

Forestry in Ireland

New FEPS a Major Boost for the Planting Programme

13 February, 2008

The Minister of State with responsibility for forestry, Mary Wallace TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, has announced a number of significant changes to the Forest Environment Protection Scheme (**FEPS**). The changes follow a full review of the pilot scheme which was launched in 2007 and detailed discussions with the various stakeholders. There is good news for both holders of smaller **REPS** farms and for holders of larger REPS farms, both of whom will find new incentive to plant under **FEPS**.

Under the new terms, a landowner will receive a **FEPS** premium of EUR200 for each hectare of woodland planted, regardless of farm size, subject to a minimum of eight hectares being planted. For owners of farms of 30 hectares and less, the minimum plantation size has been reduced to five hectares, attracting a corresponding FEPS premium of EUR150 per hectare for plantations between five and eight hectares in size. The **FEPS** premium is payable in addition to the existing Afforestation Scheme grants and premium, meaning that a farmer planting eight hectares could, for the duration of FEPS, earn an annual tax-free forestry premium of up to EUR6,000 without affecting his/her Single Payment.

Minister Wallace said she was very pleased to be able to deliver this package. It represents an exciting development in the Government's commitment to forestry as a positive force in the areas of climate change, rural development and agri-environment, and follows a specific commitment to roll-out **FEPS** fully in the Programme for Government.

The Minister said: "*The **FEPS** pilot in 2007 demonstrated the considerable appetite that exists amongst active farmers for planting trees. We watched with interest the profile of farmers who did and didn't plant under FEPS. We could see that there was good scope for additional planting on larger REPS farms but the degressive premium under the **FEPS** pilot was off-putting. I have addressed that now. We also saw how difficult it could be for REPS farmers with smaller holdings, particularly in counties such as Mayo, to present 8 hectares for planting. I have also remedied this and will accept plantations of 5 hectares from this group now.*"

The changes come into immediate effect. The Minister said she believed this would be a major boost to the planting programme and she urged farmers to look afresh at the opportunities for planting part of their land. "*Demand for timber has never been higher and thousands of farmers are now, literally, reaping the rewards of planting,*" Minister Wallace said. "*Forests bring options for farmers and those who think seriously about the future should think seriously about planting.*"

Warning from Minister on the Danger of Forest Fires

15 February 2008

Ms Mary Wallace T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for Forestry, today warned forest owners about the risk of forest fires. Every spring in Ireland, several hundred hectares of forests and woodland are destroyed by fire. Current weather conditions indicate an increased

risk of forest fires and the Minister of State is anxious to draw the attention of forest owners and the public in general to this very real and immediate risk.

The Minister pointed out that the highest risk period occurs between February and June, when ground vegetation is dead and dry following winter. For this reason the danger can be extremely high even when it has rained recently.

The areas at highest risk from wildfire tend to be located adjacent to or within moorland areas. Dry periods and seasonal high winds in spring help create ideal conditions for wildfire to spread quickly through highly flammable moorland vegetation. Woodland located in the path of such fires can very easily be destroyed and young forest crops are particularly at risk of fire, given the small size of trees and their proximity to flammable ground vegetation.

In general, woodland located within improved pasture and grassland is at very low risk of fire occurrence, due to the type of vegetation involved, but for other types of land there are some simple, cost effective steps that forest owners can take to reduce the risk of fire damage to plantations. These steps include:

- 1) **DO NOT LIGHT FIRES IN OR NEAR WOODLAND.** Take care with other potential sources of ignition.
- 2) **CHECK FIRE BREAKS.** It is the owners' responsibility to ensure that Fire Breaks surrounding plantations are inspected annually prior to the fire season and maintained in an effective, vegetation free condition. Ideally Fire Breaks should be at least 6 metres wide.
- 3) **INSURE YOUR CROP.** All forest crops should be insured against losses by fire. While the Department does provide grants for reconstitution of plantations damaged due to natural causes, there are many demands on this funding and fire is one of the risks for which cover is available commercially. In addition, basic reconstitution of the crop can never compensate for lost growth increment and the prudent forest-owner will want to insure against this risk as well.
- 4) **PLAN AHEAD.** Fire Plans should be developed for all plantations, including a map showing access and assembly points for fire fighting personnel and equipment and potential sources of water. The plan should also include contact details for the emergency services, relevant forest management organisations, neighbouring landowners and forest owners in order to summon help should the need arise. Have fire-fighting tools such as beaters and knapsack sprayers to hand and ready to use.
- 5) **DISCUSS WITH NEIGHBOURS.** Cooperation between neighbouring landowners is vital to successful fire prevention. Explain your concerns regarding fire risk to neighbouring landowners. Owners of adjoining and neighbouring plantations should develop joint fire plans and share responsibility for guarding against fire.
- 6) **BE VIGILANT.** Forest Owners should be particularly vigilant following prolonged dry spells. A period of 24 hours is sufficient to dry out dead moorland vegetation following rain, where windy conditions exist. Where dry conditions persist, experience suggests that forest owners should be particularly vigilant at weekends, and at evening times, when land burning is most likely to take place. If fire is detected, do not delay, summon help immediately and activate fire plan. Do not rely

