

# TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

OLD SERIES.—17th YEAR.

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NEW SERIES.—VOL. VI. NO. 290.

## "TRUTH'S" WEEKLY BUDGET.

In this number of TRUTH we present a new, and what we believe will prove an exceedingly interesting department. It is styled "The Observatory," and the writing is from the pen of "Observer," whose style and reflections will speak for themselves. A new line of observations respecting social life, architecture, house decorations; the grouping and harmony of colors; personal adornment and the colors suited to certain complexions; the foibles of the snobby side of social life; and all matters generally that can interest the general reader. Certain new structures lately erected in Toronto have been animadverted upon; open grounds have been criticized, and the nomenclature of certain cottages dissected by the critic's knife. We have, as a leading editorial, a lengthy review of the progress of forestry, and we publish the second instalment of the thrilling Markham story, with a suitable engraving of the two seconds coolly arranging the "duel" over their cigars. "Bitter Sweet" is an attractive engraving of a society scene, where a young fellow, "a swifly handsome but very eccentric you know" is waiting for an introduction to a social ball. The "Health" and "Household" departments are fully stocked with useful and readable information. The "Young Folks" and "Poet's Corner" is each a nook in TRUTH where will be found sweet bits. "Musical," "Amusements," and "Selections" will all be found worth looking at. Our contributions are "The Great Exhibition" from the pen of our special correspondent describing the features and progress of the Exhibition at London, wherein Canada has such a prominent place. A most charming, vivid and cultured piece of work is "Bilbao to Zaragoza, and Back" by "A Young Lady" who has been so good as to place her pen at our disposal. "A South American City," by C. H. Fowler is a readable sketch; and "Eria's Shores," by R. W. Kay, is full of thought, colour, picturesque. Altogether there is no journal in Canada that can nearly approach TRUTH in the volume and excellence of its weekly budget.

## MR. PHIPPS AND OUR FORESTS.

Of all the matters coming within the jurisdiction of our public men not one is of more importance to the material welfare of the country than that of the protection, management and propagation of our trees. Yet it is a matter about which new-world governments up to a recent period had given themselves no concern; for the politicians looked upon the trees in much the same light as the settler did, namely, as enemies. When the planter first pushed his way into the depth of the primeval forest with his axe upon his back, his business was to make war upon the trees. The cutting went on and the axeman never knew when he had gone far enough; the public was on his side in the war upon the wood; when a tempest of flame came rushing through the forest destroying hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of trees, it was considered a "fine

slight," and was a welcome spectacle if no property stood in its path.

Our good people seemed to have got it into their heads that you could no more exhaust the trees than you could bail out the ocean. Therefore when anybody raised his voice asking that some care be given to our timber stretches, the politicians took no heed; very probably they looked upon him as a crank.

But at last a pretty serious spectacle was presented to observant men; and it was, that this continent was threatened with forest extermination. Then men largely engaged in timber operations began to make representations to the United States Government, which in response granted a bureau to supervise forestry matters. At its head was Dr. Franklin B. Hough, a gentleman who brought much enthusiasm and a large knowledge of wood craft to his office.

Owing to the exertions of certain capable pens in Quebec, the administration of that Province was induced to take an interest in the question of forestry; and one of the chief acts of legislation was the creation of an Arbor Day, whereupon thousands of people assemble and plant trees. This, though a step of high importance, met but a small portion of the needs in connection with this important question.

Next came the Ontario Government with an Act creating a Forestry Branch under the supervision of the Minister of Agriculture. To the management of this Branch the Government appointed Mr. R. W. Phipps, a gentleman of unremitting energy, brilliant ability, and a wide and practical acquaintance with woodcraft. What has been done under this gentleman's tireless zeal, is well known to the country. The third annual report has been made by Mr. Phipps, and now lies before us.

In presenting this report, Mr. Phipps says:

"No question is more important to North Americans than forest preservation. It has long been said that the nobleman, and the craftsman and the soldier are alike dependent on the farmer, who feeds them all. But the farmer, in his turn, depends on the soil, and on these successions of heat and moisture, without which growth is impossible. Now, we find, by a vast body of evidence, that these conditions are not attainable in anything like so beneficial a degree—that these successions of heat and moisture do not succeed each other in a manner nearly so advantageous to agriculture when too much of the forest has been removed. We all remember the story of the gardener, who, absorbed in the desire to prune, sawed off the bough he sat upon, and broke his neck. Throughout North America, in our eager destruction of the forests, there is reason to fear that we are doing something of the same nature."

