

THE NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF FORESTRY

Published annually by the N.Z. Institute of Foresters, Inc.

VOL. V.

1948

No. 5

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Journal.—We regret delay in publication of this Journal, but trust that this tardiness may in some measure have its compensation in allowing the inclusion of some of the forestry papers presented to the Seventh Pacific Science Congress. Unfortunately it has not been possible to include all these, as this would have necessitated a separate issue, a course beyond the financial ability of this Institute.

Seventh Pacific Science Congress.—New Zealand has the honour of being host to this international gathering during February, 1949; and the New Zealand Institute of Foresters that of sponsoring a forestry section within the Soil Resources Division. As we go to press the Congress has already met in its first session at Auckland.

New Zealand foresters are fortunate in having some distinguished overseas members of the profession among the delegates to this Congress. The chairman of the section is that outstanding personality of American forestry, Dr. H. H. Chapman, an Honorary Member of the New Zealand Institute of Foresters.

The striking paper given by M. Marcel Leloup, Director of the Forestry and Forest Products Division of FAO, is included in this Journal, but in addressing the Auckland session he emphasised a further point which all foresters would surely do well to ponder. He stated that a great gulf had appeared to lie between the forester as the preserver and the sawmiller and wood merchant as the exploiters. But that gulf is now being bridged, and the faults which the forester has been wont to point out for generations are being put an end to voluntarily. On the other hand the foresters must learn not to be over-zealous "conservators" for what must be the forestry of the future will be the linking of the two.

Obituaries.—We regret to record the death of Harry Borrer Kirk, Professor Emeritus of Victoria University College and an Honorary Member of the New Zealand Institute of Foresters. Professor Kirk

will be remembered with respect and affection by all who knew him, and particularly by those who were privileged to study under him during his long association with the Biology Department of Victoria College. He would take pains to know every one of his students, and was always willing to detach himself from his own work to assist them with theirs. His interest in them went far beyond their botanical and zoological studies: he was keenly interested in the welfare of the student body and in the field of sport.

Throughout his long and active life he had many contacts with forestry; he showed an unflinching interest in the Institute of Foresters and an appreciation of the functions of such a professional body. In the days when organized forestry research had scarcely begun, Kirk's studies included the starch content of kahikatea in relation to *Anobium* attack, the food of opossums in New Zealand forests, the identification of indigenous conifers by bark characteristics and also by wood anatomy. Professor Kirk's published works were numerous, though his teaching responsibilities, his thoroughness and above all his readiness to assist others left little time for these. If one considers the guidance and assistance he has given to the work of so many, his contribution to various branches of biological knowledge has been very significant.

The untimely death of Arthur Frederick Clark at Wellington in May, 1948, removed one who has made a major contribution to applied entomology in relation to forestry and forest products. Born in England in 1899, Clark joined the staff of a London bank at an early age. He saw four years' service with the Imperial forces in World War I before being invalided out as a result of being gassed. Neither his temperament nor his impaired health made banking an acceptable career for him, so in 1919 he emigrated to Tasmania and a year later came to New Zealand, where he took any work available in order to accumulate enough capital to establish himself in a new career.

When the Canterbury College School of Forestry opened in 1925, Clark was a foundation student, completing his associateship in 1927. During this period an interest in entomology was stimulated by A. L. Tonnoir, Assistant Curator of the Canterbury Museum and lecturer in forest entomology, and on leaving the School of Forestry Clark became assistant in forest entomology under Dr. D. Miller at the Cawthron Institute on secondment from the State Forest Service. Here he carried out important research on both forest and timber insect pests.

In 1936 Clark joined the State Advances Corporation where his knowledge of timbers and timber destroying insects was invaluable. The fact that he took his B.A. degree during this period illustrates a strong streak of persistence and determination which his quiet, unassuming bearing and charm of manner belied. Rising to the position of Chief Technical Officer he acquired a unique knowledge of the

problems of timber protection and maintenance in buildings, and was instrumental in developing improved techniques in the use of timber in housing and control of wood destroying insects and fungi.

Clark always retained the keenest interest in forestry as a whole and in the welfare of the forestry profession. He was Secretary of the New Zealand Institute of Foresters in 1938-40 and a member of its Council on several occasions.

Professional Forestry Education.—The past year has seen some developments towards the provision of facilities for the training of New Zealand forestry students, but finality still appears remote.

Early in the year the Senate of the University of New Zealand obtained the services of Professor S. M. Wadham of Melbourne to advise on professional forestry training. As a result of his report, the Senate approved the establishment of a School of Forestry at Auckland University College. This school would provide a four-year undergraduate course, one year of which would be spent in a forest environment away from the College, preferably at the State Forest Service's research and training establishment at Rotorua, and with the assistance of departmental officers as instructors.

The Senate has recently reaffirmed this decision, although the Forest Service continues to favour a graduate school controlled by the University but associated with the departmental research and sub-professional training centre at Rotorua. In support it is claimed that this arrangement would be in accordance with the opinion of last year's Empire Forestry Conference in requiring a degree in science as a preliminary to professional forestry instruction; also that it would make for economy in staff, accommodation and facilities. Opponents claim that such a course would be unduly long and costly, and that the full B.Sc. course is unnecessary. There may also be some fear that, notwithstanding the control of teaching and examinations remaining with the University, such a course would be unduly influenced by departmental policy and practice.

