

REC 5-2-26

SIR LANCELOT STIRLING.

Not for so relatively unimportant a circumstance as his display of a physical and intellectual vigour, remarkable in a man of 76 years, not necessarily for his extraordinary record of Parliamentary service, but because, first through his father and then of himself, he constitutes a living link with the very foundation of all our public institutions, and occupies a position unique in the history of the State, Sir Lancelot Stirling is a South Australian without a rival. Elected to the presidency of the Royal Agricultural Society on Wednesday, he made a characteristically modest speech, in which he returned thanks for the honour conferred upon him by his fellow members. The Society, however, is not so insensible to the distinguished character of its new President as to be in any doubt where the honour really lies. The members are justified in congratulating themselves, and are entitled to receive congratulations, upon Sir Lancelot Stirling's acceptance of a further term of office in the chair which he last occupied 35 years ago. The compliment which he pays the society is the fortunate first fruits of the decision of that increasingly important body to relieve its President of the great burden of detailed work which has hitherto devolved upon him. It would have been obviously unreasonable to ask Sir Lancelot to assume the duties of President in circumstances which would have entailed his being summoned to attend 120 meetings in the forthcoming year, the number of invitations with which the retiring President (the Hon. W. G. Duncan, M.L.C.) confessed he had been bombarded. Even upon so comparatively young a man as Mr. Duncan, a presidency involving such obligations has made practically impossible demands; and, if Sir Lancelot were happily 30 years his own junior, his conscientiousness would still forbid him to attempt to add another man's work to the two men's work which he already performs. His years, he says, entitle him "to walk on the shady side of the road." The responsibilities which are imposed upon him by the punctual and untiring performance of his duties as President of the Legislative Council, and by his intimate association with an extraordinarily large number of commercial and social undertakings, make it doubtful how much of the shade he actually enjoys; but it is beyond question that the added work of President of the Agricultural Society, under the old conditions, would not have permitted him any shade at all. The wisdom of the new division of labour among the principal officers of the Society is self-evident. The members have been privileged to appoint as their President one who may be described without suspicion of hyperbole as probably the most distinguished South Australian. Sir Lancelot not only makes a notable, and even picturesque, "figurehead"—to employ his own word—but is in a position to place at the service of his executive officers an almost unexampled fund of knowledge rendered all the more valuable in his case from the circumstance that it is allied with extensive practical experience of the primary industries, whose further development the society exists to promote. Sir Lancelot, however, although he has lived the greater part of his long life in South Australia, and has devoted himself especially to primary production, has by no means confined his interests to the one State or country, or to a mere average number of activities. A son of one of the first of South Australia's legislators, he was given the signal advantage of an English university education, and was absent from this State during seven years from 1865, combining law with athletics at Cambridge, and travelling on the Continent and in Northern

Continued Africa. In 1871, he was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple. The practice of his profession, however, is one of the few things he has not permitted himself. Fifty years ago, it is improbable that he could have endured so prosaic an employment. He was specially fitted for life out of doors—the more strenuous, the better. The amateur champion hurdler of England, he returned to this country in time to win the first Central Australian Steeplechase at Alice Springs. The contrast between an English inter-Varsity athletic contest and an Australian outback race meeting of 1874, must have been sufficiently striking even to impress a young man of 25. Sir Lancelot is one of the few men living who can claim to have hunted kangaroos with the present King of England, or who might be able to say what foundation there is for the legendary story that, after the hunt, Prince George, as His Majesty then was, having been the subject of a great hue and cry, consequent upon the report that he was "bushed," told the search party which found him that their anxiety for his safety was a little excessive, and would have been better justified on account of his brother, who might ascend the English throne some day, whereas he (Prince George) never would, and did not want to! Whether the story be true or fictitious, it may at least be accepted as a rather more than ordinarily picturesque suggestion of the completeness of the revolutions of the whirligig of time which the new President of the Agricultural Society has been privileged to observe. The changes which he has witnessed have nowhere been more sweeping, or more gratifying, than in South Australia, and his fellow citizens would be rejoiced to have the assurance that he is to be spared to see the very considerable further progress of the State which he has already served so long and so faithfully.