In proof of these statements Mr. Phipps produces abundant and conclusive evidence in the shape of a report entitled "Progress of Forestry this year in Ontario" Mr. Phipps says:

"Since the publication of last year's report a very important movement, in the direction of preserving our pine forests, has been made by the Government of Ontario, in offering to lumbermen to pay half the expense of a staff detailed during summer to prevent forest fires, and to make known and

enforce the provisions of the fire Act. Many lumbermen at once availed themselves of the offer, and over forty persons have been employed during the dangerous months of last summer, and there is no doubt, with very great benefit. Throughout the various Provinces and States of North America, there are excellent Forestry Associations, and much that is valuable has been written and said concerning the matter, but Ontario, by the above movement, has acquired the honor of being the first to inaugurate the practical system of forest preservation, and to place a force in the forest to carry it into effect. This action, it may be remembered, was strongly advised in last year's Forestry report.

During the year, an arbor day for the schools of Ontario, has also been instituted, and over thirty thousand trees were planted on its first occurrence. This is likely to have an excellent effect throughout the country generally, as the tree planting being accompanied by addresses on Forestry to the children, practical lessons are then learned by the children, which are likely afterwards to render effective service in the fields and forests of the Province."

But a great measure of this success, it is the simplest justice to say, is due to the personal exertions of Mr. Phipps. He has not contented himself with visiting the forests, and studying the problem of protection and propagation, and reporting upon it, but he has written innumerable letters to the provincial press pointing out the duty of one and all, and asking for co-operation. The wisdom and the great practical value of his teachings have been recognized by the press at large. We have always been glad to notice that papers opposed to everything that emanates from the Government of Mr. Mowat have had cordial words for Mr. Phipps, exertions.

In blue-books one does not expect to find literature, nor as a general rule is literary flavor necessary in the matter which such publications present. But here is a very shining exception to the rule. Mr. Phipps cannot any more part with his style than a man can dismember himself of his shadow. We perceive, however, in the report before us that the writer is not desirous of saying fine things; he has his message to deliver; his observations to offer, and the testimony of competent persons to present. These he endeavours to set forth in the most plain way; and there is not a statement made which is not upon its face wise and reasonable. But as we have said the liberal spirit infuses page after page. Mr. Phipps has visited many of the States where attention has been given to preservation, to the scattering of seed and the planting of seedlings. How warm, and vivid, and true are not the following descriptions found in the "Notes from Massachusetts":

"There is a quaint charm about these New England villages, here nestling among, there spreading boldly over, the rolling sands which border this Atlantic coast. Wooden houses, large and small, in endless variety, dot hill and dale, interspersed with many an orchard, many a waving grove of pine and oak many a pleasant road and winding lane, and not a muddy one among them, the sandy sea coast soil is all too dry for that; the rain may fall for three days, and then three hours' sunshine, you may walk where you will dry shoes."

"The small village of West

is a picture western localities never exhibit. Its brightly painted wooden houses, many, oddly enough, covered with shingles instead of siding, from their strong stone foundations to their eaves; its rolling surface of grassward, where, at every doolity, wayfarer is aided by steps of mauve and time-worn granite that the pilgrims might have laid; its great fresh water ponds for ice (a contrast to our Toronto mud-bounded reservoirs), faced by firm walls of heavy stone; the embowering branches of linden and elm, trees overhead on all the roads, sleepily waving in the afternoon breeze; the quietness of all around, as if the sun rose and set ever on placidity alone, and all that interrupted the unvarying stillness was the plash and agitation of the bright sea-waves which roll up into the little harbour gay with pleasure boats, and glitter far away across the sound, through which schooner and steamer, plying between Boston and New York, continually pass, their sails white against the distant sea."

Seldom indeed is it that you find in a blue-book such writing as this.

Amongst the many valuable matters dealt with in this report—which ought to be properly circulated through the province, and indeed through the North-West Territories,—may be mentioned "Duty of preserving Forests," "Evergreen Windbreaks, and List of Appropriate Evergreens," "General functions of Forests," "Injuries caused by Loss of Forests," "Influence of the Forest on Inundations," "Suggestions for Government Assistance in procuring young Trees," "Trees as shelter to ground to the leeward," "Value of Larch as a Crop," &c. The book is full of the most valuable matter and the Dominion Government should secure several thousand copies of it for distribution among farmers and others in the North-West territories. It has a special worth for the Territories because Mr. Phipps' discusses at length the planting of wind-breaks along naked stretches; and the value that such barriers would be to man and beast along the naked prairie, it is not necessary to tell to those who have heard of the terrible blizzard. With respect to Mr. Phipps' suggestions as to how government might aid in procuring young trees, we quote his words, with the heartiest approval:

"If the trees were supplied free of cost, for say thirty plantations of five acres each, it would probably be easy to find, throughout Ontario, as many individuals willing to devote five acres each to the purpose, to plant them, and to take necessary care of the trees, that is to say, they should be planted four feet apart, each way, fenced from cattle, and have the soil worked with the cultivator for three years, sufficiently to keep down weeds, after which the young trees would shade the ground and take care of themselves. The government should mend for this purpose, soil and climate of Ontario, white pine, cherry and apple, and plant four in each plantation, fourth to be of the ash, cheap tree of easy growth, well to shade the ground, as to be cut out leaving the fourth in possession of maturity."