

Society's Activities

Twentieth Annual General Meeting

THE Twentieth Annual General Meeting of the Society was held in the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin on Saturday the 24th of March at 7 p.m. The President, Professor T. Clear was in the chair. He opened the private meeting.

Minutes.

The minutes of the Nineteenth Annual General Meeting, which had been published in the Journal, were taken as read and were approved and signed.

Council's Report.

The Council's Report was then read by the Secretary :—

Meetings.

Six meetings of the Council were held during the year. Attendances were as follows :

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|----------------|-----------------------|---|
| Prof. Clear (Chairman) | 6 | Mr. F. Harding | ... | 5 |
| Mr. C. MacCarthy | ... | 6 | Mr. H. M. Fitzpatrick | 5 |
| Mr. G. Gallagher | ... | 6 | Mr. M. McNamara | 5 |
| Miss S. Cahill | ... | 6 | Mr. M. Cosgrave | 5 |
| Mr. M. Swan | ... | 6 | Mr. D. Mangan | 4 |
| Miss Furlong | ... | 5 | Mr. M. Sharkey | 3 |
| Mr. A. Hanan | ... | 5 | Mr. T. Hunt | 0 |

The year's activities opened with an illustrated lecture by Mr. P. J. O'Hare, B.Agr.Sc., Manager of the Glenamoy Peatland Research Station, on the Reclamation of Peats. In pursuance of the Council's policy to distribute its activities over the country, this meeting was held in Galway and the main organising was undertaken by the local members. This meeting was an outstanding success, a tribute to local organisation and a great encouragement to the Council. It was followed after a short interval by an illustrated talk by Mr. T. A. Barry of Bórd na Móna on Peats. This meeting was held in Kilkenny and again the brunt of organising fell on the shoulders of our local members. This meeting also was an unqualified success. The success of these two meetings and the enthusiasm of those attending have confirmed the Council's belief that the Society's activities should be spread over the country and this policy will be continued.

The Annual General Meeting was held as usual in the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin early in March. It was again noted that the number of members attending for the Private Business was very small in relation to our membership, despite the fact that two important motions were listed. It was suggested that the term Private Business might be misleading as it appears some members took it as referring to a meeting of the Council and not as is intended, to a meeting of the general body of members. The title of this part of the A.G.M. is now altered to Members' Business and the Council hopes for a better attendance in future. The Council wishes to stress that this part of the A.G.M. is the most important part, and it is to enable the general body of members to discuss the affairs of the Society and to help and direct the Council on the policy to be pursued. At present the time allowed for this, the members' part of the A.G.M., is very short, only one hour. This is not because of any wish on the Council's part to hurry over this important section but simply because it is rarely found that members' business occupies to the full even this short time.

The Council were fortunate to secure Mr. E. R. Huggard, Lecturer in Surveying and Forest Engineering at Bangor University, to address the Society on the subject of "The Planning of Forest Engineering Activities" and notes that this section of the A.G.M. was very well attended.

The Annual Study Tour was held in early June in West Cork and Kerry with Glengarriff as headquarters. It was attended by some 46 members and the Council feels justified in calling it a success. They wish to thank all those concerned in the organising of it and also to thank the Minister for Lands for permission to visit State forests and for the help and co-operation of his Department.

During the year the Society visited Monasterevan Forest, Co. Kildare; Pettigo Forest, Co. Donegal; Glenmalur Forest, Co. Wicklow; Borris Forest, Co. Carlow and Cong Forest, Co. Galway. Also through the kindness of the Northern Ministry of Agriculture and the hard work of some of our members in the North, the Society visited Barons-

court and Lislap forests. The Council wish to thank most sincerely all those responsible for a very enjoyable and most instructive week-end.

While the Council are satisfied that the Society is in a healthy and active condition, nevertheless there are signs of weakness which will have to be watched. In the elections for the incoming Council there was no competition for any of the Office Bearer posts and the outgoing officers were all declared elected without a contest. Looking back over the lists of Office Bearers for several years past we find the same names recurring—only the post held varies. This is not a healthy sign as it indicates a lack of interest and enthusiasm. Also for the second year in succession we have to record the non-attendance at all Council meetings of an elected representative.

We know that there are frequent changes of address among our members especially those employed by the Forestry Division and so far as is possible we try to keep in touch with these changes. But this is not always possible and sometimes we miss or are late in noting the change. It would greatly facilitate the Secretary if members would notify him of changes of address giving both the old address, for identification, and the new. It would also ensure that the member received all correspondence and literature as issued.

Abstract of Accounts for 1962.

