

stony peak beyond us. We left the scrub behind at last, and about midday emerged into an alpine meadow under Te Atua Mahuru, a meadow of tussock and heath sheltering growths of alpine flowers, daisies and buttercups, the giants of their kind. From this meadow we could look out and see all the high tops of the Range. They lay round us in a wide half moon of peaks, Te Atua Mahuru and the rest, and I thought how they must have looked ages ago, just peering up above the restless sea."

G.B.C. and A.P.D.

Council for the Promotion of Field Studies Great Britain

This Council was formed at the end of 1943 as a result of a widespread response to a suggestion that there was a great need for improved facilities for carrying out Field Studies in all subjects in which such study is an essential constituent. The President of the Council is Professor Sir Arthur Tansley and the Director and Secretary, Mr. F. H. C. Butler. The Central Office of the Council is at 10 Exhibition Road, South Kensington, London, S.W.7.

Briefly, the aims of the Council are to provide facilities for every aspect of field work at first hand, and to set up for this purpose residential Field Study and Research Centres, distributed throughout Great Britain, in localities selected for the richness and variety of their ecological features, geological and geographical interest and archaeological and historical importance. The Field Centres will be available alike to all serious workers in the field, whether amateur or professional, whether as individuals or as members of a class from a school, training college or university; from a county college, technical college or youth service; whether as independent workers or as members of a research team, Learned Society or other corporate body. The Council wishes to co-operate closely with Local Societies and Field Clubs, and through the Centres should also be able to play an important part in the training of the community in sound knowledge, aesthetic appreciation and proper use of the countryside.

While he was in Great Britain recently Mr. N. L. Elder, of Havelock North, was able to find out something about the activities of the Council, and to pay short visits to two of the four Field Centres at present in operation. Here is a short report written by him, and approved by the Secretary of the C.P.F.S.:

I only became aware of the existence of the Council for the Promotion of Field Studies the day before its annual meeting, which I was fortunate enough to be allowed to attend as an

onlooker. As it does not appear to be at all widely known even in Great Britain and its activities could be of particular value to newcomers wishing to gain some experience of methods of field work, some information about it may be of use in New Zealand. Furthermore, some of its problems of finance and administration can be paralleled in our own experience and may point to some possibilities and difficulties that we are likely to meet in any corresponding development in our own country.

The organization consists of a small administrative centre in London and four field centres, one on the east coast, one on the west coast, a third in the Pennine Range and a fourth on the North Downs. Each of these accommodates about 50 workers, mainly on a weekly basis, and consists of workrooms, library, etc., with simple hostel accommodation. Each has a warden and assistant warden to advise or direct teaching and research work.

A large proportion (one-half to two-thirds) of the visitors are secondary (grammar) school or training college students, so that a good deal of the work is necessarily at a fairly elementary level, and as the accommodation is fully taxed in all except the winter months, full use of the facilities is to some extent circumscribed.

The Council is supported by four main groups: learned societies, universities and university colleges, educational organisations, and miscellaneous bodies corresponding to the Forest and Bird Protection Society and Soil Conservation Council.

Hitherto the project has been financed on the basis that the Council provide the facilities and the professional staff, and the fees charged to students (4 gns. a week) cover the domestic expenses of the centres. The Council's funds come from capital grants to establish the centres and annual grants from interested bodies. There remains a deficit on the capital account, and, though the annual grants this year have practically met expenses, the chief of these, a grant of £8000 from the Ministry of Education, is on a provisional basis, and the Ministry expect the Council to be self-supporting by 1952.

Apart from the capital deficit, the continuing problem after 1952 will be the cost of the professional staff. A joint committee proposes that this should be met by increasing charges to students. (The fees are now 5½ gns. a week.—Ed.).

As the bulk of the students are from schools financed by local authorities this will simply have the effect, in their case, of transferring the financial burden from the central educational authority to the local educational authorities, but will penalize the workers and bodies not so supported. Furthermore, it will mean the representation of local bodies on the Council—a situation we have met with in New Zealand, where the composition of National Park Boards gives the local rating authorities a voice in their development which has been criticized, chiefly by the Federated Mountain Clubs.