same or adjoining plots are easily made, and consistently accurate results are obtained. The unit has proved its worth in two recent studies by this station. In a comparative study of plots supporting a single range plant and adjacent barren plots, use of the unit

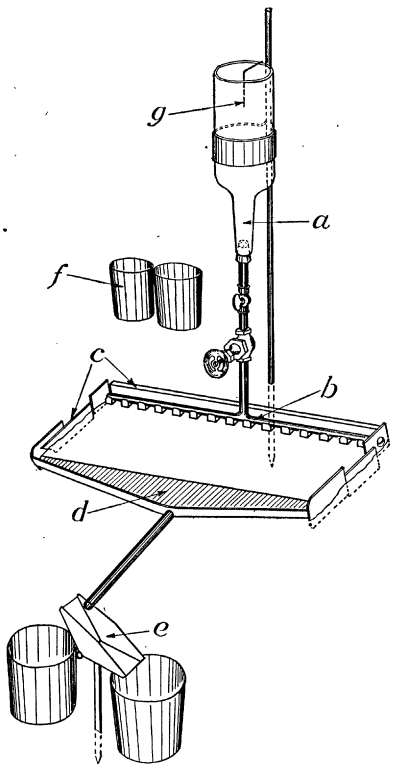

FIG. 1

has indicated that fibrous-rooted plants, such as grasses and mesophytic forbs, are approximately 2½ times more effective in promoting absorption of surface water than are tap-rooted species typical of depleted range.[1] Another study indicated that the rate of absorption by the granitic soils of the Boise River watershed was influenced much more by organic matter content than by either moisture content or textural variations. Such studies emphasize the importance of an adequate plant-cover in range-watershed management, both directly in promoting absorption and indirectly in building up the soil organic matter.

A limited supply of complete specifications for the construction and operation of the above apparatus, for use by persons interested in this technique, are available upon request to the Director, Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station.

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[1] C. Kenneth Pearse and Samuel B. Woolley, *Jour. Forestry*, 34: 884–887, 1936.

BOXES FOR STUDY SKINS

DOUBTLESS many laboratory instructors in mammalogy and ornithology have felt the need for a protective cover for the study skins, which received rough treatment by careless and awkward students. This need is greater when the skins that must be used are record skins. Such was our problem when we discovered that two new products, Plastocele and Pyralin, can be cut or sawed and cemented.

Providing a skilful student with this material, acetone and study skins he made 26 boxes for mammals ranging in size from mice to marmots at an average cost per box of 35 cents for material and 25 cents for labor. The cement made by dissolving small waste pieces and the sawdust in acetone sealed the sections firmly together, making airtight containers that are light, transparent and durable. Additional boxes made for mammal and bird skins and the entire set used during our winter quarter show only the inevitable finger marks and light scratches, and the latter do not obstruct the view of the snug-fitting, fully protected skin within.

Plastocele and Pyralin are practically identical for these boxes, the former costing slightly more. We learned about these two products of the du Pont Viscoloid Company at Arlington, N. J., from Dr. Shillinger, of the United States Department of Agriculture, who suggested their use for museum jars.

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