The abstract of accounts had been circulated with the notice of the meeting to all members. It appears in this issue.

The adoption of the abstract of accounts was proposed by Mr. McEvoy and seconded by Mr. Galvin.

Report of Subcommittee.

Mr. Fitzpatrick as Chairman of the Subcommittee set up under Motion of the previous A.G.M. "to consider the possibility of the Society's surplus funds being used to publish, separate from the Journal, original works or translations concerned with Forestry or to undertake other activities consistent with the Constitution of the Society", reported on behalf of the Council. His Committee comprised himself as Chairman, Professor Clear (President), Mr. Hanan (Treasurer), Mr. Sharkey (Business Editor) and Mr. N. O'Carroll. During the year they co-opted Mr. O. V. Mooney and Mr. T. McEvoy.

At their first meeting they investigated closely what might be regarded as our surplus funds and concluded it might be around £500. Possibilities mooted were :

Translations—

- (1) Wiedemann's Silviculture.
- (2) Pruning of Forest Trees (from German).
- (3) Soil Science (Russian).

Publications—

- (4) *Pinus contorta* Volume Tables in conjunction with the Forestry Division.
- (5) Forestry in Ireland—to be written by a team, the members contributing signed chapters, all working under an editor to be appointed by the Council.

Other—

- (6) Headquarters for Society.
- (7) Course of Study for Diploma in Forestry.
- (8) Subsidy towards travelling on foreign Study Tours.
- (9) Study Seminar.

After a full discussion of each project it was decided to recommend the publication of a book on Forestry in Ireland. This book would be somewhat on the lines of Dr. Sabroe's book on Denmark with which most members are familiar. It was estimated that the sum of £500 would cover the cost of printing 1,000 copies of a book of 200 pages, consisting of about 180 pages of text and 20 pages of photographs and drawings and in addition there would be a large folding map.

Proposed contents would be :

| <i>Pages</i> | <i>Chapter</i> | |
|--------------|----------------|--|
| 25 | I | History of Forestry; ancient times to date. |
| 20 | II | Description of Country; geology; soil, climate. |
| 20 | III | National Economy; Land use; employment, financial return. |
| 25 | IV | Forest species used : Sylviculture and Production. |
| 20 | V | General description of Forests; policy; area; management; labour; nurseries. |
| 10 | VI | Education and Research. |
| 15 | VII | Timber Products; demand; imports; exports. |
| 15 | VIII | Other Forest Products; demand; imports; exports |
| 25 | IX | General; wild life; sporting; amenity. |

The adoption of the Council's Report and the spending of £500 on the publication of a book on Irish Forestry was proposed by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Ryan.

A question was raised by Mr. O'Carroll concerning the item "Donations" amounting to £3 in the abstract of accounts. The Treasurer informed him that it was donated by members.

Messrs. McEvoy and Joyce raised points concerning the distribution of badges, and were informed that members did not appear anxious to buy them.

President's Address.

"According to Rule 5 of the Constitution, it is the duty and the privilege of the President to deliver an address at the Annual General Meeting. It is further laid down that the address shall review, among other things the advances in Forestry or Forestry Knowledge during the year.

On the occasion of the first Annual General Meeting of the Society held in Jury's Hotel on Tuesday, 9th February, 1943, the President opened his address by saying: 'The present is not a good time for obtaining information on forestry progress abroad'. What a change has come about in the meantime! There is a constant flow of information from every quarter of the globe and the problem now is what to include in a review and what to leave out.

Our main source of information on world forestry is the Yearbook of Forest Products Statistics compiled by F.A.O. and O.E.E.C. This publication contains figures for more than 160 countries and gives a comprehensive picture of the trade in timber in the world and the trends in consumption of various forest products. I believe that no great purpose is served by quoting at length strings of figures and I will content myself with giving the highlights. At the present time the world's forests yield around 1,350 million tons of round timber each year. This weight of raw material may be compared with a world production of all classes of grain, wheat, rice, oats, barley, of 800 million tons or a world output of steel of about 300 million tons.

The forests and the forest industries of the world employ about 80 million people and are a major source of income to many nations, communities and individuals. It is a matter of some consequence, therefore, to forecast the future role of forestry in the world's economic development.

It is apparent from the evidence available that the future for forest products is assured. Consumption of industrial wood is rising in nearly every region of the world. In the last decade consumption rose in Europe from 390 to 500 (in cubic metres per 1,000 of the population), in Asia from 50 to 90, in Africa from 40 to 50, in South America from 150 to 240 and in Oceania from 930 to 1,170. The world average has risen from 350 to 440.

