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Harvests

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INSTITUTE REVIEWS PROGRAM AT TWO ANNUAL MEETINGS

Director Schery and A. V. Mura of Bozell & Jacobs presented a thorough-going review of Institute activities for the past year at the B.L.T.I. Annual Meeting in Kansas City on May 21, and for Associate members and their guests during the A.S.T.A. annual meeting June 14. In both instances there were showings of the cooperative Encyclopaedia Britannica television featurettes.

An unusually large attendance at the Annual Meeting heard how the Institute has expanded its activities in manifold ways, and is becoming widely sought as a source of turfgrass information nationally.

This fiscal year the customary three illustrated press kits were mailed to over 600 editors. Special mailings to select groups rounded out the direct mail program. Other services included answering inquiries, presentations at conventions and scientific meetings, and distribution of reprints, seed samples, photographs, statistical information, etc.

Television and radio activities included the Encyclopaedia Britannica lawn series (four releases) plus personal appearances by the Director on a number of programs. The Institute movie continued to receive widespread showings, totaling 227 television appearances to an estimated audience of nearly 7,000,000, plus nearly 800 private showings to groups such as garden clubs and civic organizations.

Visits to research centers have continued, and Dr. Schery has participated in various turfgrass conferences.

The Institute continues providing lawn stories to a wide array of gardening publications -- and these receive sizeable consumer exposure. In addition, the Director has been called upon to cover the subject in numerous lawn books and pamphlets. A list of these publications and other undertakings, given in the 5-page mimeograph "Outline of Lawn Institute Undertakings", was mailed to members.

The Institute has continued cooperative activities with numerous industrial and commercial concerns, and has undertaken research related to the climax testing of bluegrass and seed germination. Dr. Schery attended many national scientific conventions, as well as highway and park association meetings, in behalf of the Institute.

The Kansas City office has kept its finger on the public pulse, accumulating clippings relating to Institute activities, and issuing publicity on personal appearances of the Director. It is quite encouraging that over 2500 column inches of news story have appeared on Kentucky bluegrass and Oregon fescue in the nation's press, well over twice what it was the year previously. Nearly 12,000 column inches of information on lawn grasses in general have been caught by the clipping service.

Cartoon items went to 2080 newspapers, and found excellent reception. A previous Harvests pictured some of the cartoons used, such as "Crabgrass Cries for You", which appeared in 201 newspapers.

Climax testing was reviewed briefly at the annual meeting, and was the chief item of the Lawn & Turfgrass Division program at the A.S.T.A. June meeting. A unanimous resolution calling for further study and consideration of the industry's position resulted.

Mr. Pommer of St. Louis, reported for the Associate members at the annual meeting. Bob indicated that in spite of an expanded Harvests, he had had no idea how extensive the Institute program was, until reviewed all in one piece. It was his suggestion that the same review be given for Associate members at the A.S.T.A. convention. His suggestion was acted upon, and a pleasant "open house" was held Tuesday afternoon at the Muehlebach Hotel during the A.S.T.A. meeting.

Joe Peppard reported for the nominating committee the following slate, which was unanimously elected: W. T. Gassner, President; Colonel Ed Spears, Vice-President; Roy Edwards, Jr., Secretary; Art Berry, Ed Mangelsdorf, Lud Hagen, Clayton Fox, Don Jones, Bob Kellogg, members of the Board. Mr. Lud Hagen of the Oregon Fescue Commission offered the Commission's viewpoint, and the formal meeting closed with a report of the membership committee recommending acceptance of additional firms or associations not currently participating in the Institute.

"POPULAR SCIENCE" LAUDS DR. SCHERY'S ARTICLE

A letter from Herschel Shohan of "Popular Science" magazine emphasizes the importance of Dr. Schery's article to the publication's tremendous circulation. This story, "Lawn Keeping: The Lazy Man's Version," appeared in the June issue of the publication. Apparently the publication's editors are impressed with the quality of Dr. Schery's material and the stature of the Institute itself -- since this is the second article by Dr. Schery published this year by "Popular Science." The other story appeared in the April, 1960 issue.

Mr. Shohan writes:

"I am writing to call your attention to a feature article in the June issue of "Popular Science" entitled "Lawn Keeping: The Lazy Man's Version", by Dr. Robert W. Schery, Director of The Lawn Institute. In it our more than one-million readers will discover how they can enjoy a rich looking and well kept lawn with more ease than they ever thought possible. Dr. Schery's article features a great many widely held popular delusions about the rigors of lawn keeping. For instance, Dr. Schery discourages unnecessary raking of grass clippings on a newly mowed lawn, unnecessary watering of the lawn even during dry periods and unnecessary fertilizing and seeding.

"I feel certain that this feature should be read by every home owner and by the members of your institute. To further understanding on proper lawn care I would like to suggest that you give the story a prominent build-up in your news bulletins."

CEMETERY PUBLICATION TO CARRY DR. SCHERY'S STORY

Plans have been completed for "Concept" magazine to carry a specially prepared story by Dr. Schery. This article, tentatively titled, "The Prestige of Quality Turf," is to appear in the August issue of the publication. "Concept" magazine is published monthly by the Interment Association of America, and is sent to nearly 4,000 cemeteries and local interment associations.

