

# *Our Forest Research Work\**

By VALENTIN SAJOR  
*Senior Forester and Asst. Chief  
Division of Forest Investigation*

This evening, I will talk on "Our Forest Research Work" about which the public has heard little or practically nothing.

Our country is blessed with a vast and valuable forest wealth from which the Government derives a considerable income and hundred thousands of Filipinos could depend for a livelihood. Standing watch over these varied forest resources, like a guardian angel, is the Bureau of Forestry which by law is charged to administer for the public interest and for their perpetuation in productive condition by wise use. It takes care of both the needs of today and the requirements of tomorrow. To this end, the Bureau encourages the utilization of trees and other forest products, regulates through experience and knowledge gained by research and study, the methods of cutting, collecting, and using these forest products so as to insure their regeneration and to maintain them, as much as possible, under a state of continuous production.

Those of you who have had occasion to transact business with the Bureau of Forestry perhaps do not know that it fixes in your license just how much timber or forest products you shall cut, or when you get its suggestion as to the plants that should be used for planting on a certain site, or when you are told that your pasture area is overgrazed requiring you to reduce the number of animals in terms of its carrying capacity, or when you get back your chunk of wood properly identified and with the information what it is good

for, that, to be able to give such information there were years of persevering efforts of scientists at their microscopes, or foresters at their sample forests gathering data and recording one set of observations after another, seeking facts and gleaned truths concerning the complicated methods of Nature.

One of the seven Divisions of the Bureau of Forestry at present is the Division of Forest Investigation. As its name implies, it concerns itself with the seemingly monotonous task of peering into that great, little known world, peopled by trees and plants and the numerous animal-life and organism that make up the forests. On the outcome of the research activities of this Division depends in a great measure the success of the other functions of the Bureau of Forestry. The administration, management and protection of our forests, the reclamation and reforestation of barren lands and many other tasks of the Philippine Forest Service **MUST HAVE** as their reliable facts and figures. The Division of Forest Investigation gathers, correlates and interprets these essential facts and figures.

Likewise, this Division takes charge of all studies pertaining to the growths and habits of trees. It conducts investigations on the best way to grow a forest so as to secure the most out of a tract of land and out of efforts put in it. This seems a relatively simple task, but it is not at all. Unlike the agriculturist, the forester handles a crop the harvest of which he may not live to see. He is interested in managing his forest lands so that he

*(Continued on page 12)*

---

\* Radio Talk delivered over DZFM, April 16, 1950 at 7:00 P.M.

## OUR FOREST . . .

(Continued from page 7)

may get from them the maximum benefits without impairing in the least their ability to give more of these benefits. Other countries are doing it and we are well on our way to doing it ourselves.

One of the pressing problems which is giving great concern to the Bureau of Forestry at present is the rapid exhaustion of our valuable species, like **MOLAVE**, **AKLE** and **TINDALO**, which, because of their superior qualities, are mostly cut and used for high class furniture and cabinet work and for high quality house panelling. To remedy their complete exhaustion, the Bureau of Forestry has looked into our forests for other trees in sufficient quantity, which at present are not utilized, or if at all, only to a limited extent. One very good example is the **DAO**. A few years ago, this tree was not utilized by our people, but through the aid of the Bureau of Forestry it is now in great demand and it commands a high price for furniture making and panelling.

The Government is interested not only in raising, managing and harvesting the forest crop in a business-like way, but is also concerned with the proper and economical use of the crop harvested. To illustrate again, let us take the principal forest crop—**WOOD**. From the sawmills, wood comes out in the form of lumber. This lumber becomes the object of a series of studies. Its drying properties must be determined so that when put into any kind of use, it would maintain itself well in shape. It is one of the tasks of the Bureau of Forestry to find how strong a particular species of wood is, and the best place it would fit in any use it is intended for. To protect the wood from the elements, from the ravages of insects and decay organism, the Bureau of Forestry investigates the best and at the same time the least expensive preservatives for it. In all these lines of activities, some fundamentals of research have already been made although more could have been

## WHAT OUR FORESTS . . .

(Continued from page 6)

municipalities are provided with communal forests. Permits for the taking of timber and forest products may be secured from the municipal mayors. During the past year the Bureau of Forestry also issued 9,344 private gratuitous permits authorizing the cutting of 152,076 cubic meters of first group timber to be used for the construction of private homes, and 78 gratuitous permits authorizing the 79,200 cubic meters to be used in the construction of public works projects, especially of bridges and school houses.

One of the greatest dangers to the permanency of our forests is illegal *kaiñgin* making. Some of the thoughtlessness of our people clear forest lands without permit and regardless of the topographical and economic condition of the land. After a couple of years, the harvest of crops in such clearings dwindle and they move to a fresh forest tract. In this manner have come the vast *cogonales* aggregating over 5,000,000 hectares which at present are mostly of no economic value to us. At great expense the strategic areas of these *cogonales*, especially those along destructive watersheds, are now being reforested by the Bureau of Forestry. Had our people exercised some foresight we would now be saved the expense and task of reforestation work. It should be said that even now, despite the vigilance of the Bureau of Forestry, destruction of the forest lands still goes on in some sections of our country. It is imperative therefore that our people should understand the folly of wasting our forest lands, not only for the valuable timber simply burned in *kaiñgins* but also for the expensiveness of the task of bringing back cover to such lands.

---

accomplished if necessary facilities for the task were available. Work along the field of **FOREST RESEARCH** in the Philippines is also equally handicapped by the lack of *full time personnel* besides having no adequate facilities. (Cf. pp. 27-28).