

EDITORIALS

IN THE BEGINNING . . .

In the beginning was darkness and man sought light about him; in the beginning was chaos and man sought order within him. Everything around him filled him with awe and terror: every tree, every rock, every stream, every hill, the sea, the mountain, and the sky: everything he imagined inhabited by deities that haunted him and hounded him like cruel relentless gods. The flash of lightning, the roar of thunder, the tremor of the earth beneath him struck terror in his heart: There was nothing that he did not want to know—about the world about him and about himself. And his insatiable curiosity and his unquenchable thirst for knowledge and his spirit of adventure kept him plodding on and on until he beheld, shining from a distant mountain top, a ray of light. There a goddess stood and held high a torch that dispelled the surrounding gloom with its effulgence. Slowly man struggled up the mountain to the top. And he saw that the goddess held in her other hand a key and this key she gave to him. She told man to go forth and use the key to unravel the mysteries of nature.

The man began to understand that there was nothing to fear from nature for nature was his friend. He began to see that man was meant to stand tall like the tree, tall on his hind legs and cast a shadow. And from nature's secret and sacred vaults he drew forth the treasures that were to help him on his journey through the arches of the forests of time. The tree would be his faithful friend and ally. The tree was to be his faithful companion through the silence of the years. The lovely crown of trees would lift up his heart to God. The tree would protect him against the sun's oppressive rays and the pelting rain's cold fingers; the wood of the tree would become his home and the things that would give him joy and comfort, the music that would stir his soul, the store of the vast knowledge accumulated through the ages, the weapons against tyranny and oppression, disease, famine and ignorance.

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The years and the silence would teach him the lessons of the forest: That like the tree he must serve his fellowmen—that he should not think of himself alone but also of others and the oncoming generations—that he must conserve this precious heritage for posterity's use down through the rippling centuries.

For the goddess said unto Man: "To you I give this key. Keep this trust, this secret and sacred trust; keep it untarnished, keep it bright; and keep using it with vision, courage, wisdom, and honor for the good of your fellowmen."

And Man in answer said, "And I, recipient of this key, accept this trust; I shall keep it untarnished, I shall keep it bright; and I shall keep using it with vision, courage, wisdom and honor for the good of my fellow men."

As it was in the beginning, so shall it ever be, the key to the knowledge of the secrets of the forest shall be passed from hand to hand from one class to another so that this precious legacy which has been bequeathed to man should benefit mankind.

WHY THE SELECTIVE LOGGING PROGRAM

Questions have been raised from some quarters as to the wisdom of adopting selective logging as a general program in the utilization of our timber resources. (Selective logging as a forestry program means the cutting of mature trees, leaving in the progress an adequate and good residual stand of immature and thrifty trees to develop for the next cut.) Some contend that clear cutting, shelterwood, or the uniform systems could be adopted just as well.

The requirements of our "lauan" species and the structure of our dipterocarp forest are the main considerations in deciding the silvicultural system to be adopted. The forest we are mainly handling consists of dipterocarp species which need partial shade during the early stages of growth, becoming intolerant or light-loving towards maturity. We must correlate these requirements to the structure of the forest. Generally, we find that the curve expressing the size (age) distribution from the smallest (youngest) to the largest diameter is a side-reversed "J". The best known silvicultural system for this condition is the selection system.

Why have we to clear-cut and plant with great expense or start from seeds and wait for over a hundred years (which is uncertain in the first place), when we have already on the ground thrifty trees needing only a few more years until they will be ready to be cut? These trees have survived through the elimination process in nature, and therefore, have a high potential value.

The selection system results in the least disturbance to the soil and forest conditions most favorable for the development of our climax vegetation—the dipterocarps. This system is a sure means for natural re-stocking of the cut-over lands.

By the selection system, we maintain the forest cover necessary to keep its water storage and soil protection functions, allowing at the same time regular periodic harvests of timber. These functions are the most vital services of forest to communities. Under other silvicultural systems, these functions are markedly interrupted if not entirely disrupted.

Under other systems cheaper cost of logging may be attained which is most desirable to the logging operator. However, when we consider the stability of the business by the assurance of continuous, adequate supply of raw materials, the selection system

will prove in the long run a more economical approach toward permanent forest industry. The higher cost of logging as necessitated by lesser volume cut per unit area and the care exercised to minimize destruction and injuries to the immature trees of the commercial species, will be compensated by assured subsequent harvests. In the selection system, the next crop is left standing on the area.

Man's ingenuity and great capacity for adjustment always made him successful to go through changes. He has a passion for creativeness and the thrill to meet fresh challenges. In the logging industry he has reduced cost by increasing production. He developed equipments and techniques to bring out more logs per unit time and area. It is believed that the logger will meet successfully the new challenge of leaving more immature trees undamaged and at the same time maintain profitable production.

