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## EDITORIAL NOTES

### FUTURE TIMBER SUPPLIES

The Annual Report of the Director of Forestry for the year ended 31st March 1953, describes the concern expressed in parliamentary reports early in the present century regarding the Dominion's future timber supplies; describes the creation of a Forest Authority in 1921, and the consistent policy subsequently followed to decrease the drain on the declining indigenous forest resource by the development of an alternative exotic forest resource; and describes the extent to which this alternative resource is already meeting a substantial part of the current timber demand.

The delegates to the New Zealand Timber Conference in Rotorua had visible proof of the magnitude of this exotic forest resource and of the utilisation facilities developed, or being developed to exploit it. The Official Year Book places the aggregate area of New Zealand's exotic forests at no less than 900,000 acres. The future timber supply position would appear satisfactory.

But is this so? A further study of the production/distribution diagram and appended tables of forest areas in the above mentioned Annual Report makes it clear that there are no grounds for complacency. Almost two-thirds of the entire exotic forest resources are concentrated within a radius of some fifty miles of Rotorua! There are the elements of a national disaster in this concentration, through the increased hazard of tree disease, fire, storm, cataclysm or war. Further, this acute regional unbalance in the distribution of exotic forests is not in the long term national interest. Long distance transport of timber is costly in terms of money but also in terms of its demand on transport services. Published population trends suggest that this unbalance will become progressively more acute, particularly in the southern and western parts of Wellington province, in South Canterbury, in Otago, and in Southland.

That these unsatisfactory features are appreciated by the Forest Service is apparent from statements in annual reports from 1937 onwards. So also under "Exotic Forest Management" in the current Year Book the comment is made:—

“ . . . . . and the geographical distribution of the forests leaves much to be desired. These faults are being corrected by the establishment of new forests in timber-hungry districts . . . . . ”

Progress to date in this direction has been wholly inadequate.

As could be expected rate of planting declined during World War II, but reached its lowest in the post war years 1946 and 1947. In those years annual plantings fell below one thousand acres for the first time since the formation of the Forest Service in 1921. The rate of planting has increased subsequently, some 25,000 acres being planted in the past five years. It should be noted however that no less than 25% of this area was planted within fifty miles of Rotorua.

There is a clear need for the Forest Authority to undertake a vigorous afforestation policy in timber deficient regions. Planted acres in these regions are required rather than paper recognition of the problem.

**THE NEW ZEALAND TIMBER CONFERENCE 1954**—This was held in Rotorua from the 22nd to 26th February, 1954. It was promoted by the Dominion Sawmillers' Federation, Inc. the New Zealand Forest Service, the New Zealand Timber Merchants' Federation, Inc., the New Zealand (Timber) Boxmakers' Association, Inc., in association with the Dominion Forest Owners' Federation, Inc., the New Zealand Plywood Manufacturers' Association and the N.Z. Institute of Foresters, Inc. In addition to a full attendance of New Zealand interests there was a strong representation from the Australian timber trade and from the commonwealth and state forest departments.

The theme of the Conference was “Radiata Pine,” with emphasis on the conversion, use, and marketing of the timber. Papers were presented on “Radiata Pine Today and Tomorrow” (Mr. J. T. Currie of N.Z. Forest Products Ltd.); “Future Trends in New Zealand Timber Trade” (Mr. W. C. Ward of N.Z. Forest Service); “Advances in the Utilisation of Radiata Pine in New Zealand” (Mr. A. L. Hogg President, N.Z. Timber Merchants' Federation, Inc.); “Australia's Requirements in Timber and Wood Pulp” (Mr. A. G. Hanson of the Commonwealth Forestry and Timber Bureau); and “Trade Surveys” (by Australian state timber trade representatives).

Field trips alternated with the formal sessions of the Conference. These enabled delegates to see the major forest and utilisation operations, Company and Forest Service, within fifty miles of Rotorua. The opportunity given forest owners and members of the timber trade, to see and discuss the problems involved in harvesting and marketing radiata pine cannot help but prove valuable, while to those members of the timber trade concerned primarily with the conversion

and marketing of indigenous timbers striking evidence was given of the coming of age of the exotic wood industry.

Those responsible for the Conference organisation deserve high praise for its efficient operation.

### RADIATA PINE

The development of major industries, dependent wholly or substantially on radiata pine as a basic raw material, is well advanced. The official opening at Kinleith in February 1954, of the integrated sawmill, pulp mill and paper mill saw the fruition of the development plans of New Zealand's largest private forest owner, Forest Products Limited. Construction of the Tasman Pulp and Paper Company's integrated plant is in progress at Kawerau, Bay of Plenty, scheduled to commence production in 1955. Known as the Murupara Project, raw material for this plant will be obtained from part of Kaingaroa Forest, New Zealand's largest state exotic forest. Other wood using industries, state and private, dependent on raw material from exotic forests have been operating in the Rotorua-Bay of Plenty District for some years. Thus within a radius of fifty miles of Rotorua will be concentrated a heavy capital investment in industrial plant dependent for its raw material on exotic forests within the area—from forests in which radiata pine is a major component, forests representing two-thirds of New Zealand's exotic forest resource.

Foresters may perhaps be forgiven for thinking that the easy task has been the development of these exotic forests and forest industries. The difficult task lies ahead—the maintenance of these forests on a sustained yield basis and in a healthy and vigorous condition. Only by the adoption of sound silvicultural practice and thorough research into the early detection and control of tree diseases can this task be accomplished.

### OBITUARY.—W. S. Anderson

It is with the greatest regret that we have to record the accidental death on 27th February 1954 of W. S. Anderson. "Stewart" had been an Associate Member of our institute since 1947 and was an active member of the Rotorua Section. He first became known to many of our older members when he took charge of planting operations in the Pukahunui Block of Whakatane Board Mills Ltd. in 1928. He continued supervising planting on their Matahina Block in 1931. Later still he superintended thinning operations for his company on Matakana Island. In 1943 he returned to Matahina to take charge of clear felling in the Radiata Pine stands he had planted twelve years earlier. "Stewart" was a big man in the truest and best sense of the word and was well known for the hospitality extended to many of our members on their visits to Matahina. Our deepest