During 1960 the rise in the demand for industrial wood continued and the overall figure was 2%. Output of some products is rising more rapidly than others, e.g. particle board rose by 32%, plywood 4%.

Egon Glesinger, Director, Forestry and Forest Products Division of F.H.O. predicted at the World Forestry Congress in Seattle that the world will need at least twice as much industrial wood as it consumes to-day by the end of the century and probably already some time between 1980 and 1990.

In view of the rapidly increasing acreage under timber here in Ireland it has been forecast that we will be able to export considerable

quantities of industrial wood or processed wood by 1980 or so. If this is the case it is consoling to know that there is likely to be a demand for any surplus we have.

Whether we will have a surplus is another matter. Mr. Glesinger in his address showed that there is a positive correlation between consumption of industrial wood and national income. Response of consumption to increases is very high at low income levels. In countries with incomes below 100 dollars per head, the elasticity of demand for newsprint, for instance, lies between 2.5 and 3; it falls to around 1.5 at incomes of 400 dollars to 600 dollars per head; and approaches 1 at incomes of over 1,000 dollars per head of the population.

It is a remarkable fact that of the 11 countries enjoying the highest per capita income not a single one consumes less than 500 cubic metres of industrial wood per 1,000 capita. Six of them, in fact, consume more than 1,500 cubic metres per 1,000 inhabitants. It appears to be a fair generalisation that no low income country will reach higher levels while maintaining low wood consumption levels.

Ireland's low wood consumption in the past is readily explained by lack of availability of domestic supplies and high costs of imports coupled with low incomes and declining population. Any change in these trends may be expected to have a high response in increased consumption of industrial wood here at home.

In view of our prospective closer association with Europe, it is interesting to know that Europe as a whole is a net importer of timber and that the E.E.C. countries account for a major part of the imports. In Europe consumption of forest products has risen by 50% since pre-war days. Europe is in consequence extending its forest area and intensifying its silviculture. In 1960 over 150,000 acres of new land was put under plantation. In general an upward trend in areas of forest extension, forest restoration and new plantation, with overall afforestation increasing to a peak of 875,000 acres for 1960, was reported as one result of the rising demand for wood and wood products in Europe.

A remarkable development in Europe and most noticeable in Germany, France, Sweden and Italy is the abandonment of farmland, particularly in less fertile or mountainous areas, as a result of changes in marketing structure and in the change from pastoral to industrial employment, thus releasing new land for forestry. The planting up of abandoned meadows and permanent pasture in the forest-rich mountains of Europe has come in for adverse comment even by forest enthusiasts, —a revealing example of changed times.

Some 300,000 foresters will be required to service the world's forests compared with the 75,000 now employed according to tentative estimates of regional forestry manpower requirements presented to the Food and Agriculture Organisations panel on Education in Forestry. The panel was told that the situation is most acute in the under-developed areas.

Dr. Shirley Hardey, Dean of the College of Forestry of the State University of New York, who was Chairman of the panel meeting said : 'There is an increasing demand for wood, for everything from rolling pins to paper. More wood means more trees and less waste and this means more and better foresters. The keenest need is for foresters who can prepare forest policy and direct forest administration,' concluded Dr. Shirley. The panel recommended that F.A.O. give special consideration to attracting and training men who can provide leadership and inspire public confidence in forestry programmes.

The mention of forestry programmes helps to turn our attention to nearer home. The Forty-second Annual Report of the British Forestry Commissioners has just come to hand and gives details for the year ended 30th September, 1961. Developments in Britain are of special interest to us here particularly in the fields of silviculture, management, economics and research.

This has been a record-breaking year for the planters in Britain. The total area planted, by the commission and private owners combined, reached a total of over 100,000 acres which is higher than has ever before been recorded. The area planted by the Commission increased from 61,700 to 63,700 acres. Private owners planted 34,200 acres under the various grant schemes and it is estimated that 2,600 acres were planted without the aid of grants. The total area planted on private estates in Britain was thus nearly 37,000 acres. With effect from 1st October, 1960 the planting grant was increased from £20 to £21 per acre and from 18/- to 19/- on the first 100 acres, from 12/- to 13/- on the second 100 acres, from 7/- to 8/- on the balance. The total spent in grants to private woodlands rose from £1,150,000 to £1,183,000. Throughout Great Britain the problem of acquiring sufficient land to support the programme was no easier. The average price paid for plantable land was £5 15s. 0d. per acre in 1961.

By the end of the year the Commission's estate had reached 2,545,631 acres of which 1,671,081 acres was forest land; that is acquired plantations, plantations established by the Forestry Commission and land remaining to be planted. The balance consisted of nurseries, rough grazing and other agricultural land, forest workers' holdings and unplantable and miscellaneous land.

