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Forestry Instruction at Iowa State

The Ames Daily Tribune

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This article should bring back fond reflections on the past.

In a time when education and science are fighting for every penny they can get and wondering if they'll ever win, the battle of the budget. It's nice that we can rely on the persistent cyclical nature of such problems whereby they are brought to the fore. Hopefully as before, it will bring a tremendous upswing in the intensification of science and scientific efforts.

THE AMES DAILY TRIBUNE
AND AMES EVENING TIMES
Thursday, Nov. 18, 1926

In a dispatch from Des Moines carried in Wednesday's Tribune, Claude R. Porter, a member of the state board of education, is reported as favoring the abolishment of the four year course in forestry at Iowa State college for the reason that this course "holds out false hopes to Iowa boys. Forestry students are not able to find jobs and the cause of forest conservation would be best advanced by a service course."

The Tribune would like to know whether Mr. Porter is purposely making mis-statements or whether he has been misinformed or whether he has not made any effort to get the facts in the case.

One would expect that a member of the state board of education would be very careful to give facts, especially when the matter of continuing a line of work which has been given for 25 years is involved. The Tribune does not believe that Mr. Porter is purposely misrepresenting but does know that he is sadly lacking in accurate information.

The statement that forestry students are not able to find jobs is ridiculous. Had Mr. Porter investigated the situation before making his statement, he would have found that all of the 17 graduates of the 1926 class in the forestry course went directly into forestry positions. Further, if the investigation had covered also the preceding year, he would have found that all of the graduates of that year went into forestry positions after completing college work. The same is also true of the forestry class graduating three years ago. The Tribune would like to ask Mr. Porter if he knows of any other department on the Iowa State campus or in any other institution in the state, which has had 100 per cent of its graduates in the past three years enter the line of work for which they were prepared.

Further than this, the college records show that on September 1, 1926, 100 per cent of the graduates

of the past three years were still in forestry work.

Perhaps the above figures do not go back far enough. The college records show that during the past ten years, 97 per cent of the men specializing in forestry went into forestry work on graduation and on September 1, 1926, 84 per cent of all of those graduates for the ten year period were still in forestry work.

Again The Tribune would like to ask Mr. Porter if he can furnish data from other departments either at Iowa State College or other institutions which will be so much better as to justify his statement that "forestry students are not able to find jobs and that the forestry profession holds out false hopes to Iowa boys."

A canvass of what the forestry graduates of Ames are doing might be enlightening:

One graduate is in charge of over twenty-two million acres of national forests; another is second in charge of approximately twenty-five million acres of national forest land. About seven or eight others are each in charge of approximately one million acres of national forests as supervisors.

Three are handling forestry extension work in different states. One is head of a forestry department in one of our western schools. Two others are in college forestry teaching positions.

Two graduates are handling important research work in the United States forest products laboratory. One is forester of the American Forestry Association. One is superintendent of the drykiln work of the Western Electric company. One is superintendent of a creosoting plant in the Longbell Lumber Company and three others are employed by the same company.

Four graduates are handling important investigational work as grazing experts in the United States Forest Service. Two are in important state forestry positions. A large number hold technical assistant positions in national forests. Many others are employed in various capacities with lumber companies and several are engaged in forest nursery business.


The Tribune is not inclined to believe many of the above young men feel that they have accepted positions with "false hopes" and wonders why Mr. Porter does not correspond with some of these men who are so over-burdened with "false hopes." It is possible that he might change his viewpoint, not only on forestry in general but also in regard to the splendid part forestry graduates from Iowa State college are playing in the country.

The Tribune believes that forestry, like the rest of agriculture, is a basic industry in the country. Forestry is not a fad—it is here to stay. The perpetuation and conservative management of the forests of the country, including the farm woodlots, is one of the outstanding problems which we are facing today. The profession of forestry offers one of the most inviting fields of opportunity and service available for the young manhood of Iowa. The men

entering forestry work are doing a real service to the country. The profession is just as honorable as law, medicine, engineering or other branches. The forestry department is giving good instruction in this field to about 100 Iowa boys as well as to a few scattering students from other states and nations.

If Mr. Porter's recommendation concerning the abandonment of the technical course in forestry is made for the purpose of economizing, this, of course, should receive careful attention. How-even, as reported in a former issue of The Tribune, it costs the forestry department of the college only approximately \$5,000 (on the basis of last year) to give the technical instruction in forestry to 124 men specializing in this work. It is generally understood that the forestry instructional work is given at a very modest expense to the state.

The Tribune does not believe that Mr. Porter is attempting to misrepresent but the people of the state have the right to demand that their representatives on the board of education at least inform themselves before making broad, sweeping and unfounded statements asking for the elimination of an established line of instructional work at one of the state institutions.



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