STORY BY SCHERY IN NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN JOURNAL

The May-June, 1960, issue of the "New York Botanical Garden Journal" features an illustrated three-page story by-lined by Dr. Schery. This article, entitled, "Weeding Lawns," and obviously dealing with weed control, incorporates prominent mention of bluegrass and red fescues.

"For the northern two-thirds of the nation, the best lawn guardians," writes Dr. Schery, "are the bluegrasses and red fescue varieties, since they flourish in many situations."

"FLOWER GROWER" MAGAZINE QUOTES INSTITUTE DIRECTOR

The August, 1960 issue of "Flower Grower", a publication with over 365,000 circulation, in a feature story, quotes the following from Dr. Schery's appearance before the Men's Garden Clubs of America June Convention:

"At the one extreme it (lawn watering) is absolutely essential for survival or for greenness during dry periods; at the other extreme it causes more harm than it does good. The watering schedule should conform to the

climate and soil and to the taste of the homeowner -- reflecting willingness to bear the expense or unwillingness to put up with the brown grass. Grasses once managed intensively may die if watering suddenly ceases, but well-established stands of the sturdier lawn species take drought well."

INSTITUTE STORY FEATURED IN "BETTER BUILDING MAINTENANCE"

The over 51,000 readers of the influential "Better Building Maintenance" will see another story credited to Dr. Schery, Director, The Lawn Institute, in the July, 1960, issue. This publication reaches maintenance people in commercial, industrial and factory buildings, institutions, hotels, restaurants, schools and military installations.

In this story, Dr. Schery states, "Upright grasses include the most noteworthy of all lawn species -- Kentucky bluegrass and its companion fine fescues. Together they make first rate lawns needing a minimum of care." The article is entitled, "Modern Power Mowers."

U. S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION RECOMMENDS INSTITUTE

A letter from John Cameron, Chief of the School Housing Section, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C., puts a number of questions to Dr. Schery. Mr. Cameron comments that the U.S. Office of Education has suggested that the Lawn Institute is the place to come to find information on a number of subjects related especially to "compilations of expert opinion and reports of approved practices."

This would seem to be just another example of the growing acceptance and prestige of the Institute as an authoritative turfgrass organization, and emphasizes the need for the Institute to carry on at least some minimal research.

"AMERICAN HOME" GIVES PROMINENCE TO SCHERY-INSTITUTE STORY

The August issue of "American Home" magazine carries a two-page story, entitled, "Start Your New Lawn This Month," written especially for the publication by Dr. Schery. Ample black and white photos and a lower half page four-color spread illustrate the story appearing in this popular consumer magazine. Upwards of 3,664,921 readers will see this Lawn Institute publicity material.

LAWN INSTITUTE FEATURED IN "FLOWER & GARDEN" MAGAZINE

Another Lawn Institute-originated story is receiving tremendous consumer exposure in the August issue of "Flower & Garden" magazine. The three-page article, reaching nearly 450,000 readers of the publication, was prepared by Dr. Schery and is entitled, "Lawn Time Coming Up!"

"TREES" MAGAZINE REQUESTS STORY BY DR. SCHERY

June Faulds of "Trees" magazine has written requesting a story by Dr. Schery for appearance in its August issue. She says,

"We would be very proud to publish a story by a lawn expert such as you ... can promise front cover billing and a good space presentation ... two or three full pages ..."

Reprints will be available shortly.

REPORTS ON KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS IN "AGRONOMY JOURNAL"

The following quotes are from the May, 1960, "Agronomy Journal," in an article entitled, "Utilization of Fertilizer by Six Pasture Grasses," by Robert W. Duell. The work was done at New Jersey and reflects conditions on the Eastern Seaboard.

"Brown and Munsell reported that when Kentucky bluegrass was lawn-mowed frequently, or when mowed for hay 2 to 4 times a year, it was practically equal to orchardgrass, Rhode Island bentgrass, and timothy in quality and quantity." Four year average yields were not much less than tall fescue or orchardgrass, and were better than brome grass and timothy.

"It is interesting to note that only Kentucky bluegrass and orchardgrass produced a greater response (of fertilizer) to the second increment than to the first.

"Contrary to the customary concept of the performance of forage grass species, Kentucky bluegrass was more productive than orchardgrass at all fertilizer rates of this experiment in 2 years out of 3.

"Interactions between grasses and fertilizer rates indicated that grasses such as orchardgrass and Kentucky bluegrass were much more responsive than were reed canarygrass and brome grass. Other observations in favor of Kentucky bluegrass as a pasture species are that its yield was generally lower than most commonly recommended grasses in the first cutting taken when pasturage is usually in surplus, and its yield was superior in later cuttings when pasturage is generally deficient."

TRADE PUBLICATION CALLS ON SCHERY

Frank Abrahamson of the "Garden Supply Merchandiser" has asked Dr. Schery to prepare a tabulation of lawn seed for the forthcoming Green Book.

"POPULAR SCIENCE" STORY ENLIGHTENS

J. N. Gadel, Consulting Physicist of East Orange, New Jersey, writes the following about Dr. Schery's article in the June issue of "Popular Science":

"Needless to say, I have lawn problems. After going to unusual lengths to obtain information and advice, I have come to the tentative conclusion that lawn culture is a black art whose secrets cannot be transmitted by scientific and verbal means. Your article generated a glimmer of hope that this is not a universal fact."

