

A Forester Must Grow

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In an article written some time ago, a man who had served in an unnamed profession, (not forestry) was described as follows "He gave a professional service and only that. He was respected by the community as a man who knew something difficult to know; something worth knowing."

The phrase "Something difficult to know, Something worth knowing;" strikes me as an essential point for consideration in the selection of a profession, a school or the formation of a curriculum.

The function of an educational institution is to impart to the student knowledge of value that he could not otherwise readily attain; knowledge, not only of facts but also of methods of reasoning. There is so much stress laid on what is called practical, and on making things easy, that in some quarters there is a tendency to forget that things that are worth doing are seldom easy and that nothing is free. Air is free, in one sense, i.e., it is provided by nature, but we must use a certain amount of effort to get it into our lungs. We must take precautions to see that it is not contaminated and to control the conditions under which we are exposed to it. We cannot live without it, but it may, when uncontrolled, cause death. We cannot progress without knowledge but an incomplete or distorted knowledge is dangerous. Many things which are good in themselves may, if improperly used or controlled, fail to provide the good which might be expected of them. Things or facts which are not well understood may be used to draw wrong conclusions from.

To understand anything thoroughly, there must be provided a broad basic knowledge.

Coupled with this, there must be a well developed ability to reason logically. The acquiring of knowledge is much like constructing a pyramid; the broader the base, the higher you can build without danger of toppling.

Will Rogers once remarked that: "There's nothing so stupid as an educated man, if you get off the subject he is educated in."

The reason that this remark could be justified would lie in the fact that an attempt had been made to get an education with too small a base on which to build. These are facts that we as foresters or prospective foresters may well think about as applied to our profession and to our resultant responsibilities.

The early foresters of Europe were men of the woods who learned the secrets of the woodland life,—both animal and vegetable—by observation and by trial and error. The forest was to them more than a mere growth of trees. It was a place for pasturage for hogs and other domestic animals. It was a refuge and breeding place for game. It was a source of fuel and timber. It gave them their weapons of defence and offense, much food, and much needed shelter. The demands on the forest were high, particularly in the neighborhood of cities. These heavy demands without any definite plan for, or knowledge of, effective methods of replenishment resulted in a severe depletion of the forest resources and a fear of a lack of fuel for heating and for cooking.

At that time coal, gas and electricity were unknown as sources of energy as coal did not come into general use until quite recently.

In the 1700's a charcoal famine due to

scarcity of timber occurred in parts of Great Britain, which led to a wide use of coal.

Early in 1500 not much timber was being cut to make charcoal for the iron smelters. The Parliament became alarmed for England's forests. To smelt 1 ton of iron required 2 loads of charcoal and to make 1 load of charcoal 2 loads of wood were required.

As a result of this fear or near panic, laws were enacted for the purpose of preserving and reproducing the forests.

These laws were based on empirical knowledge and to pass on this knowledge derived from folklore and experience, schools of forestry were established.

It is only within recent years that forestry has been placed on a scientific basis which has been and is being slowly added to as the result of painstaking research. Forestry is then a growing science which is of necessity widening its scope. Its practices are built on principles derived from botany, physics, chemistry, geology, entomology, zoology, economics and other basic sciences.

From being mere guards of the forest, the forester has developed into a man responsible not only for the protection and reproduction of the forest but also for its proper and complete utilization. This utilization covers not only the production of timber, fuel and such other direct products but such indirect products as water supply, protection from erosion, health of communities, and even enters into the economic field to a large extent in the provision of employment of labor.

Such being the responsibilities of a forester one would naturally expect to find him one of the leaders in community life. In Europe he is typically a man with a thorough college education which he maintains and keeps up to date by continued diligent study of the newest texts and technical periodicals. He is a man able to hold his own in either social or technical gatherings. As a result, throughout Europe forestry is one of the most respected professions, and ranks with medicine and law, as it should, and it is a calling to

which young men of the finest type aspire.

