

to eighteen. Frankly, and without shame, this is attributed to "the wearing out" of the soil, as if the earth were a garment that must be destroyed by the wearing.

If the earth, the mother of humanity, is to "wear out," what is to become of the race? The fact is that soils, properly treated, maintain their productiveness indefinitely under cultivation. The further fact is that, with the disappearance of pestilence and the discontinuance of war that belong to the future, all contributing to the growth of population, the productive capacity of the soil must be sustained at its highest point or the world suffer want.

The life-sustaining power of the soil is lowered in two ways: First, by physical destruction, through the carrying away of the earth to the sea; and, second, chemically, by the withdrawal of the elements required for plant life. The waste from the former cause is very great. It accounts for sterility in the older, which are also the more hilly, portions of the cultivated country. It may be easily checked or prevented. The agriculture of Japan, which is of the highest type, preserves a mountain farm intact by terracing and careful modulation of its level. Professor Shaler says that a field lying at an angle of twenty degrees can be totally destroyed in a hundred plowings. Throughout the South this process of denudation has proceeded far and is going forward rapidly. He estimates from personal observation that in the State of Kentucky, where cultivation is hardly more than a century old,