per acre, which will represent at compound interest almost 35 per cent for planting and \$1.14 per cent for sowing on the original investment.

This represents a very good rate of interest, but it is only the direct financial gain, and the greater benefit to the country as a whole is the one that cannot be figured in dollars and cents. This country is new, rich in natural resources and is perhaps the best developed of any region having such great advantages at present. In consideration of these well-known conditions it seems very reasonable to suppose that a few years will see a great development along all lines.

Limited Supply.

The limited supply and the rapidly increasing demand will soon be severely felt in all timbered regions, and as the present supply has been conservatively estimated to last about 25 years at the existing rate of consumption extensive planting will be necessary. Even by resorting to this the credits will not be relieved, as the credits will come long before trees that are planted now will have attained merchantable size, as it takes at least 100 years to produce a crop that promises to be exhausted in less than 25.

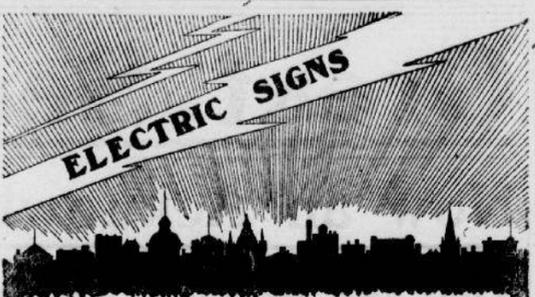
Another fact that makes planting important to the development and the continuance of Montana's prosperity is this: There are estimated to be 1,125,000 acres under irrigation at present, and this can be increased to 6,000,000 by improved methods and complete utilization. All of these streams supplying this water have their sources in mountainous country fit only for tree growth, and which requires a good forest cover for regulation of stream flow. These watersheds are in many cases badly denuded, and even when carefully lumbered more or less artificial reforestation is necessary. Therefore planting will have a very important place in the future of the state.

It may seem visionary in the face of the present wealth of forested area, but it is very reasonable to suppose that after this state has passed the successive stages of development that have come to the other states of the east the time will come when Montana will follow in their footsteps and adopt that policy which they have already done and secure areas for state forest reserves where protective planting can be done.

However, at the present time, a long step may be taken toward protecting the state's future welfare by giving the active support to the work that the forest service is doing. It is a big undertaking which will require hard work, extensive experiments and the expenditure of large sums, and for this reason it must be inaugurated and for the most part carried through by the government, but it rests in the hands of the private citizen as to whether it shall be prosecuted systematically on a scale of sufficient size to bring about its most beneficial results.

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THOMAS LOWRY DIES.

Minneapolis, Feb. 4.—Thomas Lowry, president of the Twin City Rapid Transit company and of the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie railroad, died at his home here today. He had suffered from tuberculosis of the lungs for several years. He was 66 years old.

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