

Notes and News

Minister's Address at Avondale

Forward Planning in the Forest Service

In his address at the official opening of Avondale Forestry Extension School on 9 October, 1969, the Minister for Lands, Mr. Sean Flanagan, T.D., referred to the house's historical niche as the home of Charles Stewart Parnell, and also to its long association with forestry, going back to the tree enthusiast Samuel Hayes who built it in 1779. He reviewed the present state of forestry activity in the country and saw the potential for expansion of employment in ancillary industries as most heartening.

"As the young forests develop", he continued, "our people are becoming more aware of Irish forestry's contribution to the landscape and amenities of Ireland, but few indeed are yet aware of the very great contribution the forest can and will make to the future economy and prosperity of the country."

Referring to the increasing use of modern techniques of management within the Forest Service he said it was recognised as having been one of the first public services in Ireland to introduce modern concepts of forward forecasting and planned guidance of operational management to well defined ultimate objectives.

"We are at the moment at the point of taking another major step forward along this road. There are tentative plans under discussion with the Department of Finance to include Forestry in a pilot project for the application to public services of the most up-to-date methods of forward budgetary planning with a co-ordinated use of such techniques as Management by Objectives, Cost-benefit evaluation of multiple forest uses, etc."

He complimented the architects of the Commissioners of Public Works on the skill with which they blended old and new in the

extension to Avondale, and in particular referred to their example of what can be done in timber to provide a building both decorative and functional.

Air Pollution and Vegetation

Writing in *Farm and Food Research*, Jan.-Feb., 1970, Dr. J. F. Eades deals with two of the most common poisons, sulphur dioxide and lead. Sulphur dioxide damages vegetation in and around most cities and smaller industrial areas, and results especially from the burning of coal and oil. Daily releases of 830 tons of sulphur dioxide in Philadelphia in 1959 were partially responsible for injury to 36 species of plants in adjacent southern New Jersey, while the same gas caused almost total destruction of vegetables in the vicinity of smelters in Tennessee, Montana and Ontario.

Contamination of vegetation beside highways and streets with lead from motor vehicle exhausts has caused such concern as to necessitate a non-polluting means of powering vehicles.

Damage to agricultural and forest crops in the U.S. has been estimated as costing from 150 to 500 million dollars a year, and is believed to be rising.

Cumann Gaelach

Tá sé mar aidhm ag buion foraoiseóirí agus cigirí foraoiseachta cumann Gaelach a bhunú chun an Ghaeilge a spreagadh agus a fhorbairt i gcursai bitheolaíochta. Measann an buion seo dá mbeadh lucht talmhaíochta, gairneoireachta, éaneolaíochta leó go mbeadh an cumann seo níos éafachtaí agus níos forleithne ar ball. Einne ar mhian leó baint a bheith acu len a leithéid de Chumann ba chóir dóibh scriobh chuig:

Pádraig O Flaithbheartaigh, Bessmount, Inis Córthe,
Co. Loch Garman,

nó

Seán Ua Cearnaigh, 1 Príomh Sráid, Inis Córthe,
Co. Loch Garman.

Conifer Conference

A conference, organised by the Royal Horticultural Society, dealing with conifers in Britain and Ireland, will take place from October 5th to 16th 1970. For the first week the conference will be centred in London and for the second in Edinburgh.

The London session will include lectures and discussions on "Collections of conifers in the U.K. and Eire and possible methods of improving them", "Conifers in the human environment" and "Conifers in commerce". There will be an exhibition of living plant

material, and measurements, photographs of specimen trees, and illustrations of pests and diseases will also be shown.

During the Scottish session there will be visits to gardens and estates with notable collections of conifers.

A detailed programme is available from the Society at Vincent Square, London, S.W.1.

Trees for Ireland

In his address to its twenty-first Annual General Meeting, Mr. Sean Feeney, President of *Trees for Ireland*, dealt with, as appropriate to European Conservation Year, aims and uses of forestry and afforestation other than timber production: the prevention of soil erosion, control of water, provision of wild life habitats and recreation areas. He pointed out the need for an educated public opinion — one of the aims of *Trees for Ireland* — and congratulated the State Forest Service on its diversified land use policy and on its efforts in the education of young people to know and understand the countryside.

In the Popular Press

In a witty, well informed, if slightly romantic article in the London *Observer* in February, Katherine Whitehorn advised us to "Watch Out for that Woodman". Having covered pysicsology, history, sociology, technology and aesthetics of trees in about 400 words she goes on to the now familiar topic of trees that get polluted, "though not often as badly as the ones that all died in Millwall last summer. 'Drought', said the council feebly (well, they'd had a fortnight without rain in April) but the people with sore throats knew better." She also referred to municipal trees which are pruned so as to leave them looking "like a fire hydrant with whiskers" and concluded by urging everyone to do their bit in propagating trees, and not only those with gardens. Referring to wasteland she points out that "you can push 10 bits of poplar as long as a pencil into the ground and 10 trees will come up; you can stick a sycamore seed almost anywhere, even your enemy's nostrils, and it will grow if it's left alone. Who's going to notice if a passer-by casually stuffs a bit of stick or a handful of compost into somebody else's derelict ground?"

Forestry and Agriculture at Oxford

A new *Honour School of Agriculture and Forest Sciences* has been created in order to enable undergraduates, after a three terms preliminary course, to concentrate for a further six terms on the basic principles (physiological, ecological and economic) which underlie the subjects of Forestry and Agriculture. Those intending to follow Forestry as their vocation will be able to select from the optional papers

those most suited to their interests. Nevertheless, the structure of the course and the contacts that undergraduates will have with those interested in other branches of biology, will give them a wider appreciation of the problems which concern effective land utilization and provide a broad general education.

For their First Public Examination undergraduates will normally take the Preliminary Examination in Biology at the end of their third term at the University. They will then enter a two year course of study in the Honour School. This will include field work in Britain during term and possibly a tour to Europe in vacation. The Final Examination will consist of compulsory papers on Biological Sciences, Soil Science and Economics, together with papers selected from four groups, which allow specialization either in Economics or in the study of Plant Sciences, Soil Science and even Animal Science, if desired. By selection of suitable subjects, undergraduates may follow (within broad limits) lines of study which suit their particular interests and future careers, including professional forestry and research leading to a higher degree.

For those wishing to follow Forestry as a career, the more specialized and technical aspects of the subject are taught in a one year postgraduate course leading to a Diploma on Firestry and its relation to Land Management which is available to suitably qualified graduates from Oxford or other universities. In this students may study in depth the economic, management and silvicultural aspects of Forestry, and the applications of soil science and biological sciences to Forestry.

The Diploma course will not only be suitable for the fourth year student to qualify for a post as a Forest Officer, but will also provide a high level refresher or extension course for serving forest officers. It will include advanced lectures and classes on Policy and Planning, Management and Utilisation, and also on applied biological sciences such as Genetics, Pathology and Ecology. Candidates will also be required to submit a written dissertation on a forestry subject of their choice.

Details of the new Honour School and of the Diploma, both of which are being introduced in October 1970, may be obtained from the Department of Forestry, South Parks Road or from the Oxford University Admissions Office, 58 Banbury Road.