

soon become strong and their competition could be invited. At a later time, however, it became a popular theory that the labourers a home must be protected against the cheap labor of other countries where laborers were little less than paupers. Then came the contention that the cheap laborers, like the Chinese, must not be imported any more than the products of the cheap laborers, and it is urged that the immigration of such should be prohibited. A New York journal now states that an agitation is springing up, commencing in New Jersey, against the immigration of skilled laborers from Europe. Next, in natural sequence, probably, will come a movement against all immigration so as to protect the common laborer, the skilled mechanic, and any other class in the country who may feel it the duty of the law and government to interpose in their behalf. Protection may be the wisest and best course for a country, as some affirm, or it may not be, as others contend, but in any case when it is once entered upon it is difficult to draw the line as to just how far it should go.

#### The American Whiskey Interests.

In the United States the whiskey interests have been struggling hard for some time to obtain special legislation at Washington for their immediate relief. Millions of barrels of whiskey have been manufactured more than there was a demand for, and according to the revenue laws it could remain a given time in bond before the excise tax must be paid; but the time has been expiring when millions of dollars must be paid in excise tax before sales could be effected. An attempt was first made to get the time extended but that failed. Then it was attempted to get special permission to import it into Canada, in bond, and allow it to be returned when sold, but our Ottawa authorities refused to consent. Last year a powerful effort was made for special legislation at Washington but nothing came out of it. This year a still more determined effort was made at Washington and it has failed again.

The New York Tribune, writing on this matter, says that there is testimony to the effect that, last year, the whiskey men raised \$600,000 to pass the bonded extension bill. They failed then, however, and now they have failed again. The Tribune then remarks:

"The result will be wholesome in reducing the production of whiskey. The refusal to pass a similar measure in 1883 led to a reduction of the product from 150,000,000 gallons in that year to 74,000,000 gallons in 1883. Another such a falling off will be a national blessing. And if, as the distillers threaten, the whiskey goes out of the country to escape taxation, the people will bid it good riddance. It has been fitly characterized as the dynamite of modern civilization."

This is certainly pretty strong language for a popular journal like the Tribune, strongly opposed as it is to prohibition.

#### A New War Implement.

More ingenuity and expense are lavished upon the improvement of implements of human destruction than on any thing else. Millions are paid for improved war ships calculated to be more destructive

than any ever before built, and on cannons and smaller guns capable of killing and wounding a larger number of men than any previously in existence. The latest experiments are in the perfection of a dynamite gun capable of such destruction to life and property as was never before equalled. The United States Government are now having a series of experiments tried at Fort Hamilton in connection with this new invention. The idea is to enclose the dynamite in a strong metal projectile, which will burst with irresistible fury when it strikes the object at which it is aimed. The dynamite gun must be "fired" with compressed air instead of gun powder, as the sudden explosion of the latter would probably cause the dynamite to explode in the gun itself. Compressed air, it is well known, has a great power, and is now used quite extensively for driving many kinds of machinery. The new gun consists of a long powerful brass tube of two or three inches bore, and forty feet in length. The compressed air is produced by an engine on purpose, and is admitted from a strong reservoir into the gun tube behind the projectile. It is claimed that a projectile containing one hundred pounds of dynamite may be accurately thrown a mile or more by such means. The bursting of such an amount of such a powerful explosive would produce results such as can hardly be imagined. Of course the hope is that, in case of a siege a city or fort could be destroyed, if not wiped entirely out of existence, inhabitants and all, in the course of a few hours. Probably the war authorities will soon be asking appropriations to experiment on something still more infernal as an instrument of destruction.

#### Free Libraries.

Apdopros to the opening of the New Free Library in Toronto the following facts in regard to some of the leading Free Libraries in England will be of interest. They are clipped from the Edinburgh (Scotland) Advertiser:—In Manchester full attention has been given to each of the three chief departments of a public library—namely, (1) the reference and consulting library, in which the larger, scarcer, more costly, and more special works are provided for students and readers generally; (2) the lending libraries, from which residents are entitled to draw books for home reading; and (3) the newsrooms, in which as large a selection of the current journals of the day is provided as the means of the institution permit. The reference library now contains about 75,000 volumes, and the six lending libraries, placed at convenient points in the several districts of the city, contain about 75,000 volumes. There is a newsroom, abundantly provided with selected London and provincial newspapers and magazines, attached to each of the six lending libraries. From the beginning—more than thirty years ago—these institutions have been most popular. Last year the libraries were visited by more than 2,300,000 persons, or 9,000 daily, and nearly 1,200,000 volumes were issued to readers, of which more than half were for home reading.

