The Journal Moves Ahead

THE BOARD of Directors voted last August to get out six issues of the Journal of Range Management each year and to increase the total number of pages per volume, beginning in 1951. This action is worthy of special comment.

Stepping the number of issues from four up to six per year indicates real progress with the Journal. This action means that the Editor and Board of Directors expect to have enough manuscripts and other material for this number of issues. This is far different than some members expected when the Society was organized. At first a few people thought it unwise for the Society to try to publish a journal at all for lack of material or adequate finances. They suggested that the Society get out a mimeographed news statement occasionally and that members continue publishing scientific papers in established journals such as those in forestry, animal husbandry, agronomy, plant physiology, and ecology.

But it has turned out that plenty of material has been available—good material; and even those who were most pessimistic about beginning the Journal are now enthusiastic about it. The articles have been outstanding and very satisfying. They cover a wide range of subjects and are written in such a way as to be easily understandable. Furthermore, a majority of them present useful and worthwhile information. The Journal continues to improve with each issue and, in the opinion of this writer, it has reached a new height of perfection in the past few numbers. The Journal now compares favorably with the best of those long established in other fields. Congratulations to the Editor and to the contributors!

The Directors were wise in deciding to get out six issues per year. There are definite advantages in having the Journal appear more frequently than quarterly. Among other things, it will be possible to keep the members more up to date on news and other current items. Members who cannot subscribe to several other
journals and are located in the field where a library is not readily available should especially welcome the news of more frequent issues. Most members will agree that it is good psychologically to have the Journal and range matters brought to the attention of members more frequently than was possible in four issues. It helps to create interest. More frequent publications will result also in the printing of more material, and, in general, more for the member's money.

Disadvantages of increasing the number of issues appear to be few and minor; they seem to be far outweighed by the advantages. More issues will add to the work of the Editor, of course. Also, some members probably will wonder if the Society can afford six issues and if the action will result in an increase in dues at a time when every other living cost is rising. Would an increase in dues prevent some potential members from joining the Society, and prompt others to drop membership? That is questionable; the dues have not yet increased. It is expected that the extra cost of the two additional issues will be taken care of by more subscriptions and dues from a larger membership.

As the Journal grows in size it becomes increasingly valuable in bringing together under one cover a greater number of articles on the subject of range management. Including the excellent Current Literature section, the whole field of range publications is contained here under one cover. Formerly the articles were so scattered among other journals and kinds of publications that it was nearly impossible for many range managers to see even a few of them. Many articles on range subjects will continue to be published in other journals, of course, and should be. Certain ones published in other journals probably will be used more widely, and perhaps to better advantage than they would be if published in the Journal of Range Management. Some articles on the subject of forest grazing, for example, might find their greatest use in the Journal of Forestry; perhaps the same would hold true for a few of the articles that touch on other closely allied fields.

A large Journal is needed to cover adequately all the material that should be printed and made available to Society members. After all the field of range management is large. A look at the membership list indicates as much—in addition to livestock producers and range specialists are agronomists, animal husbandmen, conservationists, economists, foresters, wild lifers, and sportsmen. All of our members representing these various interests are concerned, in one way or another, with the wise handling of the native or uncultivated forage crop itself, which is largely the job of range management.

The Journal has already done much to strengthen the Society. And with the interest and hard work of everyone concerned it can and will rise to still greater heights of excellence and service to Society members.—H. H. Biswell, Associate Professor of Forestry, University of California, Berkeley, California.