EDITOR PLUGS QUALITY SEED

Perhaps as a result of the consistent supply of promotion material that has been provided him by the Lawn Institute, Edwin Steffek, Horticultural Editor of "Popular Gardening" magazine, has developed a lawn story declaiming against cheap seed. This article appears in the August issue of the publication, which has a circulation of 281,694. Mr. Steffek states:

"First, make sure you buy good quality seed - even for small patches. Cheap seed is cheap in quality, too, and in the final analysis, proves more expensive than good seed. For instance, perennial ryegrass, which is one ingredient of a cheap mixture, has only 300,000 seeds to the pound, whereas good grasses like Astoria bent, Kentucky bluegrasses, and Chewings fescue normally run 5,500,000; 2,250,000; and 615,000 seeds to the pound, respectively. Furthermore, ryegrasses make big clumps and are short-lived, leaving big empty patches in the lawn where crabgrass can take over. Some grasses, like timothy, are hay and pasture grasses and have no place in a lawn mixture at all."

3M SEEKS LAWN INSTITUTE COUNSEL

Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (3M) has requested the Lawn Institute's evaluation and judgment on a new soil-holding material they have developed. This is a loose mesh of fibers, which is said to disintegrate upon wetting, the fibers binding individual soil particles. The application is supposedly useful to hold soils on slopes, with any type of soil. The first wetting assures its adherence to whatever the surface might be. Following a seeding with good seed, the soil surface should be protected against any wash-out. Perhaps there may also be a slight mulching affect, encouraging slightly faster sprouting.

Approximately 20,000 square feet of the material has been sent to Institute headquarters at Marysville for research purposes.

LETTER FROM GREECE RELATES POA HISTORY . . .

An inquiry from Dr. Schery about the history of *Poa pratensis* in Greece to Basil G. Christidis, Director of the Cotton Research Institute, of Sindos, Greece, brought this informative reply:

"With reference to your letter of April 21, regarding *Poa pratensis* in Greece, I am glad to give you the following information:

"Quite a number of ancient Greek authors refer to *Poa* (Greek). But as clearly defined by Theophrastus, the father of Botany (300 B.C.), 'Poa is a plant coming up from the root with its leaves; it has no main stem, and the seed is borne on the stem, such as wheat and pot-herbs' (Enquiry into Plants, I, III, 1). Accordingly, by *Poa* the ancients meant not only all grasses, but also various pot-herbs as well. Zenophon (380 B.C.) states that: 'Poa turned up in the spring is long enough to serve as manure, but, not having shed seed, it will not grow' (Oeconomicus, XVI, 12). Similar meaning is given to *Poa* by Pausanias (170 A.D.), who in his Description of Greece states: 'Upon the banks of the lake grow paos and rushes' (II, xxxvii 6). In another part he writes: 'The dwellers around Helicon say that all the poas too and roots growing on the mountain are not at all poisonous to men' (IX, xxviii, 1). I don't know if Eubulus or Eurypides mention (I shall try to find out), but any reference by them, as poets, must be incidental.

"I am sorry that there does not seem to be any specific information about *Poa pratensis* in pre-Christian times. At present there are 21 species of *Poa* found in Greece. *Poa pratensis* is common in various parts of the country and there is no reason why this grass should not be widespread in ancient Greece.

"Hoping that the above information might be useful to you."

INTERNATIONAL PAPER REPORTS WOOD PULP MULCH

Bob Hampton, of International Paper, called Dr. Schery from New York, saying that they are definitely progressing with the marketing of a wood pulp mulch material, sold under the name of Turfiber. This is especially for highways, industrial sites, and large scale grounds which merit use of the specialized dispensing equipment needed to lay the mulch. The equipment is an adapted Finn Hydro-seeder. Several demonstration mulching projects were contemplated through the season, one in New York on June 1, another in Michigan on June 6, and several along the East Coast. There was such an application made at Cartersville, Georgia, just North of Athens. Still another will be available for examination on the tour of the Ohio Short Course (for highway landscape architects) this October.

At the same time the Institute has received some literature on and a sample of Volcanol, being marketed by Also Oil & Chemical Corporation. Apparently this is some resinous material said to be of benefit as a mulch. Dr. Schery will try out the product on autumn seedings.

MERION'S TENDENCY TOWARD STRIPE SMUT . . .

In a paper entitled, "Susceptibility of Merion Bluegrass to Stripe Smut," given at the Stockbridge 1960 Turfgrass Conference by Donald W. Bevilacqua, he states:

"Infected bluegrass plants are most readily observed during cool weather in spring and fall. They are difficult to find during hot, dry weather because diseased leaves wither prematurely and infected plants die; they are also difficult to find after mowing because of their growth. Since stripe smut infection is systemic, few plants recover from the disease.

"For all practical purposes, varieties and selections other than Merion, Common and Troy Kentucky bluegrasses can be considered moderately to highly resistant to the Stripe Smut races.

"The evident susceptibility of Merion bluegrass to Stripe Smut suggests that this variety may be seriously damaged in areas and under conditions where the fungus occurs. Since they are infected systemically they remain diseased until they die."

