EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Journal.—It has regrettably proved impossible to publish the Journal since 1941. The absence of so many members in the armed forces and the increased burden of work on those remaining has allowed little time for the preparation of articles.

Innovations in the present number are a fuller reference to the affairs of the Institute and the introduction of a correspondence section which it is hoped will encourage members to express their opinions not only on technical matters, but also on the broader issues of forestry and the policy of their Institute.

The Institute.—The feeling that all is not well with the Institute has become increasingly evident in recent years; both constitution and policy have been criticised. Discussion has centred in the main on the question of membership. A considerable body of opinion has held that the rank of Member is too exclusive and that Associate Members, now in the majority, are unduly restricted in participation in Institute affairs. The opposite viewpoint has also been expressed: the maintenance of standards of membership is essential and any lowering of them will strike at the roots of a professional society.

Recent constitutional amendments allow Associate members the right to vote on all questions except amendments of the constitution and temporarily facilitate the advancement of non-graduate foresters to full membership. At the same time a campaign to increase membership has been carried on.

These activities pose the question: what are our objectives and are we on the right course to achieve them? Is membership of the Institute to be a hallmark of technical competence and professional integrity; or is self interest and improved bargaining power to be the keynote of our activities? In short, do we aim at a professional society or one devoted primarily to narrower vocational interests? The stated object of the Institute is "to further the development of technical forestry and the interests of the profession of forestry in
the Dominion of New Zealand." The interests of its members is the rightful concern of any professional society but what distinguishes a profession from other occupational groups is its primary concern with providing the public with the highest standard of service.

If the Institute aims higher than at the narrow self interest of a group, forestry in New Zealand will look to it for a lead in the many problems to be faced in the post-war period. It behoves every member to make an effort to answer the questions posed above and take an active part in determining the course of the Institute in the crucial period immediately ahead.

Post-War Forestry.—The end of the war will see developments in forestry in this country even greater than those following World War I. The call on our forest resources are likely to increase beyond the present wartime demands to provide for arrears of civil building and rehabilitation, particularly housing. This increased call will come at a time when the husbanding and skilful management of our dwindling reserves of indigenous softwoods have become more urgent problems than ever. At the same time extensive areas of both State and private exotic forest established since the last war will have reached a stage where utilization must be undertaken on a scale far greater than anything in our previous experience with exotics. This transition from indigenous to exotic will present New Zealand foresters with problems such as they have never before been called upon to face.

The extension of exotic timbers into fields previously restricted to indigenous species, the expansion of conversion methods suited to the exotics and the development of a pulp and paper industry will make a big call on the utilization personnel. In the fields of silviculture and management there will be a no less urgent demand. The problems of our indigenous forests, particularly the podocarps, remain to be solved. A huge task is provided by the extensive areas of exotics planted within a few years, treatment of which has unavoidably been postponed during the war. The leeway in pruning and thinning must be made up as soon as possible. Extension of afforestation activities will be necessary to obtain continuity on existing forests and to provide new units advantageously situated to meet local demands in areas not previously provided for.

It is obvious that forestry should provide a considerable and very desirable field for the rehabilitation of returning servicemen. But a strenuous effort will be required if permanent rehabilitation with accommodation, social amenities and economic status comparable with other avenues of employment is to be achieved. It is doubtful whether the general public appreciate the social implications of permanent communities on managed forests.

Soil Conservation.—The past year has seen major steps taken to implement the comprehensive Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act, 1941. Six Catchment Boards have been set up and others are in the process of formation. Progress is being made with the con-
stitution of Soil Conservation Reserves on which the Soil Conservation
and Rivers Control Council intends to centre its research and demon-
stration activities.

Foresters will welcome this legislation as an earnest of the
Government's intention to face the national problem of conserving our
soil resources and developing a planned system of land use aimed at
optimum utility in perpetuity. No one will imagine that the many
problems will be easily solved. The freedom of action of the indi-
vidual must inevitably be restricted in the interests of the community
and soil conservation measures integrated with the economic and
social life of the countryside. The spheres of the agriculturalist,
the pastoralist, the forester and the engineer will require careful
co-ordination: the national interests represented by several Govern-
ment departments and local interests represented by the Catchment
Boards must be harmonized. Such tasks call for co-operation of
the highest order and the sinking of sectional interests in the common
cause.

Provisions of the Act are comprehensive. The directing and
co-ordinating authority is the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control
Council while local authority and administration are vested in Catch-
ment Boards which have rating powers. Both are entrusted with
wide powers including the acquisition of land, the conduct of measures
to counter erosion and flooding, including afforestation, and, within
limits, regulation of activities on private land.

It appears obvious that whatever technical and administrative
staff the Council may build up in the future, it will remain to a large
extent dependent on the resources and experience of Government
departments. A period of stocktaking and research is essential before
much action can be taken on a large scale.

We wish the new organisations every success with their most
complex and diversified problems. It is to be hoped that the contri-
bution that the forester can make in the sphere of vegetational control
and land use will be given full consideration. It is unfortunately
evident that the popular viewpoint on forestry in relation to soil
cover shows little appreciation of the ecological and economic factors
involved.