

The sections of the report which deal particularly with technical problems of silviculture, while naturally of great interest to all connected with the timber industry, are more especially the concern of foresters. I shall not comment upon those sections. Some sections dealing with general forest policy are, however, subject for comment.

In these sections, stress is laid upon the increasing importance of the role of forests in modern society (*e.g.*, page 12, para. 29). In all the countries visited in the course of my tour I was greatly impressed by the insistence of forest technician and economists on the necessity for making policy decisions for each country on the proportional distribution of forest area and cultivated land. In every country visited, this had resulted in legislation by the respective Governments to establish and preserve the proper balance. For example, see the accompanying article on Finnish law relating to private forestry.

Paragraphs 60 and 61 on page 15 of the report are also worthy of special note. They point out the possibility of the introduction in New Zealand of a policy of encouraging reafforestation by private land-owners on steep, eroded, and otherwise unproductive and unprofitable areas.

I am not sufficiently conversant with the policy of the New Zealand Forest Service to speak with complete assurance on this matter; but although there may be nothing new in the lessons which I have derived from the Congress discussions and from the studies and demonstrations in the course of the tours, I think it worth while to set out some of my ideas.

I will venture to suggest that, if it has not already been done in New Zealand, the system of accounting used by the Danish Forest Service could be profitably applied to the regeneration of forests in this country. For their hardwood supplies the Danes rely largely on their managed forests of oak and beech. The rate of growth of these timbers may be compared to some of our valuable native types. The rotation period for beech is 110–120 years, and for oak 120–130 years and upwards. The aim of the forester is an annual increment of timber approximating in value 4 per cent. on capital invested in the plantation, including the cost of the land itself, which in Denmark is high. This aim is rather easily attained by the growing of conifers, but generally speaking hardly ever by the growing of hardwoods, because of the great costs of artificial regeneration. In addition to the 4 per cent. annual increment, the forest must earn its maintenance costs.

Approximately 68 per cent. of the forest area in Denmark is privately owned and managed. Numbers of the large forest-owners employ their own superintendents and forest rangers. Smaller forest-owners combine in associations, similarly employing superintendents and advisers.

Denmark is one of the most poorly wooded countries in Europe, having 870,000 acres of forest, roughly 8 per cent. of the total land area. Yet it is able, on the basis of scientific methods of forest management, to supply nearly all the hardwood requirements of a population of 4,050,000 and about one-quarter of the softwood requirements. Denmark's annual requirements of wood amount to 144,771,000 cubic feet, including firewood. The return from the State forests show a net average return per acre over the past ten years of approximately 40 kroners.

Throughout the Congress and in the course of the tours before and after it, I was greatly impressed by the confidence of all the delegates and the leaders of the tours in the various countries that we were entering on an age of wood—an age when wood and wood products will assume ever-increasing importance as the metal resources of the world approach exhaustion. New Zealand, because of its dependence on outside sources of supply of metals, could well emulate Finland, where the variety of uses to which wood is put is remarkable.