

TE KURA NGAHERE.

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Editorial.

It is with a great deal of satisfaction that we are able to record in this journal the passing of another successful year in the existence of the School. The success of the School has been largely due to the work of the staff who set themselves out from the very beginning to co-operate with the students in all branches of study.

It must have been very gratifying to the staff to note the rapid increase in size of the school this year. With a number of the past students finishing their course it may have been feared that it would have been hard to fill the vacancies, but the new students more than filled them. However, we can only hope that as a further reward for this year's work there will be as big an increase of students next year.

At the Spring camp the good feeling between staff and students was much in evidence and the students all feel deeply grateful to the staff for this opportunity to see the practical side of forest management. Help outside the lecture-room is also deeply appreciated by each student who considers himself honoured to be able to associate himself with the School and staff.

THE EMPIRE FORESTRY CONFERENCE.

During the latter months of this year the quinquennial British Imperial Forestry Conference is being held in Australia and New Zealand. The month of October will be spent by the representatives attending this conference in travelling through this country inspecting our plantations and native bush and in discussing the ways of management which would increase the productivity of the forests. Through "Te Kura Nga-hera," the official organ of our School and Club, we wish to extend to the Empire's foresters a hearty welcome to our native bush and hope that from their inspection there may arise greater hopes for the future of forestry in New Zealand.

Perhaps by the visit, interest may be aroused throughout the length and breadth of New Zealand and the people will awake to the possibilities in commerce arising from the proper management of our forests, controlled by a truly efficient working plan. When one thinks of the ignorance of the majority of New Zealand people concerning the future prospects of their own forest land and also the unplanted waste areas, one is appalled—nay! worse. If the more of inhabitants knew what forestry really meant, it is felt that foresters would have more whole-hearted support and co-operation than is now their lot. Also we must not forget that new industries might be carried on effectively in New Zealand if the people would support experimentation and exploitation of new ideas. Being a young country which, as yet, has not had very much time to realise the importance of careful management of forests, New Zealand would do well to follow the example set by its older neigh-

bours and control the rapid deforestation which is at present taking place.

With these few facts in view it is our sincere hope that this visit of the Empire Forestry Conference will "bring forth much fruit," not only that our own country alone will benefit, but also that the other countries in general will profit by such discussion as may take place.

FLOOD CONTROL.

Present proposals of a local river protective organization to raise a loan for further groyning and diversion works in an attempt to control the flood damage of one of the major rivers of Canterbury, serve to focus attention upon the increasing seriousness of this flood control problem throughout the whole of New Zealand. In the case in question, the Waimakariri, over half the population of the province dwells within the rating area of the River Trust, and is more or less threatened by flood damage. The sum levied annually for protective works is something like £20,000 per annum, we are given to understand (The Trust publishes no annual report), yet in 1926 alone the November and December floods caused losses totalling this same amount, so that evidently the work so far accomplished is ineffective. Now larger works involving loans are contemplated. Whether they or any other such schemes will prove permanently effective is seriously open to question. All work so far done and proposed is of an engineering character, and is all focussed on the lower reaches of the river—the delta lands where the flood damage is felt. Without criticising in any way the respective merits of the various schemes put forth from the engineering viewpoint, it may be in order to point to the colossal failure of the river engineers, after fifty years of work, involving uncounted millions and directed by some of the foremost men in the profession, in regard to the River Mississippi. Now, after all these years, the Americans are turning their eyes from the lower reaches of the river, where the damage is felt, to the upper reaches, whence come the floods. From palliative works they are turning toward curative measures which will prevent the floods in their incipency, and are finding what seems to be an effective aid, in protective forests. Might we not take a cue from them, and attempt to cure our flood rivers once and for all? So long as the headwaters of our great rivers, with their steep slopes and great rainfall, are denuded of forest, and overgrazed and trampled by deer, sheep and rabbits, then the flooding, with its erosion, aggrading of bed, deposition of shingle, and great extremes of high and low water will continue,

and will become steadily worse with increasing erosion, so that the protective works will become a millstone on the neck of the country. At present the forests in the headwaters of the great rivers of Canterbury are small in area, and are confined from constant fires to the streambeds, where their influence is least effective. Only with the re-establishment of a forest cover over wide areas of steep eroding hillside will any step be taken toward a curing of the flooding and a prevention of shingle transport.

And though it is recognised that with affairs in their present state a certain amount of stop-banking is imperative to hold the waters until such time as protection forests might become effectively established, it is suggested that were every river trust in New Zealand to definitely allocate a certain proportion of its revenues annually to the establishment of forests in the upper watersheds of their rivers, in time the rivers would be harnessed. And until the streams are harnessed, thoroughly and permanently, there would seem to be no hope of relief from the burden of these river protection rates.

The Forestry Club records with deep regret the death of two members of the staff of Canterbury College, Mr. L. A. Stringer and Mr. T. W. Rowe, who were both closely associated with the work of the School of Forestry.

Mr. Stringer, Registrar of the College, took a keen interest in forestry generally, and in the doings of the School in particular. His assistance and advice in administrative matters will always be remembered by the staff, who found in him a sympathetic friend always helpful and encouraging. The senior students and past students will remember the first field camp of the School at Lake Brunner, Westland, when Mr. Stringer formed one of the party. His name will always be associated with the early days of the School.

Mr. T. W. Rowe, M.A., LL.B., Director of Studies in Law at Canterbury College, passed away suddenly during the last Summer vacation. Mr. Rowe was Lecturer in Forest Law, and his keenness in this work enabled the course in forest law to be placed on a sound footing. It was no light task to compile a text book on New Zealand Forest Law, yet Mr. Rowe willingly undertook this work and the manuscript was completed just before his untimely death. He was an enthusiastic photographer and this hobby took him long journeys into bush country and enabled him to enter into the spirit of the work of the School.