The committee appointed by the New Zealand Institute of Foresters in 1947 to formulate a policy on higher forestry training was able to achieve unanimity on two points only: that it should be on a graduate basis and entirely controlled by the University. Consequently it was decided to seek the opinion of members before submitting an Institute policy to the Senate. Replies to a questionnaire showed that 73% of members favoured re-establishing a forestry school in New Zealand rather than sending the required number of students to overseas schools. Opinion was divided almost equally between undergraduate and graduate forestry instruction, the latter being taken to mean a two-year course following a degree in science, agriculture, forestry or arts. Rotorua was substantially preferred as the location of either a graduate or undergraduate school.

It is unfortunate that this questionnaire did not begin by seeking members' opinions on the number of forestry graduates required annually in this country. The other questions cannot be considered properly without first reaching some conclusion on this. Will the number be sufficient to justify the staffing and equipping of a school of high standard ?

After the present abnormal conditions have passed it seems unlikely that the annual intake of forestry graduates into State and other forest activities will exceed 6 or 8. If this be so, the cost of the Senate's scheme would be excessive. Even with the undoubted economy in having a school associated with departmental organizations, the cost would probably exceed that of providing bursaries at the best overseas schools. Finance should not of course be the sole consideration ; but the benefit New Zealand forestry would derive from having science graduates with some local forestry background as students at some of the best overseas schools would be substantial.

So far the attitude of the Government towards the proposals of the University and the Forest Service has not been announced, but already delay in providing facilities locally has necessitated the Forest Service sending graduate trainees to Oxford and Canberra. Provision of overseas bursaries must continue so long as the present stalemate exists ; it should continue indefinitely in preference to adoption of the University's present proposals or to the possible establishment of a departmentally controlled school.

Utilization of Exotic Forests.—New Zealand has entered a new era in its forest economy. The policy of exotic planting to bridge the gap between virgin and second growth indigenous forests and to supplement these latter is now beginning to reach fruition. The present extent of this crop and the speed with which our economy must be adjusted to cope with it would undoubtedly amaze those who initiated our afforestation policy at the end of the last century or planned its expansion after World War I.

The enormous and unbalanced planting of exotics by the State and commercial interests during the decade from 1925 is too well known to need description here : emphasis is naturally centred on the pumice lands of the North Island where the great majority of the plantings of this period are located, and where the concentration of age-classes is greatest. Planning of utilization in this region must necessarily be on an heroic scale if waste is to be avoided in the predominating short-rotation *Pinus radiata*, and if the longer rotation species are to receive the thinning they so badly need.

At present the Government has under consideration the establishment, at Murapara on the edge of Kaingaroa State Forest, of an integrated conversion project for saw-timber, chemical and mechanical pulp. Concurrently there is news of large milling and pulping developments by the largest forestry company : other forest owners in this region also have plans for utilization in the near future.

These developments are of the greatest importance in the national economy and are naturally much in the public eye at present. However, without venturing to discuss the future export market on which their success so largely rests, it should be stressed that there is a danger of the highly abnormal developments in this locality being regarded, at least by the public, as the normal and ultimate objective of our forest policy, to the detriment of the less spectacular, but perhaps economically and technically sounder exotic forest developments elsewhere, and neglect of indigenous forest management.

History of New Zealand Forestry.—How often in attempting to make an appreciation of a forest situation is it found that early records are incomplete or entirely lacking? To base conclusions on present evidence alone is often to give a false interpretation of the position, through failure to comprehend earlier technical and administrative factors. Official records have a tendency to gloss over failures, to take for granted a knowledge of conditions long since changed, and give undue emphasis to a minor point which appealed to the often untrained recorder's fancy.

It seems an obvious duty of the New Zealand Institute of Foresters to record as much of New Zealand's early forest history as is not already lost beyond retrieve. The longer we delay the more difficult does the task become. This Journal would be improved by inclusion of historical articles; but it is suggested that the Institute should go further and become the repository of information, comprehensive or restricted in scope, on New Zealand's forest history with a view to its ultimate collation and publication in book form. Let us begin now.

New Zealand-Australian Timber and Forestry Conference.—This conference was held at Rotorua from the 12th to 17th April, 1948. It was initiated by the Dominion Federated Sawmillers' Association in collaboration with the State Forest Service, the N.Z. Institute of Foresters, the Dominion Forest Owners' Association, the N.Z. Timber Merchants' Federation and the N.Z. Boxmakers' Association. There was a wide representation of Australian interests from the timber trade, the State Forest Departments and Commonwealth organizations. In all over 150 attended, so that it was quite the largest conference of its kind ever held in New Zealand. Two days were spent in the presentation and discussion of papers, and three in field trips to the main exotic forests of the district, both State and private, and to the indigenous Te Whaiti State Forest.

The conference was most successful; not only did it enable widely separated foresters to meet and exchange ideas, but it also brought together forest owners and representatives of all branches of the timber trade. Each obtained a better appreciation of the other's problems and a realization that the interests of those concerned with the growing, conversion and marketing of wood are,

in the long run, identical. Perhaps the most useful function of the conference was in demonstrating to the Australian timber trade what New Zealand can reasonably hope to do in supplying the Australian softwood market. In effect, we were displaying our wares to the most likely buyer, and these wares were freely admitted to be impressive.

The papers presented covered a wide range of subjects; they have been published in the Dominion Federated Sawmillers' Association section of the *New Zealand National Review*, and some are abstracted in the "New Zealand Contemporaries" section of this journal.