—T. S. Serevo & M. R. Reyes

ENTRANCE EXAM FOR A GREATER CAUSE

The screening of new students is finally practised in the school year 1956-57 in our College. The faculty members unanimously approved such entrance examination during one of their previous meetings which was sanctioned by the Registrar's office. The faculty members fervently believe it is the only way to maintain the high standard of the college and to avoid the waste of money to many students who depend more on their parents for their support. To save money on the part of the government and to limit the number of students, the college authorities implemented this cause for they have fully observed during their past years of experience that some students were not fit to take Forestry course as shown in the records of mortality which was high. And above all, the College can accommodate only a certain number of students beyond which instruction would not be efficient.

This signifies that our institution calls for quality unmistakably and not for quantity. The institution wants to train young men for our country, either for the government service or for private lumber industry. Undoubtedly, we are proud to say that our forestry alumni are the best examples in the eyes of the public for rendering unselfish service to the government.

So if the student fails in his studies, it can only mean two things; either he failed to do his job as a student or he is a square peg in a round hole. Or could there be other reasons? A substantial prize awaits him who can give us the \$640 answer.

—R.U.

ARBOR DAY

The forestry student is familiar with the stories of the once thickly-forested China, of the arid Palestine and of Lebanon which was famous for its stately cedars and cypress trees during biblical times. More than once, he has heard of conditions in old World Europe where housewives and children meticulously gather faggots to kindle in their stoves; of present-day India where dried cow manure is used for fuel because of the scarcity, or total absence, of wood. So scarce, indeed, that houses are made of mud—no wood, not even bamboo.

We hear of these treeless countries and we shudder, and we sigh and think of how lucky we Filipinos are to be blessed with rich timber-lands and lush forests teeming with wildlife and with sparkling lakes and streams.

Yet how long will this blessing last? How many years are left for us to enjoy the

abundance of wood which is now still so cheap and so plentiful that our poorest farmers can build their houses with the choicest ipil posts and valuable narra boards for floors? For it is a cold, visual fact that our timber line is fast receding. Our timber stand may not last another hundred years, in spite of the optimists who, still relying on obsolete half-a-century old figures, would have us believe that we actually have more timber now than before!

It is heartening that the importance of Arbor Day was recognized by our leaders years ago but deplorable that the significance of this celebration is too often lost in empty speeches and ceremony that are soon forgotten until the next Arbor Day comes around. Too often a seedling is planted on Arbor Day which is Saturday, left by itself on Sunday, may be watered by the little boys and girls when they go back to school on Monday, neglected on Tuesday, completely forgotten on Wednesday, and is usually already dried up and dead on Friday. If this were not so, the countless seedlings planted by millions of school children every year for the past twenty years would have covered every school ground in every town in the Philippines with trees. As it is, every time Arbor Week comes around, now boys and girls plant new seedling most probably on the same old spot where the seedling planted during the previous year's ceremonies withered and died. The new seedling will eventually die, too, and another one would be planted again on the next Arbor Week, and so on, but never or only occasionally by pure chance, producing a mature tree. This is not gloomy pessimism. This is a statement of fact.

Arbor Week, really, should not be confined to school children and to schoolground, nor to a single day of the year. To logging operators particularly, Arbor Week should be a weekly, perpetual affair, to be given as much importance, as felling for profit. "Cut one, plant ten" should be the ringing motto of people whom the forests have made wealthy, to be echoed and re-echoed simultaneously with the lumberjacks' cry of "Timber."

This message is one of hundreds to be spoken and written on Arbor Week this year. And like all those other speeches, essays, editorials, poems, songs and what not, this message will soon be forgotten. That we are sure of, just as we are sure that the day will come when all these will be remembered, and that day will be when our forests are no more.

—G.F.C.

FRESHMAN CORNER

By E. G. DIZON

Hi! Didn't expect to see a column of this around? Well then, sit back and relax and ponder over it carefully. I should say we freshmen should be at least grateful to know that the school lay open its doors to welcome us. This column is out to prove that. It will serve as a mouthpiece of the freshmen's activities and goings-on around the campus.

—oOo—

Well, to start with, here's congrats to all of those who successfully hurdled the entrance examination. This batch of new-comers form the first selected group, young, but tough and aggressive.

The College team had its first victory against the Aggie sophies and "Freshies". Mr. Recto, the coach of the team, is quite satisfied with the "rookies" who made the stonewall defense against the Aggie onslaughts.

—oOo—

At the Smokers' Rally, many agree that it was a Freshmen's night. The "greenies" proved their superiority in the different fields of entertainment, coping the lion share of the prizes. Their skit won the first place and their vocal numbers though out of tune showed that there are Jerry Lewises among them.