

sian olive, sumac and choke cherry, which serve admirably this purpose, and at the same time have high value in furnishing food as well as protection for game, song and insectivorous birds. Alternation of forest strips with cultivated fields combines ideal conditions for the conservation and propagation of upland game birds, which may bring the farmer some cash return if properly handled.

Tree planting on slopes of gullies will reduce rapid surface run-off and check soil erosion. As a means of conserving the moisture in the soil, shelterbelts, under certain conditions, may be as effective and less costly than the construction of dams on streams and dry gullies.

Above all, however, shelterbelt planting will make living conditions more comfortable and will add much needed variety to the monotonous prairie landscape. Probably the social benefits from windbreaks will be as great as the physical. If, by means of tree planting, agriculture may be made somewhat safer in a region subject to periodic droughts; if by breaking up the extremely large wheat fields, a diversified agriculture can be encouraged; if living conditions can be made more attractive by planting trees around farmsteads; then the still primitive and hazardous exist-

tence in the plains region will be raised for thousands of settlers to a higher level of permanence and stability. It will mean creating in the semi-arid region a belt provided with the amenities of a higher cultural life.

Shelterbelt planting is only a part of a broader plan of water conservation and erosion control for the entire Great Plains region. The "black blizzards," for instance, may be mitigated but can not be stopped by shelterbelt planting within a narrow belt 100 miles in width. These dust storms originate farther west, where the original sod has been broken up by the plow. It is only by withdrawing certain areas of the western plains from crop production, returning them to grass and using them for controlled grazing, that the causes of dust storms may be largely removed.

To bring about the desired improvement in the physical and economic condition of the region, a co-ordination of effort by the various public agencies interested is essential. It will involve land retirement, controlled grazing, diversification of agriculture, water conservation by building ponds, shelterbelt planting, strip cropping, terracing, development of new varieties of cereals and soil-binding grasses and a rationalization of land valuation and taxation.

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

### COOPERATION BETWEEN THE CHEMICAL SOCIETIES OF GREAT BRITAIN

THERE has recently been circulated to all members of the Chemical Society, the Institute of Chemistry and the Society of Chemical Industry, according to *Nature*, a draft agreement in regard to cooperation. The adoption of the agreement is unanimously recommended by the council of the Society of Chemical Industry and the draft agreement was published in *Chemistry and Industry* on March 15. The agreement provides for the establishment of a fund to be administered by a Chemical Council consisting of three members nominated by the council of each society, together with three representatives of industry, co-opted in the first instance on the nomination of the Association of British Chemical Manufacturers. The objects of the fund are the allocation of grants to the constituent bodies for the coordination of scientific publications, promotion of research, maintenance of a library, etc. Complete freedom of action is reserved to each constituent body in respect of the matter it publishes. The management of the library of the Chemical Society is delegated to a joint library committee, and contributions to the net annual maintenance expenditure are to be borne by the constituent bodies in proportion to their membership, with due allowance for overlap. This involves, for example, an

increase in the contribution of the Institute of Chemistry to £654 and from the Society of Chemical Industry to £448. The agreement is for seven years and thereafter to continue for successive periods of three years, subject to right of withdrawal on giving one year's notice at the end of any period. If the agreement succeeds, it is anticipated that means of reducing subscriptions to the three organizations will be found.

### CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY AND SCIENCE

DR. FRANCIS P. GARVAN, president of The Chemical Foundation, Inc., has announced that a joint conference of representatives of agriculture, industry and science will be held at Dearborn, Michigan, on May 7 and 8.

In addition to Dr. Garvan those joining in calling the conference are: Edward A. O'Neal, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation; Louis J. Tabor, master, the National Grange; Clifford V. Gregory, chairman, National Agricultural Conference.

The purpose of the conference is to survey the variety of farm products which through organic chemistry can be transformed into raw materials usable in industry, and to develop a plan for the joint cooperation of agriculture, industry and science for promoting