

THE YOUNG FORESTER

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The occasion of the 125th Anniversary of a forestry journal like *Indian Forester* is indeed a milestone not only in the history of Indian forestry but in that of international forestry.

The *Indian Forester* started its career as the outcome of a resolution of the forest conference held at Allahabad in January, 1874. The moving spirits in this venture were Baden Powell, Laird, Gamble and Smythies under the guidance of Dr. Brandis who was then Inspector General of Forests and with Schlich as the first Editor of the *Indian Forester*. The credit for the success of the journal goes to Brandis, Schlich, Pearson, Ribbentrop, Gamble, Wroughten, Lace, Wilmot and other dedicated foresters.

From the humble beginnings as a quarterly forestry magazine, *Indian Forester* has to-day subscribers all over the world. The *Indian Forester* started as a quarterly, the first issue coming out in July, 1875. It became a monthly from January, 1883.

The *Indian Forester* was printed and published by the Pioneer Press, Allahabad, till March, 1932 and subsequently till 1947 by the Civil and Military Gazette at Lahore. With the partition in 1947, its assets and records were frozen in Pakistan and it was only after many crises and trials that it was finally put on a secure basis in India.

In the prologue of 1st volume in 1875, it was stated :

"At the commencement of our undertaking it behoves us to offer an explanation of the principles which will guide us, and the objects we shall have in view, if we are fortunate enough to gain the public approval, and be elected to represent forest literature in the estate the Public Press of India.

Our object is to supply a medium for the intercommunication of ideas and the record of observations and experiments, as well as to catch all stray fragments of information, all facts and data, and supply the places of "Notes and Queries" to the forest Service generally.

As to our principles, they are decidedly liberal and independent. We, and all who communicate with us, are free to express what we think; we shall not repress any criticism on what we honestly believe to be wrong, or say anything that we do not believe to be true, to please any one. We shall endeavour to extenuate nothing, and we shall "set down nought in malice".

But free, full and unfettered discussion of every principle and practice is the very life of forest science and forest art.

That discussion it will be our endeavour

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to facilitate with all the means at our disposal. But this thing we will do - we will impress on ourselves and our contributors the absolute maintenance of courtesy and good temper in the thick of the hottest discussion, and we will banish from our pages every thing that verges on personality or harshness of expression. Our criticism will be directed to measure, not men, to the opinion and utterances of the impersonal office, not to the thoughts and deeds of individuals.

We are suppliants at the threshold of every temple of Government; we ask for assistance, for the speedy communication of every report and every paper that deals with any thing of theoretical or practical interest in forestry, as well as of all orders that bear on the organisation and interests of the Forest Service; but we confidently expect that no authority will desire in return for such assistance other than the gratitude which courtesy commands and a hearty endeavour on our part to support warmly, where support is due, without abandoning our right to criticize, where we cannot approve.

In pursuance of the general principles enumerated, we do not propose to open our columns to personal grievances; but questions affecting the organisation of the service, or a section of the service, are legitimately within our scope. We propose to allow ourselves the option of declining papers which are unsuited for publication, or which are based on absolutely unscientific grounds; but we trust that the exercise of this discretion will rarely need to be called into action.

We have now earnestly to address our supporters in behalf of this new scheme of an Indian forest periodical. Above all we want steady contributors. Now many forest

officers feel, and naturally so, that they have not time for writing. Others feel that they have no facility with the pen, and perhaps too modestly imagine that they can do nothing to help. With regard to this feeling, we would offer a few remarks. In the first place, while every number ought to contain a fair proportion of leisurely written and detailed matter, that share of the work must necessarily be handed over to those who have a gift for writing, and who have the necessary literary machinery in the shape of books of reference to assist them. Every forest officer who is worthy the name keeps a note-book and as some new fact or some new experience comes to his notice, or some "Happy thought", tending to the facilitation of some portion of his work, flashes across his mind, he will make a rough note of it. There is actually no one who can go about from day to day on Plantation work, up and down a river on timber transport business, demarcating a forest, making valuation surveys, or engage in any other branch of his ordinary business, but must see something, and learn something, which is in itself valuable, and a distinct addition to the stock of facts which are the basis of all rational and practical progress in forest administration.

And here is the line for the forest officer who loves not desk and blotting paper. Send us in then rough and unartificial, from your note-book jottings. A diamond, even uncut is a diamond still; and even if we cannot always have a diamond, we can have a crystal, and that is a very good thing in its way.