REPORT ON CONSUMER PROTECTION IN ENGLAND

The following is a quote from "Parks & Sports Grounds" of February, 1960 -- a contrast in protection of the public, comparing the system of lawn seed sales in this country with that in England.

"A report well worth study comes from the Consumer Advisory Council. It discusses the subject of lawn seed quality. The C.A.C. wrote to 70 firms asking for 'a good fine mixture of lawn seed'. The orders enclosed a 2s. 6d. postal order with an indication that further money would be sent.

"Packets of seed sent in reply to the request were tested by the National Institute of Agricultural Botany. Of the 70 samples, seed from five firms was described as 'excellent'; 23 were described as 'fine'; 20 were described 'moderate' and 23 were described as 'rough with a high percentage of rye grass'.

"Whilst readers of this journal are hardly likely to order 'a good fine mixture of lawn seed' and are unlikely to be influenced by the report, they, ourselves and all the reputable firms in the seed trade will welcome this Report for the simple reason that it discloses a somewhat unsatisfactory state of affairs.

"Whilst some firms clearly indicated the contents of their packet, other firms gave no indication. One sample contained 14.7% of useless matter, weeds and chaff, whilst in one instance there was a partial germination of only 5%. These figures are quite inexcusable and clearly indicate that the National Association of Corn and Agricultural Merchants must give the subject some consideration if only to protect those who are unable to protect themselves.

"The C.A.C. advises the public to request an analysis of lawn seed from the merchant, together with germination and date on which it was tested. A committee presently discussing seed transactions would be well advised to heed this report."

N.P.F.I. IMPRESSED WITH INSTITUTE ACTIVITIES

The following is quoted from a letter from Dr. W. H. Garman of the National Plant Food Institute, to Dr. Schery:

"Personally I feel that you and your organization could be a great deal of help in our intensified program directed toward the non-farm market, and I am hopeful that we can work out an informal arrangement so that we can cooperate on matters of mutual interest.

"Thanks for sending the list of activities of your Institute. What you are doing certainly is impressive. Actually I do not see how you do so much and cover so much ground.

"Sometime this fall if you are in Washington, I hope you can arrange your schedule so that you can spend a couple of hours or a half day with us."

BULLETIN ENCOURAGES CONSUMER "EXPERIMENTATION"

An article appearing in the June issue of the Missouri Botanical Garden Bulletin, by George Van Schaack, entitled "The Grasses," states:

"Some authorities have considered tillering, which among cultivated plants is restricted to grasses, to be more important to the dominance of grass than all other characters peculiar to this group combined. Other grasses branch at the base to form underground stems, or rhizomes, thus spreading out to form turf. Bluegrass is a typical example, and it is this turf forming tendency which makes it so desirable as a lawn grass, and, more importantly, as a field and forage grass.

"Finally, grasses grow from down below instead of up on top. Cut off the top of a young cabbage plant and you lose your cabbage. Cut off the top of a young wheat plant and you lose essentially nothing. The plant is growing at the bases of the leaves and the treasure of the wheathead is still forming way down inside, protected by many layers of leaves.

It is this 'way of life' which makes grass so great a forage plant -- as it is chewed off from the top it grows up from below, in fact, up to a point some grasses seem to be stimulated to extra vigorous growth by being cropped.

"So this year don't cut all your lawn down to one and a half or two inches. Do a little experimenting in cutting-heights on the back lawn and take note of how the plants behave. Especially, save at least a small plot where you don't cut at all, but just watch what happens. If you look sensitively and reflectively you won't be disappointed."

BOOKLET BACKS UP INSTITUTE THINKING

"Your Lawn," (Bulletin 271), an attractive booklet, has recently been published by the Agricultural Extension Service, Ohio State University. Photographs offered by the Lawn Institute are featured on page 15 of the booklet, and appropriate mention of the Institute is shown. The general content of the material conforms to Institute ideas -- and may have been influenced by recent stories published by the Institute.

TECHNICAL SERVICE BY UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

Some time ago, the Lawn Institute sent a number of seed lots for comparative planting, to Dr. J. K. Underwood, Agronomy, University of Tennessee. Those plots designed to demonstrate the compatibility of lawn grass species, and the eventual domination of certain grasses, were last year decimated by sod webworm attack; apparently a dieldrin insecticidal spray had killed the predators of sod webworm, allowing the latter to "explode", ruining the test area, which has now been plowed under.

Through the early seedling stages, Dr. Underwood observes that the findings parallel those of the past, in which ryegrass proved exceedingly antagonistic towards other seeded species. As a matter of fact the ryegrass planting along with bermuda (in the autumn) repressed spring bermuda almost completely, even when the ryegrass was mowed back and nearly eliminated. The question still remains whether there is some toxic secretion by the ryegrass, or whether this is mere mechanical competition. To a lesser degree, Dr. Underwood found red fescue repressing bermuda, bluegrass and bentgrass.