on others to call the Fire Service, and remember that a rapid response by the emergency services is essential if damage to property is to be minimised.

7) **OFFENCE.** It is prohibited to cut, grub, burn or otherwise destroy any vegetation growing on any land not then cultivated between 1st day of March and 31st day of August in any year.

8) **REPORT LOSSES.** If a plantation is destroyed or damaged by fire, the incident should be reported to the nearest Garda Station and to the Forest Service. Your local forestry inspector, forest manager, consultant or Teagasc advisor can advise on reinstatement measures.

Minister of State Wallace concluded by reminding all landowners that it is an offence under the Wildlife Act to burn vegetation between 1 March and 31 August in any year, on any land not then cultivated, and said that if this simple rule was adhered to many costly and dangerous forest-fires would be avoided. She underlined that, in addition, Single Payment Scheme applicants found burning vegetation within this period could have their payments reduced.

Forestry Opportunity for REPS Farmers in Clare

County Clare, 20th February 08

Minister of State and Clare T.D., Mr. Tony Killeen today welcomed the announcement, by his colleague Ms. Mary Wallace, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with special responsibility for forestry, of a number of significant changes to the **Forest Environment Protection Scheme (FEPS)**.

Minister of State Wallace introduced the **FEPS** Scheme, on a pilot basis, in early 2007 to provide an attractive option for farmers looking at Forestry. **FEPS** offered an additional premium, to the existing 100% planting grant and yearly premium payments available under the Afforestation Scheme, of up to EUR200 per hectare for five years depending on farm size.

The Scheme was targeted at participants in REPS and was designed to encourage farmers to establish and maintain high nature-value forestry through a number of different measures, particularly in the area of enhanced bio-diversity and water quality protection. All forestry payments are tax-free and providing less than 50% of a farm is planted, will not affect a farmer's single payment entitlements.

FEPS is now being rolled out with major changes, including a reduction in the minimum size to 5 hectares for farms with 30 hectares or less and, in relation to bigger farms, to dispense with the sliding scale and pay a flat rate premium of EUR200 per hectare, for planted areas of 8 hectares or more, irrespective of farm size.

*'This is good news for both small and larger **REPS** farmers with enhanced incentives in all categories', explained Tony Killeen.*

*He continued, 'Clare farmers that plant 8 hectares or more will now receive a **FEPS** premium of EUR200 for each hectare of woodland planted, regardless of farm size. For owners of farms of 30 hectares and less, the minimum plantation size has been*

reduced to 5 hectares. In this case the **FEPS** payment will be EUR150 per hectare. The **FEPS** premium is payable in addition to the existing Afforestation Scheme grants and premium available meaning that a farmer planting 8 hectares could, for the duration of **FEPS**, earn an annual tax-free forestry premium of up to EUR6,000 without affecting his/her Single Payment.'

Minister Killeen congratulated Minister of State Wallace on addressing issues that had arisen during the pilot phase of the scheme in 2007. Previously, the minimum area that could be planted was 8 hectares and there was a reducing payment system.

He added, 'This is a major development in the forestry schemes and it should be particularly suitable for farmers in this area. It also fulfils a commitment given in the Programme for Government to fully roll out this scheme following the pilot stage. It clearly shows the Government's commitment to forestry and the benefits it can bring not alone to farmers but the whole country in the areas of climate change, rural development and agri-environment.'

Minister Killeen explained that the changes to **FEPS** come into force immediately.

