NEWS AND NOTES

FIELD NOTES

by Cam Place

THE HARVARD CONFERENCE ON FOREST PRODUCTION

I am indebted to Professor Pringle of the University of New Brunswick Forest School for an interesting account of the Harvard Conference on Forest Production. This was held last October at the Harvard Forest in Petersham, Massachusetts, and apparently is to be an annual affair lasting two weeks. Its objective is to bring together a small diversified group of foresters from industry, universities, and government agencies to study mutual problems, methods and current progress of research in forest production.

Members of the staff of the Harvard Forest led the meetings, and the principal materials and points of departure for discussion were found in the general area of northern Massachusetts and adjoining New Hampshire. These, however, were used not so much for their local significance as to illustrate ideas and research methods that may have wider application.

The Conference opened with an exposition of the principal forest types and sites in the region, the manner in which they are owned and operated, and their principal market outlets. Attention was then given to specific silvicultural problems. These included case histories of the development of plantations; of the developmental sequences in natural forest types as they appear on various kinds of soil and modified by effects of past land use; on the correlation of forest types and sites; etc.

The theme of the third phase was research problems in forest soils, the influence of forest history on the present status and future development of stands, and improvement of forest by the application of genetics. Finally, the members of the Conference tried their hands at construction of a program of forest production on a typical private land holding.

Those attending found the gathering a remarkably stimulating experience.

This leads me to wonder whether we may say as much of most of the meetings of the C.I.F. True, these serve to strengthen the corporate feeling among varied groups of foresters, and one does widen his field of professional acquaintances. But many of the formal sessions are woefully dull and platitudinous; the lobby conferences are usually much more informative.

I suppose this state of affairs is inevitable. Because of the numbers attending and ranges of interest, addresses have to be general in nature. A speaker can seldom really get to grips with a topic, and it takes a good speaker to give an interesting talk when all he can do is to skim over ground already depressingly familiar to most of his audience.

In any event, one seldom gets much specific information at our national or section meetings. I think there is a real need for smaller and more intimate gatherings in which men with allied interests can really thrash a subject out without boring a large audience to tears.

Few Canadian organizations have the facilities to stage affairs such as the Harvard Conference. However, the sort of thing that is practical is perhaps better exemplified by a clinic held in the Lake States in 1953 on the use of chemical controls in forest management. This was sponsored jointly by three agencies, and the Lake States Forest Experiment Station has recently published the proceedings (1).

The publication is well worth the attention of anyone interested in using brushkillers or herbicides in the woods. Such topics as the nature of chemical control, the ecology of woody plants, foliage and dormant sprays, power sprayers, aerial spraying, and many others were discussed in enough detail to be of use to the industrial forester. Little time was given to the platitudes that seem to figure so prominently in most meetings of foresters under the vague heading of forest management.

ANNUAL REPORTS ON FORESTRY

Another item which caught my attention appeared in the December issue of the *Empire Forestry Review*. It was H. R. Blandford's comments on the annual reports published by several Canadian provinces on the administration of their forest lands (2). Mr. Blandford is noted for his caustic tongue, and these reports give it plenty of scope. To mention names would be invidious, and from what I have seen, there is 'much of a muchness' to the annual reports issued by the various provincial departments responsible for public lands.

Perhaps I can do no better than quote a few excerpts from the reviews themselves.

"It must be admitted that there is singularly little to review in this annual report . . . Revenue and expenditure figures are so mixed up with mines, game, angling licenses, etc., that it is not worth attempting to work out separate figures."

"There is little attraction in these—Annual Reports. The casual reader is confronted with a mass of forms and tables in great detail, overwhelming the reading matter. He would probably put it back in the bookshelf or in the W.P.B. after a cursory glance. It is only the student or the unfortunate reviewer who has to delve a bit deeper in order to extract some information. Why cannot those responsible for annual forest reports make an effort to write something readable which is easily absorbed by the forester and general public? The first thing to be done would be to banish long detailed forms to the appendices and confine figures to summaries with detailed explanations and discussions in the body of the report. The second thing would be the inclusion of a map illustrating the forestry position and showing reserves, forest executive and administrative boundaries and headquarters, roads, railways and

waterways of importance to the forests and any other details that may be illustrative of the report. Surely a readable and interesting report is as good propaganda for forestry as anything else."

"There is not much of interest in this report. True, it is better than many and has all detailed figures, such as they are, confined to appendices; but there is no mention of the area of the forests in the Province, surely the first essential detail that most people would want to know."

As a Canadian, I find it galling to my national pride to read such comments year after year. Yet one may hardly be angry with Mr. Blandford, for what he says is true.

REFERENCES CITED

- (1) Lake States Forest Experiment Station 1954. Proceedings of the Lake States Forestry Clinic on using chemical controls in forest management. Misc. Rept. 21. 68 pp.
- (2) Blandford, H. R. 1954. Reviews of annual reports. Empire Forestry Rev. 33:389-391.

ANNUAL MEETING DATE ANNOUNCED

Convention days for the C.I.F. this year will be October 5th, 6th & 7th, when the theme will be **Forest Protection**, embracing all three fields of pathology, entomology and fire control.

B.C. REGISTERED FORESTERS ELECT OFFICERS

British Columbia Registered Foresters at their annual meeting elected John F. Jacobsen, Manager of Squamish Mills Ltd., as president for 1955.

Other officers elected were: vice-president, H. M. Pogue, forester in charge, Survey Division, Victoria; past-president, Ian T. Cameron, forester in charge, Protection Division, Victoria; members of council, Walter G. Hughes, forester in charge, Working Plans Division, Victoria; George S. Allen, Dean of the Forestry Faculty, U.B.C.; G. R. W. Nixon, Logging Section, Utilization Division, Dominion Forest Products Laboratory, Vancouver; H. A. Richmond, officer in charge, Forest Insect Investigation, Dominion Department of Agriculture; Allan R. Fraser, Assistant Forester, Research Division, Victoria; and F. M. Knapp, Faculty of Forestry, U.B.C., was reappointed Registrar.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY OF U.S. FOREST SERVICE

The 50th anniversary of the creation of the Forest Service as a federal agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture was marked by a dinner, sponsored by the Society of American Foresters and the American Forestry Association, at the Statler Hotel in Washington, D.C., on February 4.

The Forest Service came into being in its present form on February 1, 1905, during the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, through merger of the then existing Bureau of Forestry and the forestry division of the General Land Office. An honored guest at the dinner was Mrs. Gifford Pinchot, wife of the first chief of the Service.