ADVERTISER 12-5-26

THE SCIENCE CONGRESS IN PERTH. Preparations are being made for the meeting of the Australasian Association for the advancement of science, which will be opened in Perth on August 23. This will be the eighth meeting of the association and the first to be held in the western capital. The State Government and the people of Perth are showing much interest in the coming visit, and are making every effort to attract visitors from the eastern States. All delegates to the congress will be carried free over the railway line connecting Kalgoorlie and Perth; and will be granted reduced fares over other sections of the East-West line. The local committee in Perth are trying to arrange private hospitality for the visitors from the east. If the season is early those who attend the meeting will be able to see the profusion of Western Australian wild flowers, which make such a strong appeal not only to the botanist, but to the visitor who is able to appreciate flowers for their intrinsic beauty. Many excursions to localities of scientific and general interest near Perth and farther afield are being arranged, and the meeting promises to be as great a success as was the last gathering in Adelaide. Professor E. H. Rennie, of the University of Adelaide, will take over the presidential duties from Sir John Monash at this meeting.

REC. 9-2-26

The latest English files, which have just come to hand, announce that a knighthood has been conferred on Mr. Thomas Hudson Beare, Regius Professor of Engineering and Dean of the Faculty of Science, Edinburgh University. A reference to this honour appeared in The Register on January 25. Sir Thomas Hudson Beare is a native of South Australia.

REC. 13-3-26

Mrs. Smedley Palmer (Miss Ethel Ridings, A.M.U.A.) has been appointed locum tenens for Mr. Frederick Bevan, Mrs. Palmer, who has been associated with the Elder Conservatorium for a number of years, will take charge of Mr. Bevan's vocal section of the curriculum during his leave of absence in England.

REC. 6-5-26 FORESTRY.

The Need for a Wider Vision.

II.—By E. Anthony, M.P.

The far-reaching influence of scientifically organized afforestation upon the national life has been so frequently emphasized as to have become almost stereotyped. In spite of this, however, the United States, conscious of the rapid diminution of her timber resources, was probably the first of modern nations to embark upon a comprehensive scheme of replanting, the result of a vigorous and long-continued campaign, in which the universities and prominent public men, magnificently supported by the whole American press, engaged.

The wave of enthusiasm, arising from the constituencies, swept into Congress, and the legislators duly gave effect to the popular will, and by enactment placed forestry upon a firm footing. Yet so recently as 1924 the Professor of Forestry at Yale considered it necessary to utter another reminder to the public, and at a public lecture stated (inter alia):—"Although during the century and a half of America's national existence she had established the highest standard of material civilization the world had ever known, owing to the enormous consumption of the products of the earth, the continuance of that high standard of comfort depended on the people's ability not only to manufacture goods, but to secure the raw material upon which that scale of production depended. No factor," said he, "has contributed more in the past towards building up this standard than the abundant and comparatively cheap supplies of wood drawn from our native forests; and it is the belief of foresters that the exhaustion of these woods, without replacement, is the greatest blow that can be struck at our standard of living."

Dear Timber and Housing Shortage.

There can be no possible doubt that the enormous increase in the price of timber during the last quarter of a century has contributed materially to the increasing housing shortage, the congestion, and bad living conditions in the larger cities, which accompanying high rents and the excessive percentage of the smaller incomes which must go for housing. The former, though important, is only one phase of the question. The beneficial effects of forestry in the control of floods cannot be overlooked, more particularly in our own State, with its comparatively low average rainfall. Bishop Moorhouse spoke not without a deep knowledge of the facts when he stated, somewhat facetiously perhaps, that Australia should pray less and dam more. Probably no State in the Commonwealth requires to devote more attention to water conservation than does our own; yet millions of gallons of water find their way to the sea each year, doing untold damage to surrounding orchards and the thoroughfares of municipalities, and inflict great hardship upon property owners in the low-lying suburbs.

III Effects of Forest Destruction.

