Editorials

Our 1951 Student Issue

Last year, the October number of the Journal featured an editorial and several other items that marked the beginning of an annual Student Issue. This year, with more time to prepare, much more material about students and teaching is included in this September number, which is dedicated to range students—to our future. The prize winning essay of the 1950 contest is the lead article. In addition, Dr. Harold F. Heady generously agreed to solicit, assemble, and edit material from the range schools. As a result, this issue contains several articles of especial interest to students and a new section "Range Student Roundup, 1950–1951," which describes many of the field trips and other activities of students during the school year. We have not one, but two student editorials. Furthermore, Dr. Heady's correspondence and surveys in bringing this range student material together, uncovered many points of interest concerning the teaching of range management, which he has written up as still a third editorial.—R. S. Campbell, Editor.

The Value of Student Membership in the American Society of Range Management

Recently a friend asked me, after glancing through a copy of the Journal which was lying on my desk, why I was a member of the American Society of Range Management. He knew that I was a student of wildlife biology and was unable to see any direct connection between the science of range management and that of wildlife management. When one considers that this man had been born and raised on a cattle ranch in northern Arizona, it may be possible to appreciate my surprise at his question. Had he been reared in an urban community or had he come from a part of the country where range problems are of little local interest, there might have been some excuse for his question.

In answering, I explained to him, as he should certainly have realized by now, that the science of range management is by no means an independent one. On the contrary, scientific range management includes the coordination and application of the researches of a wide variety of specialists. Backing the rancher in his efforts to produce livestock profitably while maintaining the range at its highest possible level of productivity are botanists, agronomists, ecologists, chemists, foresters, animal husbandmen, biologists, meteorologists, and engineers, to mention
but a few. Since each of these professions, as well as others, play a vital part in range management, it is only natural that students as well as practitioners in these fields should be interested in knowing how their work fits into the overall picture of the utilization and conservation of our range resources. The American Society of Range Management with its Journal of Range Management acts as an ideal medium for the exchange of ideas and researches of these many fields and for the dissemination of practical knowledge.

The activities of the Society are by no means restricted to scientists or specialists. Since the Society is dedicated to the maintenance and improvement of the range and consequently of its products, many businessmen, economists and bankers, in areas where the economy is directly dependent upon a healthy livestock industry, have become active and interested members. The public as a whole often benefits from the varied programs presented by the Sections in their regular meetings. The program of the December, 1950, meeting of the Arizona Section is a case in point. In addition to talks by various technicians and laymen on range problems, the Section members and invited public heard an address by Dr. Irving P. Krick, noted meteorologist, on the potentialities of artificial rainmaking, a subject of vital interest to everyone in the arid Southwest.

On a more personal basis, I have found, while a student, that the Society and the Journal are a valuable source of information in my own field, wildlife management. Much of the wildlife in the west, both game and non-game, is found on the same rangeland used in the production of livestock. Many of the conditions essential to good livestock management, abundant forage and dependable water sources, for example, are likewise factors essential to proper wildlife management. If the range is allowed to deteriorate with a corresponding lowering of its carrying capacity for livestock, the wildlife populations on the range must suffer also. Since wildlife populations are less easy to control than those of domestic stock, the wildlife left on a deteriorated range may wreak further havoc with vegetation before nature can take its course of range improvement. An unwise or misguided predator control program may result in more harm from an increased rodent population than in good from the eradication of the predators. Conversely, wise management that increases the carrying capacity for domestic stock means more and better wildlife on the range. Information such as this is as important to a wildlife ecologist as it is to a rancher or range technician. Is it any wonder, therefore, that a potential biologist in the west should be interested in range manage-
ment? The American Society of Range Management is as valuable to me as any of the organizations devoted exclusively to the field of wildlife management.

It seems to me that the manner in which membership in the Society is valuable to me could, with a few variations, be applicable to students and technicians in any of the aforementioned fields. It is because of this universality of appeal that the American Society of Range Management is fast becoming an important factor in the advancement of the multiple science of range management. For my part, I hope the Society continues to grow and to expand the already high degree of useful service that it is rendering today.—James B. Elder, Student, Department of Zoology, University of Arizona, Tucson.

An Obligation

IN THESE troublesome times in which we find ourselves currently engrossed, there are many problems confronting both the practical range livestock raiser and the professional man. As a country we are recuperating after a war which taxed our agricultural, industrial, economic and moral strength to the limit. We see, as we look ahead to the new horizons of the future that perhaps our period of recuperation has been too short, for the outlook for ourselves and our immediate posterity is indeed dark. We find that we are needing to prepare for another conflict which could last over a period of several decades. This is true because our nation is in opposition to a system of statism that has industrial and agricultural resources comparable to our own, and an almost limitless supply of manpower. The Soviet Union also has a doctrine that is directly opposed to all that which we as a nation hold dear, and they will spend all their resources and manpower to promulgate that doctrine over all the world.

The struggle between communism and democracy proposes to be an exceedingly long and hard one, with the final victor being the one with the most moral integrity, physical resources, and fortitude to outlast the other. These vital world-wide facts pose complex problems to those who are interested in the management and conservation of our range lands. There is a pressing need for rapidly producing foods, especially meat produced on our ranges. This supply is not needed for our own consumption alone, but also for those countries which are on the brink of starvation and are being led astray by the luring promises of communism.

We are also faced with a dire shortage of wool due to a lack of stockpiling and increased demand. We have been told that we must raise more wool, and since most of the wool is produced on the western range lands it will become the burden of these ranges. This is where the range man must remember the bitter lessons of the past and realize that our struggle with communism probably will not be an overnight affair and that our grasslands must produce enough, not only for our present emergency, but must come out of it in condition to produce at least until the dangers of world aggression are removed.

It is the responsibility of those who know the potentialities of our ranges and the ease of their destruction to use that knowledge in the conservation of these lands. A lack of basic knowledge concern-