'I would urge all farmers, both those already in REPS and those considering entering **REPS**, to contact a forestry adviser as soon as possible to explore their forestry options and to see how it could complement their existing farm enterprises and provide a welcome steady stream of additional income', he concluded.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW COFORD COUNCIL

February, 2008

Ms Mary Wallace T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for Forestry, today announced the appointment of a new Council for **COFORD (National Council for Forest Research and Development)**, a State agency under the aegis of her Department.

Minister Wallace said that, since its establishment in 1993, COFORD has made a significant contribution to forestry research and development. She thanked the previous Council members for their contribution. She added that, with the beginning of a new Forestry programme, growing awareness of the role of forestry in climate change and renewable energy, and given the Government's commitment to forestry as evident from the recent roll-out of FEPS, now is a good time to appoint a new Council.

Following the appointment of **Mr. Michael Lynn** of *Woodfab Timber Ltd.* as Chairperson of the Council, the additional appointments to the Council are:

NAME	ORGANISATION
Pat Hennessy	Irish Farmers Association
John Joe O'Boyle	Forest Service Northern Ireland
Michael Glennon	Glennon Sawmills
Willie Fitzgerald	Enterprise Ireland
John McCarthy	None so Hardy Nurseries
Donal Whelan	Irish Timber Growers Association

Minister of State Wallace congratulated the Tree Council of Ireland on the organisation of so many varied and interesting activities for the coming week. She also encouraged local communities and local authorities to participate in some of the 300 or more events, which will take place around the country during this week. Events include forest walks tree planting ceremonies, workshops, talks and competitions.

Noting the theme of this year's National Tree Week is **'Cuireann crainn uisce ar fáil don bheatha'/'Trees Water Life'**, Minister of State Wallace commented, *"Trees, the timber they provide and their numerous other benefits are an integral part of life. The significance of trees is often taken for granted. There is ongoing coverage of the consequences of deforestation throughout the world - we need to ensure that forestry remains a feature of the Irish landscape, economy and environment"*. The Minister of State drew attention to the afforestation schemes available from her Department, stating, *"New planting is vital to the sector so that forestry can continue to provide an income stream for Irish farmers and a steady supply of material for the timber and energy sectors"* and added *"The importance of trees does, of course, go far beyond its provision of timber - the environment, clean air, jobs, wood energy and health and recreation are additional benefits. National Tree Week this year will, I hope, reinforce in our minds that trees are also about water and about life."*

"Project Forest Launched"

Educational Initiative for transitional students

5 March, 2008

Ms. Mary Wallace T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for forestry, today launched **"Project Forest"** in the ENFO Offices in Andrew Street, Dublin. **"Project Forest"** is an educational initiative for transition year students, aimed at increasing awareness of trees and forestry and their environmental and economic role in Irish life. The Project was first developed by the Tree Council of Ireland in the 1990's with Government funding and was presented in binder format with a supporting CD-ROM. This allowed students to work in an interactive environment while also receiving exposure to environmental, business, geographical and historical information about trees and forestry.

Launching the Project, Minister Wallace commented, *"While the original "project forest" was comprehensive and presented in an appropriate format for the time, it became apparent that, due to the advancement in modern technology, measures needed to be taken to update and modify the Project. With this in mind, and on the advice of the National Transition Year Coordinator, 'Project Forest' has now become web based and its main focus is on Leaving Certificate subjects that interact with forestry, such as Agricultural Science, Biology, Geography, Woodwork and to a lesser extent history and folklore"*.

The Minister of State spoke briefly about the recent developments in the forestry sector, including the recent full roll out of the Forest Environment Protection Scheme (**FEPS**), saying *"This scheme has achieved and indeed exceeded its targets in the*

pilot phase year and is now being fully rolled out with a number of modifications that will make it even more attractive for farmers".

Minister of State Wallace concluded by stressing the importance of new planting to sustain the forestry sector into the future so that forestry can continue to provide its many benefits for society and the economy, adding *"I am confident that transition year students will benefit enormously from this 'Project Forest' in its revised format, both now and in the long term, and that, consequently, society in general will benefit from the knowledge and insight that these students will bring about trees and forestry into their future careers and lives"* and congratulated the Tree Council of Ireland on the Project.

"Factors Affecting Afforestation in Ireland in Recent Years"

6 March, 2008

Ms Mary Wallace TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for Forestry, has received the report aimed at identifying issues and actions to enhance the current Government support for forestry planting. The report is entitled **"Factors Affecting Afforestation in Ireland in Recent Years"**, and was prepared by Mr John Malone, former Secretary General of the Department.