In Birmingham the same general policy has been followed, and with similar re-

sults. There is a reference library of about 65,000 volumes, and five lending libraries containing together about 50,000 volumes. To each lending library is attached a newsroom. All are very largely frequented by the public.

In Liverpool attention has been given principally to the reference library, for which have been purchased very many of the largest, most important, and costliest works in British and foreign literature, and which has in consequence become probably the richest consulting library belonging to any provincial town in the country. It is open to all persons; and students of all branches of science and knowledge have the privilege of consulting freely the greatest works in their subjects. It now contains nearly 80,000 volumes, and the number of volumes issued to readers exceeds half a million annually, exclusive of 300,000 of weekly, monthly and quarterly periodicals. There are also two lending libraries, containing together 44,000 volumes, from which nearly 400,000 volumes are issued annually for home reading.

Other countries, it may be observed, are showing greatly increased interest in public libraries. In France, Germany, and Italy they are rapidly increasing in number, importance, and usefulness; and in the United States the municipal authorities and citizens generally have devoted large sums and great care and thought to this department of public work, and with so much success that now the best types of the free town libraries must be sought in America.

#### Timber Preservation.

EDITOR TRUTH.—An article appeared in your columns on the preservation of timber. It is well that the subject is attracting the attention of others than lumbermen, and in another way.

Our forests are not inexhaustible; like all sublunary things there is a limit beyond which we cannot go.

In many parts the end has been already reached, and to places, from which lumber of different kinds was formerly exported, timber has now to be sent. We are importing walnut and whitewood, woods which at one time were to be obtained in plenty in the Western part of this Province.

"Experience teaches fools." We were wise to learn a lesson which the natives of other countries have been taught; and having learned, endeavored to profit thereby.

From an article now before me, the following is condensed:—

"In 1835 the Island of Mauritius was covered to nearly three-fourths of its extent—300,000 acres—with forest; in 1870 this was reduced to 70,000 acres. In the following year, an exact survey gave but 35,000 acres. In Ceylon, looking from the top of a mountain, an unbroken forest ranged. Six years later it had disappeared. A member of the 'Eclipse' Expedition to Ceylon states that from a calculation made, one-third of an inch per annum was being washed away from the cultivated surface of the island. In Jamaica, timber for building purposes has to be imported. In New Brunswick the hemlock is fast disappearing, 10,000 trees per annum being used by a single manu-

facturer for tanning purposes. That is, the bark. In Demerara the work of destruction will soon clear off all the timber. In New Zealand the present generation may look for the end of the timber woods."

France, too, is an example of the pernicious destruction of forests. A recent writer laments the loss sustained in many parts by the total disappearance of the forests. Regions formerly prosperous, are now sterile deserts. Many other places could be mentioned from which the forests have been cleaned entire, and which are now paying the penalty of their short-sightedness.

It is admitted, by persons in a position to know, that many years will not have gone by, at the present rate of consumption, before we will be suffering from a want of timber, as well as the consequent destruction of our soil.

Each issue of our trade journals contain statements of the amount of lumber manufactured at some of our numerous mills—tens of thousands of feet at this mill, hundreds of thousands at another. For example, Gilmour & Co's. mill, Trenton, cuts up daily 350,000 feet of lumber, 100,000 ps. lath, 100,000 pickets, as well as heading and shingles. This is the largest mill in the country. Hundreds of mills cutting from 6,000 feet and upward daily, are busily engaged in reducing our forest wealth. Portable sawmills wind their way into the heart of our woods and cut right and left, leaving saw dust, etc., to furnish fuel for a fire. Our square-timber men down the choicest trees, and in felling destroy numerous others. Cattle and camping parties also contribute their share to lay bare our forests.

Our exports in 1883 of the products of the forests amounted to nearly \$26,000,000, which is an increase of \$1,000,000 over the previous year.

The Curator of the Arnold Arboretum, Prof. Sargent, states in his report to the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture, that the average annual consumption of pine in the United States was ten millions of feet yearly, and that only eighty billions of feet remained, including much poor timber.

Many of our hardwoods are becoming each year more scarce, such as white ash and oak, cherry and butternut, rock elm, walnut, etc.

The writer is not aware of what has been done by our local legislature in the matter of foresting. No doubt there is plenty to be done. It were well for us had we less politics to the acre and more trees. The subject of the preservation of woods should be brought more prominently before the public, and some means adopted and applied to the increasing of our forest wealth. We know, or can readily find out, what has been, and is being done elsewhere, and surely the Canadians can do likewise. That we are fast denuding our forests is a fact, that very little is being done in the way of preservation is another. It is time we were up and doing; not thinking whether we, who plant, will live to see the fruit of labor, or departing, leave those who follow to reap the benefits.

A. SIMPSON.

Toronto, March 24, 1884.