

Notes - No. 1 International Society of Tropical Foresters

Enclosed with this first issue of notes is the Society's membership list. Suggestions for increasing its usefulness will be welcomed. In this connection, members are reminded of the importance of notifying the Society office of any changes of address or occupation. The accuracy of future lists, to be issued at intervals, will depend in large measure on the cooperation of the membership.

As of August 1, the Society's membership totals 95, representing over twenty countries, and including two women. The first of these two (alphabetically) bears the somewhat misleading title "range conservationist." She is Dr. Miriam Bomhard, and actually is a dendrologist and a leading authority on palms; the second, Dr. Eloise Gerry, as some of our members already know, devotes her full time at the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wis., to the collection and dissemination of information on foreign woods, principally tropical.

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A Seminario Forestal was inaugurated on 9 February 1951 in the Escuela Ingenieria Forestal of the Universidad de Los Andes, at Merida, Venezuela. Its main function will be to supplement the regular courses in the forest engineering school with material on conservation of all the natural resources. It will also serve as an agency to facilitate programs of public education in resource conservation. The Escuela Ingenieria Forestal, now three years old, may shortly be elevated to Faculty status. Three of its professors are members of this Society.

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C. W. Scott, of the Forest Products Laboratory at Princes Risborough, Bucks, England, raises a question: "Tree counts in British Guiana," he writes, "show a much larger percentage of the heaviest timbers than in Africa, the Philippines, Burma, or India. Something like 90 percent of the hundred-odd tree species enumerated on a considerable scale by the Forest Department of British Guiana in the last twenty or so years are 50 lbs. or more per cu. ft., air dry (15 percent moisture content), and some 66 percent are 60 lbs. or more in the same condition. Now even 50 lbs. is a bit heavier than oak, beech, apitong (Philippines), and most other generally acceptable general-use woods. How big is the disadvantage of such a high percentage of heavies, and how best can such forests be utilized? How far do other virgin forests of Latin America share this handicap? West Africa and its light or medium-weight big-girth Meliaceae, is much better off, it seems; and the Philippines still more so, with the gregarious light Dipterocarps, the lauans. (Also, the British Guiana woods often have a high percentage of silica, in the Eschweilera, Licana, Parinari genera.)"

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The Centre Technique Forestier Tropical expects to occupy during 1951 a modern building with laboratories specially designed for the study of tropical woods. The Centre is now equipped to handle studies concerned with the production, exploitation, and use of tropical woods, to carry on silvicultural experiments, train technicians, and collect and disseminate information on forest improvements and conservation, wildlife, and the development of tropical woods and forests. It publishes a quarterly review, Bois et Forêts des Tropiques (365 frs. per single copy, 1250 frs. annual subscription). The Centre's address is 45 bis, Avenue de la Belle-Gabrielle, Nogent-sur-Marne, France.

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As of July 1, Professor Robert Hess left the Yale School of Forestry, where he was Associate Professor of Forest Products and Editor of Tropical Woods. His new position is with the Mengel Company, Louisville 1, Ky., USA.

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Tropical Forestry Congress. Among the the projects of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization for the next two years is one calling for the preparation of a Tropical Forestry Congress, to be devoted primarily to questions of conservation of forests, soil, and water, and probably to be held in 1953. The place for the meeting has not been announced, nor are definite plans yet known, though it has been suggested that the meeting may be held in cooperation with the United Nations.

Members of the International Society of Tropical Foresters may have suggestions regarding the agenda for this proposed Tropical Forestry Congress. The Society office would be glad to receive any comments from members on this point.

The Food and Agriculture Organization is holding a regional conference on tropical land utilization at Ceylon on September 17-29, 1951. This conference will deal only with Asia and the Far East, but it is hoped that a later conference can be arranged to cover tropical land utilization on a world basis.

A project for a Fourth World Forestry Congress is also included among the Food and Agriculture Organization's work plans. No place or date has been set, though 1954 has been suggested as the probable year.

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The membership of this Society will be kept informed through news notes of the development of all these meetings.

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The Organization for European Economic Cooperation is the publisher of Possibilities of Increasing the Use of Tropical Timber. (Columbia University Press, New York 27, N. Y., USA, 1950, \$1.50 per copy, 93 pp.). This book, which bears the subtitle "Report of a Group of Experts," is reviewed in the Empire Forestry Review for June 1951 (Vol. 30, No. 2), by Bryan Latham, Esq., who summarizes it as "Undoubtedly a valuable and helpful report, even if in some of the paragraphs the dice have been somewhat heavily loaded in favour of tropical timbers and what the consumer can expect from them." Chapters in this book have the following headings: Timber Sources, Export and Consumption Possibilities, Exploitation, Conditioning, Marketing, Propaganda, Freight Rates and New Methods of Transport, Export and Import Duties, Relations with the Dollar Area, Effects of Devaluation and Liberalisation of Trade, International Tropical Timber Technical Association, Comparison between Tropical Timber and European and American Timber, Technical Assistance, Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations of the Group of Experts.

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