The Report recognises the competing demands of the different types of land use including forestry in Ireland and the increasing importance of forestry in developing sustainable economic, energy, environmental and climate change policies for the country into the future. Renewed promotion of this important asset is important and having flexible support schemes as attractive as possible relative to other options is emphasised.

Speaking at the presentation of the report at Agriculture House, the Minister of State said: *"I welcome this report which addresses the current factors impacting on the decision to plant and makes a series of recommendations that I look forward to examining in detail with a view to implementation."*

Turning to the recommendations, the Minister noted in particular the call for more research on environmental issues, the need to re-visit the absolute requirement to re-plant following felling, the possibility of a more targeted policy, rather than the nationally operated one as at present. In relation to the recommendation to adjust the Forest Environment Protection Scheme (FEPS), the Minister referred to her recent amendments to the scheme to make forestry more attractive to farmers already in the Rural Environment Protection Scheme (**REPS**). These included a reduction in the minimum qualifying size to five hectares (for farms with less than 30 hectares) and in relation to bigger farms, the removal of the tiered payment system in favour of a flat rate FEPS premium of EUR200 per hectare for planted areas of eight hectares or more, regardless of the farm size.

The Minister complimented Mr Malone on such a wide-ranging report produced in such a short space of time. She thanked all who had co-operated in this work and said that she would reflect on each of the 18 recommendations in consultation with Minister Mary Coughlan and wanted to move quickly to action on what was acceptable and possible.

Links and Further Reading - suggestions welcome: info@aughty.org

Dept of Agriculture & Food - Forest Service

http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/index.jsp?file=forestry/pages/forest_service.xml

An Taisce

<http://www.antaisce.org/>

Crann

<http://www.crann.ie/>

Coillte

<http://www.coillte.ie/>

Citizens Information - Millennium Forests in Ireland

http://www.citizensinformation.ie/categories/environment/agriculture-and-forestry/millennium_forests_in_ireland

Farming Pages

<http://www.farmingpages.com/>

Forestry Directory of Ireland

<http://www.forestryireland.com/>

Forestry Investment Ireland

<http://www.piffs.com/piffsframe.htm>

Forest Stewardship Council

<http://www.fsc.org/>

Forestry Yearbook

<http://www.forestryyearbook.ie/>

Friends of the Irish Environment

<http://friendsoftheirishenvironment.net/>

FSC Watch

<http://www.fsc-watch.org/>

Heritage Ireland

<http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/>

Irish Timber Growers Association

<http://www.itga.ie/>

Peatlands Forests

http://www.ucd.ie/ferg/Research/Topics/Peatland_forests.html

The Forest Ecosystem Research Group (FERG)

<http://www.ucd.ie/ferg/>

Society of Irish Foresters

<http://www.societyofirishforesters.ie/>

Woodlands of Ireland

<http://www.woodlandsofireland.com/>

Voice

<http://www.voiceireland.org/>

The socio-economic contribution of forestry in Ireland

Authors: Áine Ní Dhubháin, Marie-Christine Flécharde, Richard Moloney, Deirdre O'Connor and Tim Crowley

<http://www.coford.ie/iopen24/pub/pub/econtrib20060808.pdf>

VI.—Forestry in Ireland. By W. F. Bailey, Barrister-at-Law, Legal Assistant Land Commissioner.

[Read Tuesday, 2nd July, 1889.]

Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland

I.—The importance of the Forestry question in Ireland at the present time.

In view of the proposed extension of the Land Purchase Acts, the question of the protection and development of Forestry in Ireland is one of very great importance and interest to the entire community. The effect of transferring to the occupiers the ownership of their holdings has in this respect been up to the present overlooked. Those who have opportunities of travelling much through Ireland, must very quickly notice the result of such sales of farms as regards the plantations thereon. It is pitiable in many cases to see the occupier, as soon as he gets a conveyance executed to himself, proceed to cut down and sell any trees that may be on his holding. In some instances these trees were planted for ornament, in others to give shelter; but in most cases they have been placed on parts of the farm which otherwise would be waste and useless. Whatever was the purpose with which they were planted, the actual gain to the occupier from clearing them away is in the majority of cases very small. Indeed, over and above the money obtained from the sale of the timber the benefit is nothing. The soil from which the plantation has been removed remains practically useless, while the shelter which it had afforded—in Ireland a very important consideration to the farmer—is gone.