It cannot be said that forestry is either an exact profession or an exact science, especially in our present stage of development. Rather we must regard forestry as statesmanship of the finest type, when we consider that with the foresters lies the responsibility for developing and directing land use as well as land and water conservation policies which must be carried out over long periods of time.

On the successful development of the solutions of the above problems and the problems of utilization will depend, to a considerable extent, on our ability to survive as a free and independent people under the present and future political and economic stress.

If we as foresters are to establish our profession as we would have it, and as we must have it, if we are to contribute our share towards the carrying of civilization through the present and coming perilous times, we must develop, among others, the following qualities and we must begin to develop them as students.

Concentration: An essential of championship in any game is the ability to concentrate so as to strip thought and action down to essentials. Forestry is your game.

Faith: Faith in the present and future values that will accrue from present and future efforts to solve present and future problems. Faith in the human race.

Growth: We should at least do as well as the trees we aspire to manage. Trees continue to grow as long as they continue to live. In fact growth and living are so intimately connected that it is difficult to consider one without the other. The student or forester who tries to rest on his laurels is dead and doesn't know it.

A publishing company is credited with having observed that while mining engineers are much fewer in number than foresters they purchase more technical books, especially the new and important publications concerned with their field of work. This is indeed a sad

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he was a private student and if he could prove to me otherwise, I should have no objection in making the corrections.

Bending low he whispered, "*Father scholarship.*"

3. *Are You Black?*

Upon our arrival at Nangwaray, South Australia, Mars (Marcelo) enjoyed playing with the children in the camp. One of the children curiously asked, "Are you black?"

The great philosopher was never caught more flatfooted in his life before. Gathering all his wits, he smiled.

"Can you see that car over there?" he pointed yonder. "That's black; I am brown, you see!"

4. *"Trade Mark"*

After we enjoyed the 'sleeper privilege' on the night train to Albury, New South Wales, Mars and I transferred to the *Spirit of Progress*, first class, for Melbourne, Victoria. We put on our heavy coats and woolen gloves to keep us warm. As the fleeting scenery through the icy glass window passed before us like an endless film strip, I rolled my cigarettes while Mars was in pensive mood. From the adjoining compartment, we heard boisterous laughter which made us suspicious.

Our suspicions merely confirmed our innocence about what was going on. The biggest news which had already caused much fun among the passengers on the train was not known to us until Beggs shambled in. Amidst broken laughter he unravelled the great surprise of a conductor who purposely by-passed us while checking passengers' tickets. The conductor really thought we were Filipino boxers.

But why such fear?

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A month later, when we visited two Filipino families in Melbourne, we found the following personages: (1) *Francisco Morris* (Eusebio), formerly Star Frisco, one time Welter Weight Champion of the Orient in 1933-35; and (2) *Lorenzo Gamboa*, formerly Kid Lory,

winner of several fistic fights in Australia before he joined the U. S. Army.

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We have no doubts that Filipino boxers were once popular in Australia. On Diploma Day last March, we were fortunate to meet His Excellency, the Governor General who, after expressing his felicitations on Vichy's hospitality to her daughter, exalted Dencio Cabanela's feat.

Now, we found the real answer.

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What are we in this "Land Down-Under" for? We are UNESCO Fellows in forestry. We swing the axe without blisters. Not only that! Our capabilities can be summed up in four P's: *propagate, plant, protect, and preserve* trees for posterity. In short: *Mihi Cura Futuri.*

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commentary on the forester, for books and periodicals are very important means of growth.

A Long Look Ahead: We must think in terms of decades rather than days and years. This is an essential for the forester that is not always easily grasped by the laymen.

Action: Any accomplishment requires action which must be wise, fearless, planned and vigorous. Without action nothing is accomplished. Wild, sporadic or injudicious action must be avoided.

We, that is you and I, are helping or hindering in the building of a profession that is difficult but worth while knowing.

We must carry forward the standards. The results will depend on how patiently and indomitably you work for the attainment of our ideals.

Talk delivered at the opening ceremony on June 27, 1951, in the College of Forestry.

On the plains of hesitation, bleach the bones of countless millions who, at the dawn of victory, sat down to rest and resting, died.