The volume of timber produced by thinning and clear fellings in Commission's forests was 23 million Hoppus feet, an increase of 2.9 million H. ft. over the previous year.

"In Ireland also 1961 has been a year of outstanding achievements in State forestry. A record programme of 26,060 acres was planted at the 169 forests throughout the country requiring the use of no less than 35 million young trees of the various species. There are at present 32 State Forest nurseries with a total of over 700 acres.

The total area of land acquired for State forestry in the year under review was 29,169 acres of which 25,504 was rated productive. Gross

expenditure was 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ million pounds and income £460,000. The volume of industrial wood produced by thinning and clear felling was over 4.3 million Hoppus feet.

The most disappointing aspect of our forestry development here is in the field of private forestry. The area planted during the year was a mere 986 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres. The stagnation in this area when compared with the remarkable progress in Great Britain is really amazing. However as we spend a mere £9,419 on private forestry compared with £1,183,00 in Great Britain, perhaps a more generous endowment would lift private forestry out of the present rut.

In the management field the most interesting development to come to my notice during the year was the Working Plan Code prepared by the Forestry Commission. This is a marked step forward in working plan design and execution and already 30 working plan surveys under the new code have been completed. There are many who believe that working plan idea must eventually be adopted in Ireland as in every country where advanced forest management is practised. Before a major innovation of this kind is introduced it would be useful to know how our neighbours are getting over the inevitable teething troubles. Here again we must recognise that our colleagues in Great Britain are bearing a major share of the development burdens of Forestry in these islands.

Last summer on a visit to Delfth in Holland I was fortunate to see an exhibition showing the use of aerial photography and photo interpretation in forest management. It is certain that great developments may be expected in this field. The use of aircraft in Forestry is increasing rapidly. The spraying of tree crops to control insects is now routine in many countries and as is spraying of weed killers to control weeds like furze, heather, bracken and scrub. The use of aircraft to successfully top-dress choked or underdeveloped plantations reported from Britain and New Zealand is of considerable interest to us. Aerial fertiliser dressing of poor land will come in agriculture and it would be valuable for foresters to combine in such a project.

The symposium on Forestry and Land Use in Ireland organised by the Agricultural Science Association in University College, Dublin was a notable event in 1961. The meeting in Queen's University, Belfast on Peatland Afforestation was also outstanding in every way and was a model of its kind. These meetings have done much to highlight the big issues of land suitability and availability for forestry in Ireland.

In the field of utilization, the official opening of the Scariff Chipboard Mills, the building of a new chipboard factory at Waterford and the activity of the newly organised Home Timber Federation were welcome developments for the forester. An active demand for timber of all kinds and in particular for hardwoods was a feature of the year. The valuable export trade in veneers was further expanded and improving prices for sycamore, oak, beech of veneer quality made for renewed

interest in these species. The use of larch for veneer this year in Ireland was an interesting development and will help to rehabilitate further this rather neglected tree. The pole market was also active and renewed interest in Scots pine, Douglas fir and larch was a direct consequence.

The year was one of the worst on record for storms and every part of the country was visited at one time or another. Great losses were occasioned in veteran hardwoods and for the first time one sensed a general acceptance of the dangers of roadside trees to motorists which almost amounted to hostility to trees in general. This is something we must be at pains to combat. Research in forest protection against storms is a vital need and a useful beginning has been made in Britain where tests on root-holding capacity of different trees on different soil types are being investigated in a novel fashion. This must yield fruitful information on selection of species and on establishment and thinning techniques.

The World Seed Year has its forestry repercussions by increasing the emphasis on quality seed and progress in seed certification and improvement in collection of better strains was a feature of 1961. Much remains to be done in this field and progress is painfully slow.

Our Society has been active during the year as the report of the Council indicates. We have come a long way from the inaugural meeting held on the 31st September, 1942—'Fice Bliadhain ag fas!' At that meeting, twenty years ago, I was among the 31 members who enrolled. I am sure those who are still with us can look back in pride at the results of this Society. I feel that the members to-day can also look forward to a bright and productive future."

This ended the members' meeting.

Public Business.

After a short interval the meeting began its Public Business with the symposium, "The Forest and Recreation", with Mr. H. Naylor representing An Bórd Fáilte Éireann, Mr. C. S. Kilpatrick, Deputy Chief Forest Officer, Forestry Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Northern Ireland, Mr. H. Gray representing the Department of Lands, Forestry Division and Professor Felix Hackett representing The National Trust and An Óige. The Symposium appears elsewhere in this issue.