I have noticed this denudation of timber on the Marquis of Bath's property in Monaghan, and on other estates in Ireland, which were lately sold to the tenants under Lord Ashbourne's Act. In view of the probable further extension of the Land

Purchase Acts, it is worth consideration whether the legislature should not introduce provisions which would prevent purchasers from acting in a manner undoubtedly detrimental to the interests of the country at large. The attention devoted to the protection of woods and forests in almost all other civilised countries of the world, is in remarkable contrast to the apathy of the British legislature on the subject up to the present, while at the same time few countries are in this respect really more in need of the fostering care of the government.

Perhaps one cause why so much more attention has been paid to forestry in other European countries than in the British Isles, is that timber is of more importance to people on the continent, for fuel purposes. In England the people can easily get abundant supplies of coal, and in Ireland of turf; consequently they do not need timber to the same extent. One thing, however, is certain as regards Ireland, which will tend to remove this difference in circumstances— namely, that the turbary supply of this country is rapidly diminishing, and that after a certain number of years the peasant will be driven to seek some other substitute for firing. The coal supply of the country is scanty and of inferior quality, while the cost after importing it from England would be a heavy tax on the resources of the Irish peasant. Most probably the time is not far distant when the people will be driven to planting trees for fuel purposes. But the growth of timber is not a matter of a day. It is slow, and requires system and care. From this point of view, if from no other, the cultivation of trees is of great importance to the future of the country.

II.—Comparison of the proportion of the area of Ireland under timber with that of other European countries.

An examination of the physical and climatic characteristics of Ireland will point out the great advantages which the country would derive from the existence of woods, forests, and plantations. From the standpoint of the farmer, the presence of trees to protect his cattle from the winds and rain which prevail for considerable portions of the year, adds greatly to the value of his holding. Most authorities who have considered the subject have come to the conclusion, that the planting of much of the waste lands in the country would have a very beneficial effect on the drainage, rainfall, and climate generally of Ireland.

Notwithstanding the manifest advantages of trees to an island situated as is Ireland, it is remarkable that it has a far smaller proportion of its soil under timber than any other country in Europe.

The soil of Ireland in the year 1881 was classified as follows:—

Cultivated (under crops and grass),	15,270,799	acres.
Uncultivated,	4,729,251	„
Woods and plantations, ...	328,703	„
Total area,	20,328,753	statute acres.

From this we see that only 1.6 per cent of the total area of the country was under woods and forests, while over 23 per cent., or nearly one quarter of the country, is uncultivated. This latter description of land comprises bog and marsh, barren mountain, and otherwise waste lands, much of which however would be well suited for the cultivation of timber.

The proportion of land devoted to woods and plantations in Ireland, namely, 1.6 per cent., is much less than in any other part of the United Kingdom. In England

upwards of 4.6 per cent, of the area is under woods and forests; in Scotland, 4.2 per cent.; and in Wales, 3.4 per cent. The area of the entire United Kingdom is 77,799,793 statute acres, of which 2,787,848 acres, or about 3.6 per cent., is under woods and forests. These figures show us how far behind the rest of the kingdom Ireland is, in the cultivation of timber.

The smallness of the proportion of the soil of Ireland under timber will stand out in still clearer relief, when we become acquainted with the fact that, with the exception of Denmark, the British Isles have less area under trees than any other country in Europe. This proportion in other European countries is as follows :—

Russia,	40 per cent.	France,	17 per cent
Sweden,	34%	Greece,	14%
Norway,	29 1/2 %	Spain,	
Germany,	26%	Belgium and Holland,	7%
Turkey,	22%	Portugal,	5%
Switzerland	18%	Denmark,	3 1/2%

The area of all the European states taken together under woods and forests, is 29 per cent, of the total area.* These figures show us that Ireland is behind every other county in Europe in the extent of its area devoted to woods and forests, and that to a very remarkable degree.

The extent of land under woods in Ireland fell off very much in the ten years between 1841 and 1851. In the former year the acreage under timber was 374,482 acres, which ten years later had fallen to 304,906 acres. Since 1851, the area devoted to trees has slowly increased ; but we are still forty or fifty thousand acres behind what we had under timber in 1841.+

* See Essay on "Forestry in France," by Major F. Bailey, in the Transactions of the Scottish Arboricultural Society, vol. xi.

