

# IRISH FORESTRY

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## *Introduction*

THE papers which follow were read at a symposium entitled 'Peatland Forestry', held in the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the Queen's University of Belfast, on the 19th and 20th September, 1961. This symposium was the second of two such meetings which have been held in Belfast. In 1959 a course, originally designed simply to communicate to foresters in Northern Ireland the results of some ecological research carried out by the Botany Department of the University, was expanded to make it a comprehensive examination of the ecological basis for forestry in this country ('Forestry and the Land' Sept. 21-23, 1959). This course was attended by a large and representative body of those concerned with forestry in Ireland and it soon became clear that much of value to Irish Forestry might spring from such gatherings quite apart from anything which the formal programme had to offer. The 1961 symposium was arranged in response to many and repeated requests for another such meeting.

The particular objects of the symposium were to promote the exchange of ideas and information on the problems of peatland forestry, the research directed towards their solution, and the progress of peatland forestry in the British Isles. The contributors included three research officers representing the British Forestry Commission, the Forestry Division of the Irish Department of Lands, and the Forestry Division of the Northern Ireland Ministry of Agriculture. The seven remaining speakers were drawn from a number of research centres in Scotland and Ireland. Most of the papers have been revised for publication; some have been enlarged by the inclusion of additional material, some have been condensed and one appears in summary only as its substance is to be published elsewhere.

The administrative arrangements for both meetings were made by Mr. R. H. Semple, M.A., the Director of Extra-Mural Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast. Without his encouragement and active support the meetings would not have been held. His help, together with that of his staff, is most gratefully acknowledged. For the simultaneous publication of most of the papers under one cover we have to thank the Society of Irish Foresters.

R. E. PARKER.