Perhaps more interesting to Institute members was the "winter grass" experimentation initiated with bluegrass and red fescue varieties sent Dr. Underwood last autumn. Sections of all named variety plots of bermudagrass and Zoysia were overseeded in autumn with bluegrass, red fescues and bentgrasses. Dr. Underwood found that the bentgrass did not come up at all, and was useless as winter cover; the bluegrass made a beautiful cover later in the season, but was slow to start; the fescue came up very quickly, and made excellent cover through the winter. Come-back of bermuda and Zoysia in the spring is

in just the reverse order, being quickest where there was no winter cover, intermediate in the bluegrass seedings, and slowest in the fescue. Dr. Underwood is awaiting the lasting qualities of the various plantings before making up his mind on winter grass overseeding recommendations, but currently favors bluegrass or a slightly lighter seeding rate of fescue than he used in these trials.

It was interesting that both bluegrass and the fescue varieties gave good emergence on even the very tight named strains of Zoysia and bermudagrass. This indicates that with a little attention to frequent sprinkling at the time of overseeding, northern quality grasses can adequately substitute for ryegrass, and prove superior, for winter grass overseedings in the South. The fescue overseedings were more attractive with the darker green strains of bermuda (such as Sunturf) than with some of the lighter colored yellow-green strains. Bluegrass color is more like the bermuda and Zoysia, so the contrast at this time of year was not apparent.

Dr. Underwood feels that it is possible to have a compatible two-grass system in most sections of Tennessee, if a little care is practiced. In general he would suggest planting bermuda to a seedbed sterilized for weeds, during spring or summer, then overseeding this with bluegrass and fescue in autumn. Thereafter the predominance of either the bermuda or the bluegrass-fescue should be controlled by mowing and fertilization. Mostly this involves generous application of fertilizers in autumn to encourage the bluegrass and fescue, combined with reasonably high mowing. If the northern grasses start to squeeze the bermuda out, lower mowing and greater warm-weather fertilization can tip the balance in favor of the bermuda (or Zoysia).

Among the Oregon fescue varieties, Dr. Underwood concedes there is little to choose, but if he had to make a pick would select Pennlawn first. His Zoysia preferences are for Emerald and Matrella, although Meyer is a little more aggressive and fills in more quickly (one and a half instead of two years). Tifgreen or Sunturf would be first choice among bermudas. He has also had fair results with bents, including Penncross and Seaside. As a matter of fact he likes bentgrasses for their ability to "give body" to the turf. Contrary to conditions farther North, Dr. Underwood maintains that bentgrasses do not become a pest in Tennessee lawns, dominating bluegrasses and fescues.

A number of selections have been made of all of these species, as well as a hardy type of centipede, bahiagrass and St. Augustine which have survived the winters in Knoxville. Dichondra is said able to survive winters there, even become a pest. Merion bluegrass has performed poorly for Dr. Underwood, and he would not recommend it. He likes Park bluegrass, because of rapid germination, and on theory for the same reason he likes natural Kentucky bluegrass (its heterogeneity, derived from a "mixture of varieties").

In summary, it would seem desirable to further investigate possibilities of using the bluegrasses and fescues at this southern limit to their natural area of adaptation. Evidently, under the stress that prevails this far South, their competitive behavior is somewhat different from in the North. If these can adequately substitute for ryegrass in winter grass seedings, an appreciable market might develop southward, in time.

INDICATION OF EUROPEAN BLUEGRASS FAILURE . . .

Although by no means conclusive, it is interesting to note that plantings of an imported (European) bluegrass by Dr. Robert Buckner, Agronomy, University of Kentucky, failed rather completely. So notes Dr. Schery during his recent visit with Dr. Buckner. The Institute has sent Buckner added samples of imported seed, to determine if these also prove unadapted.

Dr. Buckner is alarmed lest imported seed may prove to cheat the consumer, and especially be of a type to contain weeds which might degrade the reputation of Kentucky bluegrass. Julian Walden, bluegrass cleaner of Midway, Kentucky, indicates that there is some alarm in Kentucky lest the name "Kentucky" be taken in vain in importation of "Kentucky bluegrass". There is apparently some agitation, both for increased import duties and for restriction of the use of the prefix "Kentucky" for imported seed.

Dr. Buckner has planted the various regional bluegrass selections the Institute sent him through the past several years, as well as having made a number of his own. At the time of Dr. Schery's visit plantings from commercial seed did show some off-color tendencies, that Dr. Buckner's own selections did not. Evidently he has pulled out from the complex of "natural varieties" a number of strains which are more disease resistant, and better withstand the heat and other tribulations of summer.

It may just be coincidence, but northern sources of bluegrass seemed more afflicted with disease difficulties than did southern sources. Of course this makes logical sense, in that southern bluegrass should be better adapted to the Kentucky conditions than northern. But Dr. Buckner states that even his best selections are still bluegrass, and must be managed as bluegrass. In other words there will be no "miracles", just slight improvements in the performance of an already good grass.

Chiefly for his hybridization and breeding work with grasses, Dr. Buckner recently received the U.S.D.A. citation for the year for meritorious service.

NEW TV FEATURETTE IN PRODUCTION

Initial production on a new television featurette on fertilizers and lawns is underway. This is the fourth in the series involving mention and emphasis on quality turf and seed. The series is financed, produced and distributed by

the Encyclopaedia Britannica. These featurettes are circulated among television stations throughout the country -- at no cost to the Lawn Institute. Thus far, the preceding three featurettes have been distributed to upwards of 100 local TV stations.