Older residents are unanimous in their opinions that the increasing severity of these floods is largely due to the denudation of the hillsides, their holding capacity having suffered tremendous reduction thereby, in addition to the gradual washing away of the soil and subsoil and other consequent ill effects. No better illustration can be given of the injurious effects resultant upon the deforestation of mountains than that given by Professor Fernow in "Economics of forestry." Mr. Fernow states "That within 70 years, as the result of denudation, 1,000,000 acres of mountain forest was laid waste. As a consequence the mountain streams, turned into torrents, swept vast quantities of debris on to the lowlands, laying waste 8,000,000 acres of tillable land. It is gratifying to know that afforestation has since practically reclaimed that area, and altered the physical conditions completely.

Statistics reveal the existence of practically a million acres of suitable forest land within the 30-in. rainfall belt, nearly half of which is situated in the Adelaide hills, in close proximity to the city, accessible by rail and road. The importance of such a situation cannot be overstressed, for, in addition to the advantage of low transport costs, the presence of a large population provides a ready market for firewood and other cheap forest products.

Pulp and Paper.

In addition to the previously enumerated timber requirements of the State, there exists an almost unexploited field for the utilization of softwoods in the manufacture of pulp and paper. It is

Continued expected that the Australian demand for newsprint will reach during the next few years 100,000 tons. At the present time 120,000 tons of paper and pulp, valued at £5,500,000, is imported into Australia each year. There are three paper mills already established in the Commonwealth, none of which is manufacturing newsprint, for which there is a market sufficiently large to absorb the output of at least two mills producing 100 tons per day. Experimentation has proved that the softwoods of Australia are eminently suited for the manufacture of this material, and, in fact, under certain treatment, give a heavier yield than the woods of other countries. Twenty years ago it was generally considered that the supply of raw material existing in the softwood forests of northern European countries and North America would be sufficient to meet requirements for an indefinite period. Owing, however, to unexpectedly heavy lumbering operations, together with the damage wrought by devastating forest fires, Australia will be shortly thrown upon her own resources, or else pay dearly for the material for the manufacture of her daily newspaper. Apart altogether from the desirability of retaining in the country as much as possible of five or six million pounds sterling now paid abroad for our paper requirements, important advantages would accrue from the establishment of a pulping industry capable of dealing with a great portion of the local demand. As South Australia has outstripped the other States in regard to her softwoods, she has a unique opportunity of getting right into the business of pulp and paper manufacture. Her forests at Mount Burr and other places will produce immense quantities of thinnings suitable for pulping, and, with the utilization of these thinnings a considerable impetus would be given to the financial prosperity of her forest operations. The Government have gone into the commercial side of afforestation, and if the data obtained is reliable, there should be no hesitation in embarking upon a scheme which would find employment for a great number of our own people, save the expenditure of large sums of money outside of Australia; but, better than all, would forge one more link in the chain of national self-dependence.

NEWS 4-5-26

UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

9—Mr. G. R. Piper, B.Sc.

Mr. Gordon Rudolph Piper, B.Sc., who recently attained the degree of Bachelor of Science at the Adelaide University, with credits in chemistry and mathematics, has had a scholastic career of unbroken success. He has obtained nearly all his education on scholarships, and is now only 19 years of age.



MR. G. R. PIPER, B.Sc. who gained his Bachelor of Science degree at the University examinations.

Mr. Piper was born at Balhannah, and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Piper, of Myrtle Bank. At the Adelaide High School he obtained a primary exhibition which took him to St. Peter's College. In the examination which decided the award, he came first of the candidates in the State. In three successive years he passed the junior public examination in seven subjects with four credits, the senior in seven subjects with two credits, and the higher in five subjects with two credits. He came seventh on the general honours list, and was awarded a scholarship tenable for four years at the Adelaide University. At St. Peter's he won the Wyatt scholarship for mathematics and the Farrell scholarship for general subjects. He was also cox of the second rowing eight. Mr. Piper has been appointed tutor in mathematics at the University for 1926, and will continue his studies during the year. Study has left him little leisure for sport, but he occasionally finds time for fishing, shooting, and yachting, his favorite recreations.