We beg every one to send what he has, and not to subject it to a preliminary criticism and put it on one side. "I did not think you would care about it; I thought it hardly worth sending" are sentences that consign to

inutility many really valuable facts many good suggestions, that may contain the germs, perhaps as yet only partially developed, of future progress, or of some important economy.

Literary merit or excellence of style is not looked for in such communications.

Another way of helping may be indicated to those whose taste or the sterner call of duty forbids literary work - "ask questions". The interchange of opinions and expression on all sorts of forest matters will be most useful, and it will create a good discussion, which will be of vital importance to our paper.

We shall endeavour ourselves to keep a good look out for information gleaned from home literature, as well as that of other countries, but we would invite every one to call our attention to articles or other sources of information of this kind, and to correspond with friends at home, with a view to keeping us informed of the progress of forest literature, furnishing us with notices of recently published books, stating the prices and class. Communications regarding the supply of forest material to public works, improvements to be made in transport, information regarding seasoning timber and impregnation, regarding buildings, hill roads, cheap bridges, and numerous other connected subjects, will doubtless enable the later class to benefit the public with their experience.

So much is applicable to forest officers; but we hope that forest officers will not be our only contributors; the scope of subject upon to comment will no doubt enable district, settlement, railway and engineer officers to give occasional assistance. Procedure of settling forest rights, notices of

forest tribes and their requirements, questions of organisation, principles of settlement &c., will furnish opportunities for the later to help us.

We may add that we shall be able to illustrate papers by diagram and drawings of a simple character capable of being reproduced in Octavo size, by lithography or by simple wood cuttings.

As regards authorship of papers, every contributor is expected to communicate his name, and state whether he wishes the article, the question or the note to be inserted with his name, or with his initials, or under a nom de plume, or without any name at all. Either plan can be adopted, provided that the real name and address of the writer be entrusted to the Editor.

Whenever possible, rejected MS. contribution will be returned to the author at his request.

The magazine will be arranged under headings in the following manner :-

- I. Articles, Translations, Official Paper Communicated &c.
- II. Reviews.
- III. Notes and Queries
- IV. Shikar and Travel
- V. Extracts From Official Gazettes, Appointments, Promotions, Transfers &c.

Circumstances may, of course, render a modification of this program advisable or necessary.

It has been suggested that we should indicate the sort of subjects on which papers, notes, and queries may be communicated. With a view, therefore, of giving information

to meet such inquiries and not by any means to fetter the discretion of intending contributors, we offer the following sketch.

In the first instance, we mention the subject of organisation of service and forest law. Then silviculture, as artificial reproduction, methods of working the soil, of sowing and planting, the rearing and treatment of seedlings, description of tools, natural reproduction, methods of treatment, cultivation of minor forest produce, &c. Next come working plans in all their bearings, as forest surveys, methods of ascertaining the content of growing materials, and of the rate of growth, methods of working forests of plans of operations. Utilization of forest forms another great section, as the properties of the different kinds of wood, the harvesting of forest produce, marking, girdling, and felling of timber and wood, tools, extraction of India-rubber, production of Lac, fruits, as of Bassia latifolia, grass, leaves, peat, &c. Then again charcoal burning, preservation of forest produce, especially of wood and seeds, impregnation of the former, transport of forest produce by land and water, dragging, carrying, carting, snow-sledges, timber slides, floating and boating and of all things road making. The different methods of the disposal of forest produce sale of standing forest produce, working by Government agency, permits private sale, and public auction. Next we mention protection of the forest and their produce against men and beasts, treatments and settlement of forest rights and privileges, area of forest, its maximum and minimum, forest boundaries and their demarcation, protection of humus, and other beneficial substances. Protection of forest against fire, storms, avalanches, frost and of forest trees against diseases. Forest statistics and forest finance are two more great chapters. Then the physical and chemical properties of the

soil, their influence upon forest vegetation, the atmosphere and its importance, heat, frost, moisture, light, winds, and storms. Effect of forest upon climate, inundation, landslips, &c.

The above subjects are those most intimately connected with forestry. But besides these there are many others to which our pages are open, as forest botany, geology, zoology, physical science and chemistry in their bearings upon forestry, national economy, agriculture &c.

We shall further accept with thanks communication on camp life, travelling, sports, notes on forest tribes, their habits and customs.

These lists are far from exhaustive, but they are at least full enough to show that there will be very little difficulty in finding matter of interest to communicate.