+ See paper by Dr. Grimshaw, Registrar-General, on Statistics of Waste Lands in Ireland, read before the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, on 29th April, 1884.

Should the tendency noted at the commencement of this paper, on the part of purchasers of farms under the Land Purchase Acts, be given free rein, it is to be feared that the upward movement will relapse into a continued decrease in the area under plantations, a result which undoubtedly would be disastrous in its results, and which can only be restrained by special enactments on the part of the legislature.

III.—The Forestry Regulations of European States,

Far too little attention has been paid in this country to the laws and regulations of the various European states for the protection and encouragement of forestry. Much information which would be of very great value to the inquirer who would seek to develop the cultivation of timber in Ireland, is to be obtained from the experience of other countries. A little over two years ago the Department of State, Washington, with that energy and enterprise which distinguishes the government of the United States, issued instructions to the consular offices of the republic, to inquire into, and report on the subject of forest culture and forest preservation in the district in which they were stationed. This was to be done with a view to framing forestry legislation for the home country, where the subject was considered of great and increasing

importance. The reports sent in in response to these instructions contain very valuable information with respect to almost every European country, and throw much light on the methods therein adopted to protect and encourage the cultivation of timber.

IV.—Causes and Results of the Destruction of Forests.

The causes of the destruction of forests, says Consul-General Jussen, writing of the Austrian empire, have been the same in the Old World as in the New. The greed of men, the desire of speedy gain, without reference to consequences, the want of judgment and knowledge as to cause and effect in the courses of nature and its developments, have razed and shorn the forests along the spurs of the Alps and the shores of the Mediterranean, with the merciless energy which has been displayed in this direction along the shores of American rivers and on the slopes of American mountains.

" The result," he continues, " in a climatic direction, has, as a matter of course, been highly disastrous. The same region, which had been famous for its mild and temperate climate, has become changeable and unreliable, the mountain creeks have become dry, and the whole face of the country has been changed from a rich, fruitful, and salubrious climate, to an arid, sterile plain, interspersed with, stony and parched hill-sides, populated by meagre sheep and goats, and their equally meagre owners."

Consul-General Eaine writing from Germany, says that many great countries which flourished in former times have, by the devastation or extermination of their forests, fallen into pauperism and, cultural decrepitude. In consequence of the extirpation of forests on the Baltic coasts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the sea coasts are unprotected, and villages where the farming population once lived in prosperity have fallen into ruins. In the central and eastern provinces of Germany, where the soil is level and light, swamps have appeared where previously forests covered the land, or absorbed the stagnating moisture. In northern Hanover, tracts of land formerly covered with woods, are now waste, offering nothing but a poor food to sheep, while the progressive formation of stones obstructs all endeavours to prepare arable land, or to reforest. In the western provinces, mountainous in their character, the removal of trees has destroyed the fertility of the high lands. Forests break no longer the violence of the storms, and the high moors developed, since their denudation, vapours and fogs which extensively destroy vegetation. Observations made in the forest schools of Germany tend to prove that woods moderate the extremes of temperature, and that such extremes of heat and cold do not occur in well wooded districts, as are to be observed in regions devoid of forests.*

The causes and results of the destruction of forests in France have special significance for us in Ireland, connected intimately as that destruction has been with the creation of a peasant proprietary, such as is now taking place in Ireland.

" One effect of the French Revolution," says Consul Mason of Marseilles, in his report," was to divide the land throughout a large part of France among a greatly increased number of small peasant proprietors. They were poor, and compelled by circumstances to utilize every resource. If the few acres of a peasant were covered with forest, he cut the trees away, for the double reason that the timber was valuable and he needed the land for pasture. It was only after the trees were gone that he

learned that the destruction of the forest entailed the ruin of the pasturage that grew beneath its protecting boughs. The consequences have been disastrous throughout nearly the whole mountain region of south-eastern France. Hundred of thousands of acres of upland have become arid and barren wastes of plutonic earth, seamed by rugged chasms and gullies, which in the rainy season pour down torrents of mud and stones upon the fertile lands below, and fill the streams with sudden floods that devastate the valleys from mountain to sea."

V.—How re-forestation is effected and encouraged in the various European States.

All the principal countries in Europe have special government departments devoted to the care of the woods and forests, and, as a rule, have also schools of forestry for the education and training of the officials entrusted with the work. These forestry departments not alone protect the existing trees but also give aid and encouragement to private owners who may wish to re-timber their lands.

