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ILLUSTRATED ADDRESS GIVEN BY STATE FORESTER,
E. M. GRIFFITH.

Besides emphasizing special features of the address by the use of stereopticon slides, Mr. Griffith said in part:

A year ago it was my privilege to tell the Farmers' Conference something of the forestry work that is being done by the state of Wisconsin. Today I wish to emphasize the value of forestry to the farmer, in the establishment and care of the woodlot.

The woodlot is of no less importance to the farmer in the southern part of the state than it is to the northern farmer who, perhaps, derives his largest and surest revenue from his woodlot. It is a valuable asset to any farm and daily growing more so, as the prices of timber continually rise with the decrease of the supply. With a good woodlot, a farmer may be entirely independent of the lumber market and may even derive a steady income from the sale of poles, posts, fuel, bark, etc.; but it is a great mistake to think that a woodlot will take care of itself. With very little thought and labor, a woodlot may be improving all the time instead of becoming less valuable.

It is poor management to take the best trees from your woodlot every year, leaving the poorer trees and less valuable species to develop and reproduce themselves. Ordinarily, the first thing to be done is to clean up the woodlot. Take out the trees that are dead, dying, suppressed or over mature. They are taking up room and not yielding any profit. Take out the less desirable species, and the large crowned trees that are taking up enough

space for several other trees. However, do not open up the woodlot too rapidly, as the soil will dry out and grass may obtain a foothold. If the blanks formed by taking out trees do not restock by self sown seed from the best species still standing, sow seed yourself or plant with young seedlings obtained from a nurseryman or a forest near by. If the woodlot is open and park like, any sod that has been allowed to form must be destroyed. If there is no young timber to be injured, the grass may be burned off; otherwise, it must be plowed under; or seed cannot reach the soil and germinate. In an open woodlot that has no young growth, grazing does little harm, but a permanent woodlot should have young growth and no grass, and cattle, sheep and even horses should be rigorously excluded.

It is difficult to advise definitely as to what species should be encouraged, as so much depends on the character of the land and its location. If possible, the woodlot should be on the highest land on the farm that is not arable, so that it will hold the snow water like a great sponge until the hot months, when the moisture will sink to the cultivated fields on a lower level.

White pine is one of the best trees in Wisconsin. The timber will always be in demand and it is a good species to plant. Hardwoods can be grown easily by gathering nuts or acorns in the woods and planting them in the ground to a depth of from one and one-half to three inches.

If a farmer wishes to grow timber, he should look out for quality, but if he is growing trees for cordwood, he will look out for quantity. In both cases the stand must be kept dense, so that the trees will grow rapidly in height, instead of forming side branches. If the stand is not kept dense, there will be too much side light, which causes the dormant buds under the

bark to develop into branches, and this means knots and, hence, poor lumber. A well stocked, even-aged forest will have the greatest amount of timber to the acre and if quantity is desired, the timber should be thinned out as soon as such thinnings will pay for themselves, before the stand has become so dense that there is a fierce struggle for existence, which lessens in general the increase in wood, although it results in the survival of the fittest. That is, such thinnings allow the trees to gain in diameter more rapidly, which makes quantity of wood, while if the stand had been kept dense and the struggle allowed to go on until the trees had attained their height growth, the surviving trees would have very long, clear trunks, which, after thinning, would increase rapidly in diameter with little tendency to form side branches.

If a woodlot is not too large, it may pay to do some pruning. With pine or other conifers, it is a comparatively simple matter, as the limbs can be cut off cleanly, close to the bark, with a sharp ax, as high as a man can reach. Pruning hardwoods is more difficult and less satisfactory and should not be undertaken unless there is certainty that it will pay. Pruning should be done only when the trees are young, so that the wounds will heal rapidly, and only to the trees that are to be allowed to mature.

In cutting, protect the young growth in every possible way. Do your cutting in deep snow, if possible, with this end in view. Dry tops, brush and defective wood should be burned in wet weather, so that they will not be left to feed a fire in dry weather. Fire, above all things should be guarded against. A fire that will not injure mature timber will destroy young growth, thus doing inestimable damage, and will sometimes burn off the humus or forest soil that is necessary for the development of young growth. A very large percentage of the forest fires in this state are caused by farmers who are clearing or burning for pasture and much greater care should be exercised by them.

I am often asked whether it would be a paying investment to start a timber plantation or woodlot from the beginning, and my answer is emphatically, yes. For years it has been thought that no timber growth but that which was mature was of any value. The growing scarcity of timber and its increasing value has brought about a change. There must be young growth for years before there can be mature timber, and even though a man may not live to see his timber plantation grown into mature, merchantable timber, he will live to see it have a money value as young growth, and will get returns from his thinnings in comparatively few years. The return on a woodlot as a long time investment may be estimated at from four to six per cent on the principal invested.

Under the present laws especially, is it wise to start plantations. Nearly every farm has some waste land that is not used for either field or meadow, perhaps because it is too steep and hilly, or of broken and uneven surface, or sandy, gravelly or even stony. The state has now made it possible for the owners of such land to put it under a valuable crop and hold it exempt from taxation for a period of thirty years, through the enactment of a law known as chapter 592 of the laws of 1907.

In view of the great public benefit that will result from the cultivation of timber trees, any owner of land is permitted to set apart a portion, not exceeding forty acres, and to plant it with timber trees not less than 1,200 to the acre, and be exempted from taxation for thirty years from the time of planting. This exemption does not apply to lands that are worth more than ten dollars an acre, nor to those that are within two miles of any incorporated city or village, but the State Forester may nullify the latter condition by a written approval. The trees must be kept alive and in a healthy condition, but after they have been planted ten years, they may be thinned out, but 600

must be left upon each acre. This privilege extends to corporations and co-partnerships as well as to individuals.

Any farmer who contemplates planting trees of particular species may write to the Forest Service, Washington, D. C., and get a list of "Forest Planting Leaflets" for the different species, any of which will be sent to him free of charge upon application.