The field is a wide one; let us try and occupy it successfully". (B.H. Baden Powell and W. Schlich, Vol. 1st, July, 1875)

After 124 years, the vision that the founders of the *Indian Forester* had, has become a reality. The *Indian Forester* covers all aspects of forestry, its administration, management and research achievements. The *Indian Forester* has been a Pioneer, providing its readers information on the latest developments and researches carried out in the country on burning topics by bringing out Special Issues on Tropical Pine, Biomass, Brandis Memorial, Environment Conservation, Eucalyptus, Earth Summit, Indian Forest Service - 125th Anniversary, Wildlife, Vegetative Propagation, Biodiversity, Sustainable Development, Teak (*Tectona grandis*) Wild Life Conservation, Neem, Agroforestry, Wild

Life Management, Participatory Forestry Management, Wildlife Protection, Environment, Poplar, Wood Energy, Social Forestry, Bamboo, International Symposium On Tiger, International Year of the Forests.

The *Indian Forester* is a fountain of information and learning which nourishes and enlightens the entire communities of foresters, scientists on scientific forestry and allied disciplines in the country. During its career of 124 years, it has taken an honorable place as one of the world's pioneers in forest journalism.

A great intimacy has developed among Indian Forestry (1861), the *Indian Forester* (1875) and the Forest Research Institute (1906). They have progressed and prospered under the same roof so to stay. This association has assumed the form of very close and cordial ties. It is the oldest journal on tropical forestry and has been very closely associated with the science of forestry with distinction for the country. The most important roles that the *Indian Forester* has played are in being a 'Pioneer' and 'Leader of Forlorn Hopes'. The issues of 124 years (Vol. 1 to 124) have published more than 30,000 articles on all phases of scientific forestry.

The *Indian Forester* is also awarding the following annual prizes for the best articles/papers/cover photographs/Forest Notes & Observations, published in the *Indian Forester* :

1. The BRANDIS PRIZE : This prize was instituted in 1884. The awards of five prizes are given i.e. Two prizes on theory or practice of Indian Silviculture, two prizes on akin to silviculture and one

prize for Cover Photo. Till 1997, 219 authors received this prize.

2. SCHLICH PRIZE : This prize was formed in 1928. The award of one prize is given to the best original contribution in any branch of forestry other than silviculture. Till 1997, 58 authors received this prize.
3. S.K. SETH PRIZE : This prize was formed in 1982. The awards of two prizes are given to best original contribution on environment, ecology and allied disciplines. Till 1997, 48 authors received this prize.
4. THE CHATURVEDI PRIZE : This prize was formed in 1956. Award of one prize is given to the best original contribution on Wild Life. Till 1997, 23 authors received this prize.
5. THE INDIAN FORESTER PRIZE : This prize was formed in 1991. Award of one prize is given to the best original contribution on "Notes and Observations". Till 1997, 10 authors have received this prize.

The *Indian Forester* is also entering the electronic era. It has received research grant from the World Bank Assisted project of the ICFRE, to go electronic. The valuable research publications on multifarious research topics are stored in 124 volumes of the *Indian Forester*. We are bringing the entire topics on computer. The entire text will be put on computer from which it will be put on Compact Disk. It will be very easy for interested readers to access any paper published in the *Indian Forester* through NIC-NET and Inter-Net and download the paper of interest. It is also proposed to

select few important topics and publish compilations of *Indian Forester* papers in book form under several titles for benefit of foresters and researchers.

Forests in India deserve a place of pride. But today, they are under high pressure to meet the demand of the growing population. Conservation of forest resources has become the main concern. In this regard

the conservation of biodiversity is attracting world-wide attention today. Forests, if protected and fast growing tree species grown, the problems of fuel, fodder, timber and pollution will be solved and make the nation more green and prosperous.

I earnestly hope that *Indian Forester* will keep on serving the cause of forestry globally.

SUMMARY

The *Indian Forester*, founded in 1875, is celebrating its 125th Anniversary. On this memorable occasion, we salute the founders who started it for serving the cause of scientific forestry. The *Indian Forester* today stands tall in the field of forestry information dissemination, and renews its pledge to strive to serve the cause of scientific forestry further in times to come.

युवा फौरेस्टर
जी०एस० रावत
सारांश

इण्डियन फौरेस्टर, स्थापित 1875 अपनी 125 वीं जयन्ती मना रहा है, इस स्मरणीय अवसर पर हम इसके संस्थापकों को प्रणाम करते हैं जिन्होंने वैज्ञानिक वानिकी का हित साधने के लिए इसे आरम्भ किया। आज इण्डियन फौरेस्टर वानिकी क्षेत्र में एक गौरवशाली शिखर पर है। आशा है कि वह इस गौरवशाली पथ पर आने वाले समय में भी अग्रसर रहेगा।

References

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