

the simple crafts and rural industries so that their standard of living may be slowly, but surely, raised! The Wardha Scheme of Education aims at giving our school-boys instruction in useful crafts and industries. Gandhiji's scheme may be well served by the institution of industrial museums all over our country, in important centres, so that school children may be taken to the museums regularly—as they do in the United States of America and in Soviet Russia—and there taught the principles and processes of the manufacture of the articles in daily use.

At present, for a population of 350 millions spread over two million square miles, we have only 105 museums and very few of them are specially devoted to the industries. Even many of our cities are without any industrial museums. Recently there is a healthy trend towards the establishment of industrial museums in our important cities. The part played by the Congress and other national organisations in establishing technological museums deserves our praise. But one should remember that in the absence of generous help from the Government, the responsibility of encouraging industrial museums rests largely with the public. We hope that our Universities, municipalities and other public bodies would come forward in organising well-equipped museums for the rapid industrial, educational and cultural progress of India.

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### 'ASCU' WOOD PRESERVATIVE

PENDING clarification of these and other obscure points the Forest Research Institute has decided to withdraw its publication, 'Ascu'—A wood preservative, *Indian*

*Forest Records* (New Series), *Utilisation*, Vol. I, No. 6, and to postpone its re-issue in a revised form until the results of further research and adequate service tests are available." This announcement is contained in a note issued by the Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun, under the signature of Mr. L. Mason, President of the Institute.

This very unusual procedure of formally withdrawing a scientific publication originally issued under official authority raises a number of points which are not rendered any simpler by the fact that the process in question is covered by a patent which has been commercially exploited in India and, it is learnt is under active consideration even outside. When reviewing the publication 'Ascu'—*A Wood Preservative* (*Curr. Sci.*, 7, No. 3, p. 141), attention was drawn, in particular to two facts; first on the mass of data and a century of experience which the older creosote and zinc chloride processes had behind them and which 'Ascu' on account of its infancy could not possibly have, and secondly, on the lack of a bibliography of relevant literature in the publication. And although the Foreword to the *Record*, explicitly warned that it was "too early to pronounce a definite or final opinion on its merits or limitations", it must be confessed that this withdrawal was entirely unexpected. The Forest Research Institute took on itself a heavy responsibility in originally recommending the process and sponsoring the official publication and its responsibility is no less onerous in withdrawing its official *imprimatur* now after more than six years. It is not merely the future of a particular process that is involved now; it is the future of a pioneer industry still in the nascent stage. Public acceptance in India of wood preservation processes as such, is definitely hampered by these unfortunate developments relating to 'Ascu'.