REPORT ON BLUEGRASS AND FESCUES AS "WINTER GRASS"

The following is an excerpt from a report by Jim Latham, Agronomist for the Milwaukee Sewerage Commission, on the testing of bluegrass and fescues as "winter grass" in the South:

"Poa annua was quite visible in most plots, but the light color of Poa trivialis provided a color 'shield' and it was not noticeable until flowering was initiated. In Atlanta, Pennlawn was excellent all season. At Sea Island, however, it started well but deteriorated in January and ended the season very poorly.

"We realize that cost of Pennlawn would prohibit its use. Other creeping red varieties should provide similar response, though, and future testing is certainly indicated. Since this was definitely not an 'average' season, the tests will be repeated next fall, possibly including some other fescues and mixtures."

GROWERS' ASSOCIATION PROTESTS CLIMAX BLOWING

The following letter, received at the Institute office in Marysville, clearly defines the attitude of the Jefferson Seed Growers' Association in Oregon:

"During the past several months the Jefferson Seed Growers' Association has been considering the effect of the Climax Blowing method of testing bluegrass seed on the seed industry. We have endeavored to study all phases and all information available on this method.

"The Jefferson Seed Growers' Association is an organization of farmers, representing approximately 300 growers, who grow in the neighborhood of 8000 acres of bluegrass for seed. Only a very slight amount of this is common Kentucky bluegrass with the majority grown being the specialized strains, Merion, Newport, and Code 95. A major share of the entire farm income is involved.

"We are concerned particularly with the variety Merion. This seed varies in size, shape and weight from the common Kentucky. It is our feeling, from the limited test work that has been done so far, that the proposed Climax Blowing point could be extremely disastrous to some growers each year and to the whole Merion bluegrass crop on years when conditions cause light seed production.

"We, as an Association, strongly protest the use of the Climax Blowing method on Merion bluegrass seed until sufficient research can be conducted to determine its effect on the seed industry. We also urge further study of the Climax Blowing method on other Kentucky strains, as each strain is slightly different in characteristics, we feel each would be affected differently by the Blowing method.

"We respectfully request that the method not be adopted as the official method of testing as planned in 1961, but, at least, remain an alternate method through 1965."

MANGELSDORF FURTHERS INSTITUTE'S CLIMAX VIEWS

Mr. Ed Mangelsdorf, Institute Board Member from St. Louis, generously took of his time and personal expense to represent the Institute at the A.O.S.A. meeting in Springfield, Illinois in late June. This meeting was devoted almost entirely to discussions of the climax testing of bluegrass, and the industry's viewpoint was expressed by Gager Vaughan, President of A.S.T.A., as well as by Mr. Mangelsdorf.

Ed Mangelsdorf was perhaps most successful in working "behind the scenes". In consultation with A.O.S.A. "bigwigs", he induced Al Carter to put before the A.O.S.A. a modification of the resolution passed unanimously by the Lawn and Turfgrass Division at the A.S.T.A. annual meeting in Kansas City. This called for a committee embracing interests outside of A.O.S.A., to conduct a broader study, and made recommendations as to when and if climax should be initiated as an official test method.

This resolution, which was approved, calls for a quadripartite committee embracing A.S.T.A.-Institute representation, that of the commercial seed technologists, that of the A.O.S.A., and that of the Seed Control Officials. Essentially this lines two "pro" parts of the committee against two "con" organizations. Much was achieved to even have this concession, and to have admission by A.O.S.A. leaders that the climax blowing point chosen was not necessarily the best, nor need be the point retained.

Mr. Mangelsdorf effectively answered questions from the floor and from the committees, showing how the climax method would produce hardship on the domestic bluegrass industry. He pointed out especially how the complexities and misunderstandings would multiply, if there were imposition of any great change in the generally accepted marketing customs.

The Institute is indeed grateful to Mr. Ed Mangelsdorf for upholding its interests at this gathering. There is hope that some suitable accomodation of A.O.S.A. and Seed Trade views may result, from the start made at Springfield.

COLOR SLIDES AND SCRIPTS AUGMENT INSTITUTE PROGRAM

Dr. Schery has recently prepared a series of write-ups and Kodachrome slides on lawn grasses and lawn making. The series consists of nineteen lawn making shots and bluegrass production photographs, which are issued approximately at cost to correspondents who inquire for lawn information with which to illustrate lectures. The first set of this material was sent to Gro-Green Products, Inc., Buffalo, New York, for the use of Mr. Arnold Walker in talking to garden clubs and similar groups.

U.S.D.A. BULLETIN VERIFIES INSTITUTE STAND

A position that the Lawn Institute has advocated for some time, namely that some of the fancy named varieties be used in mixture (preferably with natural Kentucky bluegrass), has been proposed in the current U.S.D.A. Home & Garden Bulletin No. 61, entitled "Lawn Diseases". Authored by Kreitlow and Juska of the Crops Research Division, Agricultural Research Service, it reports:

"Plant mixtures of recommended grasses. Species vary in their susceptibility to different disease organisms, and in a mixture one or more of the grasses usually will survive a severe disease attack."

