

Sitka Spruce in Ireland

PROCEEDINGS OF SYMPOSIUM

On Friday, 11th March, 1977, a symposium organised by the society was held at University College Dublin, Belfield. Six invited papers were presented with discussion. This issue of the journal is devoted to the proceedings of the symposium.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

FELLOW members of the Society of Irish Foresters. Today, we re-discover the symposium. I say "re-discover" because the symposium used to be a prominent feature of Society Activities some fifteen years ago.

The theme of our symposium is Sitka spruce in Ireland. No other tree species has had the same impact on forestry in this island. In species it has risen from a negligible percentage a rotation ago, to become the major single species in afforestation today. Indeed, its importance in general selection is such that if Sitka is selected without any knowledge of the site, the choice is correct, on average, two times out of three.

To set the scene we have two papers; one on the origin and genetic variation of the species and the other on its distribution and productivity in this island. This will be followed by an appraisal of Sitka spruce in relation to insect pests and pathogens. Since much of the land currently used for afforestation is of relatively low fertility we also examine the role of nutrition in regard to the species. This brings us to the real purpose of timber growing; the utilisation of the produce.

Members will have noted that some aspects of Silviculture and Forest Management have not been mentioned. We find it impossible to include everything we would like in a one day symposium. In an attempt to retrieve the situation we have allowed time under "General discussion" for those who wish to extend the range of subjects beyond those covered by the papers. Hopefully this arrangement will give members an opportunity to ask questions.

P. M. Joyce