In France, the government supplies tree-plants and seeds to landowners, at only the cost of packing and transportation, and gives encouragement by the advice and suggestions of forestry officers.

There are two special government schools of forestry in the country, one at Nancy (superior), and one at Barres (primary and secondary), each with carefully defined courses of study. Strict rules are enforced for the protection of state forests, while even private owners are not allowed to cut down and clear their woods without giving notice to the Forest Department, which can prohibit the clearance if the maintenance of the woods is desirable on public grounds. The central government has also the right to force the communal governments to drain their swamps and wastes, with a view to rendering them suitable either for cultivation or for the growth of trees, and when this is done advances of state funds may be made under special conditions to the local authorities.*

In Germany one-third of the forests belong to the crown, one-sixth to local communities, and the remaining one-half to private owners. The administration of state forests is entrusted to the Minister of Agriculture, Domains (Public Estates), and Forests, under whom is a carefully organised department with local branches. There are, as in France, special academies for the instruction of persons who desire to enter this branch of the public service.

Under an Act of 1876, German communities are, under certain conditions, obliged to grow wood on such of their uncultivated lands as are not suitable for permanent agriculture or industrial purposes. The state, however, assists poorer communities by the contribution of funds towards the planting of such lands, f

In the Austrian Empire a similar system is adopted for the encouragement of forestry as has been described as existing in France and Germany. The cultivation and preservation of woods, and the administration of the forest laws, are entrusted to the Minister of Agriculture, under whom are various officers and inspectors. The Austrian forest inspector controls and commands private owners as to the manner and order in which they should cut their timber, as to the necessity of replanting, the preventing of waste, etc. In fact, the proprietor cannot exercise a single act of ownership except under the control and with the approval of the forest inspector. Forest schools have

also been established, and the local communities are compelled to plant districts which would otherwise lie waste.

Switzerland has also a Federal Forest Department, and in each canton there is a Chief Forester under whom the entire administration is placed. Private interests are regulated to the extent of requiring a new planting wherever there is a clearing made. This, however, need not necessarily cover the same area as that on which the trees have been cut down. It is the duty of the Forest Department to give advice to owners of plantations, and point out the necessity of renewal, replanting, and maintenance of trees in the various districts. From time immemorial, almost all the mountain cantons possessed forest laws, but by a law of 1876 the Federal Government assumed control, and undertook the supervision of forests, and the forestry question is now regarded as a matter of paramount national importance.

- * Report of Consul Mason of Marseilles,
- f Report of Consul-General Rame (Berlin).
- J Report of Consul-General Jussen (Vienna).
- § Report of Consul-General Winchester (Berne).

In Italy the general supervision of forests belongs to a special bureau in the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce. The immediate supervision of forests belongs to the provincial Forest Committees, which consist of the prefect of the province, the forest inspector, an engineer nominated by the Minister of Agriculture, and three members nominated by the provincial council. There is a government forest school at Vallambrosa, in Tuscany—a place celebrated by Milton in the *Paradise Lost* for the number of its leaves. The provincial forest committees adopt regulations for the preservation of forests, and decide upon requests for the reduction of wooded areas into cultivated lands.

The forest laws of Italy contain various carefully framed regulations for the encouragement of planting, and the protection of the woods and trees on the lands within forest bounds.*

VI.—How Forestry should be protected and encouraged in Ireland.

The first step which should be taken for the protection of timber in Ireland, is to provide against the wholesale destruction of such plantations as we have, a destruction with which we are threatened by the extension of the Land Purchase Acts. Provisions should be introduced into future acts prohibiting the cutting of trees without the permission of the Land Commission, or whatever government department may be entrusted with the duty of supervision. But more than this is required. Special legislation should be devised for the encouragement of planting, especially in those large and numerous districts of the country which now lie waste and useless. In the promised measures for the reform of the local government of the country, care should be taken to give power to the new local bodies to undertake the planting of waste lands, and for acquiring such lands as may be considered suitable and desirable for the cultivation of timber. Supervision over all lands so planted should be given to whatever central body is entrusted with the care of public works and government loans, and that body should also be given authority to suggest and compel the planting of trees, where such work would be for the benefit of the community at large.

Bailey, William F. 'Forestry in Ireland'. - Dublin: Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, Vol. IX Part LXIX, 1888/1889, pp 429-435

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