DR. SCHERY CONFERS AT UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Here are a few highlights from Dr. Schery's recent visit to the University of Missouri, Columbia, after conferences with Drs. Hemphill and Taven, our Advisors at the University:

The bluegrass and fescue turfs were better at this season, than at any time when I have previously visited the University. The cool spring, with ample rainfall made a luxuriant bluegrass turf anywhere that it was mowed high. Because of its vigor, coupled with high mowing, very few weeds existed in established sod, even though the rainfall had also been favorable for bringing on spring weeds elsewhere. This simply proves once again that the best weed control is a thriving bluegrass turf. Because of the lack of weeds in most of the test area where the bluegrass was flourishing, little crabgrass could be found and test results were not too meaningful because there was so little crabgrass in the check plots.

Dr. Hemphill's preference is for Dacthal among the pre-emergence crabgrass killers. He finds both this and Zytron safe, but Dacthal slightly more effective. Arsenates (such as PAX) are equally effective, but he fears that there may be some build-up of arsenical toxicity in the soil that will cause future cumulative damage.

Both liquid and dry applications of Dacthal were equally useful. Neither this nor Zytron gave any nimblewill control as a pre-emergent.

A number of test materials have proven very harmful to the bluegrass, killing out extensive patches (these are experimental, not marketed). Paradoxically, where a crabgrass killer had been used (and it was so rough on the bluegrass), the crabgrass was appearing in the bare areas, freed from the competition of bluegrass. This simply proves again that the best method of restraining crabgrass is to have a good cover, even if it is only a mulch of grass leaves.

No very effective chemical means for controlling knotweed has been found. Silvex proved no more effective than 2,4-D, both of them were only useful when the knotweed was very young. Endothal, at a doubled rate, applied with a wetting agent, showed some promise of getting rid of knotweed, although it wasn't certain how severe it would be on some of the established grasses.

One very interesting observation was that 2,4-D applied last autumn, for control of the familiar broadleaf weeds, also seemed to eliminate chickweed (not yet visible at time of application). At least the areas treated with 2,4-D were free of chickweed this spring, while untreated areas had extensive stands of common chickweed.

All attempts at killing out volunteer bermudagrass have failed, including the current treatment with dalapon plus TCA. The bermudagrass browns, but comes back from the underground parts. Dr. Hemphill feels that the only way to eliminate bermudagrass with certainty is a complete soil fumigation with methyl bromide.

DR. SCHERY APPEARS AT M.G.C.A. NATIONAL CONVENTION

The 1960 National Convention of the Men's Garden Clubs of America was held June 21-24 at Asheville, North Carolina. Included in the program were presentations by Dr. Fred J. Nisbet, Superintendent, Biltmore Estate; Dr. Richard Thompson, rose authority and President of the Garden Writers Association; and Paul Frese, Director of Education at the Sterling Forest Gardens, west of New York City.

Dr. Schery conducted a workshop on the subject of Lawns. In his remarks, entitled, "Your Lawn -- To Do or Not To Do," he told the assembled convention:

"For a good lawn, suitable building blocks for the climate where this lawn is to be are needed. One can never make a first rate lawn out of coarse haygrasses or impermanent bunch grasses. The Lawn Institute feels that any grass (or combination of turfgrasses) of quality should be fine textured, perennial for the climate in which used, and preferably able to spread by rhizome or stolon. Within the framework of these

major attributes varietal choice is less important than maintenance practices; all good grasses can make an excellent turf if they are properly tended, but none can do it when maintenance is really poor. The Lawn Institute likes Kentucky bluegrass mixed with red fescue varieties such as come from Oregon, for lawns north from Tennessee; bermudas, Zoysias and centipede for the South, or St. Augustine in shade."

DR. SCHERY TO APPEAR AT LONGWOOD GARDENS

"During February and March of each year," writes Dr. Hodge, Head of Education and Research for Longwood Gardens, a duPont sponsored endeavor, "Longwood Gardens presents a series of six evening lecturers in the general field of horticulture. The aim is to bring well qualified, stimulating speakers who can present information in their field that will be of practical value to the serious home gardener."

He continues in his letter to Dr. Schery, ". . . in your present position . . . the authority in this field . . . would you consider giving a practical, down-to-earth illustrated talk on lawns here at Longwood."

Dr. Schery has agreed to handle the evening program on March 1, 1961. This session will be devoted to lawns and turfgrass.

DR. SCHERY ADDRESSES MISSOURI TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

Dr. Schery played a prominent part in the First Annual Missouri Turfgrass Conference, held July 14-15 at the University of Missouri in Columbia. As the lead-off speaker at the first morning session and appearing again at the evening banquet, and then participating in a workshop session, Dr. Schery had many opportunities to further the cause of the Lawn Institute. Among those appearing with Dr. Schery on the program were William C. Haskett, Plant Pathologist, the Upjohn Company; S. A. Frederiksen, Industrial Sales Division, Mallinckrodt Chemical Works and Marvin H. Ferguson, Mid-Continent Director, National Research Coordinator, USGA, Green Section.

Dr. Schery reviewed the many selections of grasses that are possible, then gradually eliminated those unsuited for climate, for mowing and so on -- and concluded with a recommendation that for good turf only bluegrasses and fescues be sown.

