



Rooted Successes

PLANTINGS of trees by the U. S. Soil Conservation Service are based on requirements different from those of any other branch of arboriculture. Everyone else who plants trees thinks of returns for his labor in terms of their tops: wood, fruit, nuts, ornament, shade, encouragement of wildlife, shelter from the wind, etc. And sites are always chosen in which the trees seem likeliest to survive and thrive.

The soil conservationist alone thinks in terms of roots. He plants his trees primarily for the living underground ropes they will provide; tops, save as umbrellas to check surface wash, are incidental. Also, he has to take the sites provided by his problem, and they are almost always the least promising: caving gullies, naked sterile clay, drifting dunes.

Under the circumstances, the soil conservationist might be expected to be a defeatist, always looking to see his labors perish of drought or washed away in freshets. Yet a summary of plantings to date, offered in *The Journal of Forestry* (Jan.) by John F. Preston of the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, shows both self-exacting standards and a reasonable degree of optimism.

To date, some 350 million trees have

been planted on about 218,000 wasting acres by the Soil Conservation Service. Of this acreage, it has been possible to check back on about half. Over 70 per cent. of the acreage thus examined was

found to have its plantings in satisfactory condition; the remainder, with half or more of the trees dead, was rated unsatisfactory and marked for replanting.

Science News Letter, February 4, 1939

ANTHROPOLOGY

The Savage Gets a Break: Sanctuaries Planned For Him

WILD animals at present receive more care and consideration, in most parts of the world, than do wild human beings. Preserves and sanctuaries are arranged for our lesser cousins in fur, feathers or scales, but for the poor brown brother there has long been nothing but exploitation or extermination.

At last there are signs that some savage tribes are going to get at least as good a break as ducks or gorillas. In several tropical colonial areas, what might be called "savage sanctuaries" are being planned. They will not be like our Indian reservations, which were places where the Redmen were penned to keep them from getting at the white men who had taken their hunting grounds. Quite oppositely, they are to be places where the white men can get at them only under conditions calculated to render the intruder as nearly harmless as possible.

This movement is largely the work of scientists, particularly anthropologists and ethnologists, who have seen some primitive peoples vanish altogether be-

fore they could study and record them and their ways, and they have seen others so changed by contacts with civilization that they could no longer yield data of real scientific value.

A typical case are the sanctuaries planned, and now being surveyed, in the Netherlands New Guinea. There, some tribes live in the highlands who have had so little contact with white men that they are still practically in the Stone Age. Ultimately, access by missionaries and (under restrictions) by traders, will be permitted. But first, thorough scientific studies of the people and their environment will be made.

The inmost lands, far up in the interior mountains, are planned to become the permanent sanctuaries of the shyest, most primitive of all the aborigines.

It all arouses the ironical reflection that in some of the world's erstwhile highly civilized lands there are hundreds of thousands of white men who must be wistfully wishing they were these poor, benighted but protected savages!

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GEOLOGY

Ice Age Stages Traced In Tropic Lands of Asia

WHAT were the tropical lands like during the Pleistocene Ice Age? This often-asked question was taken up by Dr. Hellmut de Terra, research associate of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, who has spent some years exploring the southern slopes of Asia, from the Siwalik Hills of northern India to the remote interior of Burma.

During the Ice Age, corresponding perhaps to the major advances of the great glacial sheets from the north, there were four major glaciations in the Himalayas, Dr. de Terra reported. There are four zones of gravelly or silty compositions, separated from each other by

major breaks which coincide with interglacial stages, he said. These are uniformly developed all over continental southern Asia, and afford a means by which cycles of soil making and sedimentation can be correlated.

Prehistoric man was an unconscious calendar-maker for his modern scientific successors in this study. The rude stone tools he made, and the bones of the animals he hunted (and that sometimes turned the tables and hunted him) are valuable aids in "dating" these four periods of glacial deposition.

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● RADIO ●

Dr. Walter B. Cannon, Harvard physiologist, president of the A. A. A. S., will be guest scientist on "Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, Director, Science Service, over the coast to coast network of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Thursday, Feb. 9, 7:15 p. m. EST, 6:15 p. m. CST, 5:15 p. m. MST, 4:15 p. m. PST. Listen in to your local station. Listen in each Thursday.