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## EDITORIAL NOTES

**Forestry Training.**—The Annual Reports of the Director of Forestry for recent years have outlined proposals for the development of a departmental training centre at Rotorua and a series of short specialized courses have already been held. A comprehensive training scheme is contemplated which will include a two-year course on a post-graduate basis to provide full professional training in forestry. Entry to this course will be open to those who have completed a science or arts degree in approved subjects, normally as trainees within the Service. Instruction will also be provided for field trainees and for other sections of the staff.

Members of the Institute will welcome the revival of systematic forestry training in New Zealand after a lapse of 10 years since the closing of the University School of Forestry. The period immediately preceding the war was one of evolution in professional forestry education elsewhere in the English speaking world. A movement became evident, more particularly at Oxford though also in America, to strengthen the basic scientific education in the training of a professional forester. This trend is apparent in the State Forest Service proposals.

Whether the proposals offer a completely satisfactory solution to the problems of professional forestry training in this country is a question on which foresters may differ. Undoubtedly the method has its advantages, particularly from the departmental aspect. A more thorough grounding in the sciences ancillary to forestry will be possible than in the previous four-year undergraduate course in the University school, and the Service will be better able to regulate recruitment to the Professional Division. However, the system is not without its disadvantages. A training period of at least 6 years will be necessary for the student to complete his science degree on a part time basis and receive instruction in applied forestry. The basic and applied sciences can hardly be so well integrated as in the

undergraduate course. The student will have the opportunity of gaining field experience during the university vacations, but as a student of pure science, his ability to derive benefit from such experience will be limited until he has had formal instruction in its application to forestry: botany and mathematics do not enable one to grasp the principles of silviculture or mensuration unaided.

Should entry to the Rotorua school be restricted to departmental nominees, professional forestry training will be available in New Zealand only to those who join the staff of the Forest Service. Moreover, we understand that the question of University recognition as a professional school is still undecided. If the university is not prepared to grant a degree or diploma in forestry to those of its science graduates completing the two-year post graduate course at Rotorua, they are likely to be at a disadvantage professionally and academically to graduates of other forestry schools, if not in New Zealand at least overseas.

Whatever views may be held regarding a professional school, few will deny the necessity for organized technical and administrative training for recruits to the field staff of the Forest Service. Standards of practice can hardly be raised without systematic instruction and, at a time when the shortage of trained staff is so acute, it will allow the latent ability of junior officers to be better judged and developed. Provision of refresher courses for more senior officers and specialized instruction to qualify staff in their widening spheres of activity are steps essential to the development of any forestry organisation.

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**Overseas Study.**—The State Forest Service is to be congratulated on the organization of tours of duty in the United States for four officers returning from overseas military service. Each was assigned a particular field of study and every assistance was proved by American foresters. The opportunity to make first hand observation and establish personal contacts will not only be of the greatest benefit to the officers concerned, but must have a stimulating effect on New Zealand forestry. It is hoped that the practice will be continued as a part of the general training scheme.

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**Forestry and Public Opinion.**—A letter to the Editor in this issue draws attention to the need for an enlightened public opinion on forestry. By its nature forestry is predominantly a governmental function, and in a democratic system must in the main be conditioned by popular ideas. Consequently the necessity for developing a sound outlook is obvious if forestry practice is not to be the victim of its would-be friends as much as of its opponents.

The majority of foresters being Government servants are necessarily restricted in their utterances. It is usually held that the cultivation of an informed public opinion is the function of a popular

non-professional society. But if sound propaganda is not provided through such a channel, the professional society cannot afford to disregard the omission. Members should give careful consideration to what steps the Institute should take to develop a better informed public opinion on forestry.

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**Wind.**—During the past winter Canterbury suffered two storms of exceptional severity which wrought havoc among exotic forests over most of the province. Some 70 million board feet of millable timber were razed by wind and, to a less extent, snow. The greatest damage was suffered by Balmoral State Forest where approximately 5,000 acres, including 30 million board feet of millable trees, were severely affected. Nearly all the damage occurred in the space of a few minutes at the height of the gale: older stands suffered most and both thinned and unthinned *Pinus radiata* was flattened. Elsewhere, State, local body and private forests also suffered the greatest damage among the older age classes. Further details of one of these storms are given in the notes section below.

Such a disaster serves but to emphasize the vital importance of wind as a factor in New Zealand silviculture. This journal and official reports contain numerous references to the effect of wind in both indigenous and exotic forests. In the former it has been argued that the perpetuation of some of the main commercial species is dependent to a great extent on wind throw, often on an extensive scale, to produce conditions favourable to their regeneration. Certainly wind will have an important bearing on the management of our podocarp forests in causing the overthrow of many of the podocarps that may be retained as well as of the second tier species.

In our exotics it is not only against such windthrow as Canterbury has recently suffered that the silviculturalist must guard: that is apt to be the price to be paid for growing forests on non-forest land where rooting is notoriously shallow. There are few districts where wind does not cause an appreciable amount of stem injury to many exotics. More care is called for in the selection and siting of species as well as in their subsequent treatment. The wind factor perhaps more than any other must be borne in mind in adapting to our own use silvicultural practices developed abroad; practices usually suited to climatic conditions markedly different from those of New Zealand.