

Society's Activities

Illustrated Lecture in Dublin

AN illustrated lecture delivered by Dr. Mooney on the "Vegetation of Ethiopia", was held in the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin on the 9th December, 1961.

With excellent slides he described the different vegetation belts, ranging from semi-desert to rain forest.

The main types he outlined, in a country which consists of a low-lying coastal plain to the east and a high plateau to the west, were semi-desert, savanna, evergreen scrub and bamboo in the low lands changing to evergreen montane forest and high level bamboo as altitude increased, and followed at still higher elevations by Afro-alpine vegetation. Also described were the rain forest, gallery forest and sand dune belts, which are indigenous to Ethiopia.

Among the many interesting plant species mentioned were junipers, African box and eucalypts, members of the evergreen scrub vegetation; *Podocarpus*, pencil cedar, African olive, giant lobelia, *Erica arborea* (giant heath), of the evergreen montane forest and giant groundsel and the more familiar *Deschampsia*, *Festuca* and *Poa* species of the Afro-alpine vegetation belt. Tree ferns, palms, mangroves, blue gum and *Salix* species were mentioned with regard to the rain and gallery forests.

Dr. Mooney also referred to the potentialities of bamboo for paper manufacture, and the valuable commercial timbers to be found in the rain forests.

The President, Professor Clear, brought the evening to a close by complimenting the speaker on his interesting lecture and proposing a vote of thanks.

G.J.G.

Illustrated Lecture in Sligo

A meeting of the Society of Irish Foresters took place in Sligo on the 3rd February, 1962. To a packed house in the Imperial Hotel, Mr. O. V. Mooney gave a lecture with slides. The title of his talk was "Austrian Recollections". The material for the lecture was gathered by Mr. Mooney, when he and Mr. S. M. O'Sullivan were delegates for this country at the 13th Annual Congress of the International Union of Forest Research Organisation at Vienna. Delegates from 39 nations attended the Congress.

The tour, starting in Vienna, covered a large and representative area of the country. We were shown many aspects of forestry in Austria, where timber and its by-products are a major industry.

Forestry not only brings wealth to the state, but it also provides a livelihood, in conjunction with agriculture, for thousands of farmers and small holders. Small privately-owned forests are, in fact, the largest area under timber in the country, at 52% of the total.

We were shown the problems of afforestation in the Pannonian Lowlands, a large expanse of flat unbroken plain with very alkaline soils that militate against efforts to establish a forest crop. We saw slides of the Vienna Woods, situated on the heights and valley slopes of a ridge of low mountains just outside Vienna. Here, we were told, the main emphasis was on selection high forest. Oak and beech in mixture with *Abies alba*, *Picea abies* and *Larix europaea* form the selection. Prime stems for veneer was the ultimate aim.

We were shown many aspects of farm forestry in the Tyrol and other areas. Over the years many of these farms had degenerated to a sorry state. This, we were told, was primarily due to poor access to the farms and consequent lack of development. A form of shifting cultivation, often practised, was also blamed for soil deterioration. These and other problems of the hill farm-forest were demonstrated and also some methods that had been adopted to try and improve matters.

Many questions followed the lecture and finally the Vice-President, Mr. McNamara, thanked the speaker and closed the meeting.

M.J.S.