

Utilisation of Moss Lands.

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Extract.

[*Read March 4th, 1898.*]

After a few introductory remarks the lecturer proceeded as follows:—

Utilisation of course includes cultivation, but I do not intend to speak of cultivation only. I shall have something to say about the more modern methods of cultivating moss-lands later on, but the subject is not an inviting one. In these days when almost every one is prepared to tell you that "farming does not pay" he would be a courageous man who would advise a settler to reclaim a swamp.

There is a comparison attributed to Queen Elizabeth which points out that life is like a bog; if you stand still you begin to sink and if you want to keep afloat you must keep moving. I shall, therefore, ask you to leave the consideration of bogs as they occur in nature, and the possibility of cultivating them, and ask you to accompany me, in spirit at least, to see a more pleasing landscape, a moor drained, consolidated and in process of utilization, where art has come in to modify nature, and, as it generally does, to improve it. In describing such a moor I must avoid any minute reference to the plants by whose instrumentality it has been produced. I can only deal with vegetation in a very general way, and indulge the hope that the botanical aspect of the subject may on a future occasion be made the subject of a disquisition by my friend Prof. Macoun, than whom there is no better authority.

The imaginary trip on which I have invited you is to Holland, or, more properly, the Netherlands. Holland is