Summarizing his remarks at the evening banquet, Dr. Schery told the group:

"Good lawns can co-exist with leisurely living. Choose non-tempermental grasses proven able to take it -- bluegrass and lawn fescues for the north. Begin the lawn season in autumn, with bolster seeding and generous feeding . . ."

DR. SCHERY CONFERS WITH PURDUE AGRONOMIST

The following is a summary of Dr. Schery's observations during his July visit with Dr. W. H. Daniel, Extension Agronomist in Turf at Purdue University:

Almost all classes of pre-emergence crabgrass killers have proven effective when used at recommended rates. Dr. Daniel now feels he can conscientiously recommend bluegrass as a golf fairway grass, in view of the ability to check crabgrass and other annual weeds, as well as the broadleaves (2,4-D). In the test plots the arsenicals are quite enduring, chlordane less so, Dacthal and Zytron doubtfully beyond a few months. Of course there are some disadvantages in having quick dissipation, especially when it comes to reseeding. Interestingly, a mistaken application of chlordane, at the rate of 400 pounds active material per acre (nearly 40 times recommended strength) has resulted in no injury to bluegrass.

It does seem evident that arsenic accumulations in the soil can result in less tolerance to drought, at least as far as grass color is concerned.

Winters have been severe enough at Lafayette that almost all of the fine leaf Zoysias have been lost. Broad leaf strains, especially Meyer, have survived rather well. Dr. Daniel is searching for a broadleaf Zoysia with elongate internodes, into which bluegrass may be inter-planted successfully.

Fertilizer trials on various strains of bluegrass are in the third year. It is evident that Merion needs high fertility to look well (Dr. Daniel says at least 4 pounds actual nitrogen per M per year). Interestingly, grass that has received a generous fertilization in the first two years, then has been left without feeding this year, looked no better than turf that had not received feeding previously. It looks as though there is no carry-over of fertility from year to year, except through the colder months.

Scores of bluegrass strains have been selected and are under test. Some may eventually be released to the trade, including supposed dwarf and shade forms that would have special advantages. Newport bluegrass did not look very well at the time of visit. Dr. Daniel reports that this is slow to start early in the year, but is a strong finisher. He would suggest a very heavy "pushing" with fertilizer at the beginning of the season.

Elaborate testing with delicate instrumentation on the practice putting green suggests that soil conditions are less important than previously had been thought. Some of the bentgrasses, if accorded reasonable attention, appear best on some of the soils or mixtures which theoretically are poorest.

Dr. Daniel is coming around to the view that less frequent (as well as higher) mowing is important to vigor and survival in most turfgrasses.

AGRICULTURAL METEROLOGY GROUP HEARS SCHERY

Dr. Schery combined his trip to Kansas City for the Lawn Institute Annual Meeting with an appearance before the Third Conference on Agricultural Meterology on May 18 and 19.

In Dr. Schery's remarks, entitled "Bluegrass and the Weather," he explained how rainfall data of a previous year might indicate what the bluegrass crop will be at a specific location the following June.

"In general, rainy summers lead to poor inflorescence production; drought leads to good production, if followed by moisture in autumn. Adequate autumn moisture correlates with good production, especially following a dry summer. If the total annual rainfall is much in excess of average, it can have an inhibiting tendency even where summer-autumn conditions might prove favorable."

Among those appearing with Dr. Schery on the program were: F. A. Went, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis; Dr. F. A. Brooks, Department of Agricultural Engineering, University of California; and Dr. M. B. Russell, Department of Agronomy, University of Illinois.

"WHAT THEY ARE SAYING . . ."

"Your program (at the Convention of the Men's Garden Club of America) was wonderfully received and was a big help in having this convention considered 'the best of the first 25 years'".

Dr. Fred J. Nisbet
Biltmore Estate

"Your chapter on grass seed packs a lot of good information. It's succinct, well written, and well organized. The style is fresh -- delightful.

"I wish you would insert some material of practical use to the home owning little guy -- where to buy seed, something about varieties, what to look for, even though that is not your assignment and not particularly the purpose of the book. Lots of people are bound to feel you have not told the whole story.--

"Many thanks for a good job!"

Alfred Stefferud, Editor
Agricultural Yearbook
U.S.D.A.
Washington, D. C.

Viewers Praise Institute Film

"Subject was well presented -- informative -- found out what went wrong with our lawns."

Herbert Jahn
A.A.U.W. of San Bruno
San Bruno, California

"A very excellent film. Both instructive and entertaining."

G. Wiley, Jr., President
Garden Dealers of Delaware Valley
Oreland, Pennsylvania

"Thanks from two thousand and seventy-five patients, young and old alike. God bless you."

A. Workum
Kings Park State Hospital
Kings Park, New York

"This picture was very interesting in showing the product and how to care for it."

Bert Montgomery
Medical Center for Federal Prisoners
Springfield, Missouri

"This film was especially interesting and informative for the patients prescribed for farming courses. We wish to thank you for its use."

A. L. Pigman, Chief
Educational Therapy Section
Veterans Administration Hospital
Lexington, Kentucky

"Excellent subject matter."

Lawrence Spyker, Program Chairman
Allen County Men's Garden Club
Lima, Ohio

"A very excellent picture, well received by vitally interested dealer audience."

Dwight M. Brown, Vice President
Chas. McCullough Seed Co.
Cincinnati, Ohio