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PROPOSED SCHOOL OF FORESTRY.

In the English House of Commons on May 15th, on the motion for going into Committee of Supply,

Sir John Lubbock called attention to the state of forestry in this country, and moved for a Select Committee to consider whether, by the establishment of a forest school or otherwise, our woodlands could be rendered more remunerative. After pointing out that this was the only great country in Europe which took no notice at all of its national forests, he said this was a time when it was peculiarly desirable that they should have an inquiry of the kind he proposed; because, in the first place, the head of the Indian Forest Department was in this country at the present moment, and they might have the advantage of his co-operation and advice; and secondly, because the Indian Office was at the present moment engaged in organizing the system of instruction of the Indian officials. He thought it would be very desirable to consider the whole subject before the Government made any arrangements that would apply to the Indian officials. If a well organized forest school was established it would afford a valuable nucleus in the first instance. He did not, however, wish to express any decided opinion in favor of the establishment of a Government School of Forestry. It was a subject for inquiry. Every one, he thought, would admit that they could not have a successful school without having access to a large tract of forest. It was almost impossible for private individuals to establish for themselves a satisfactory forest school, and it might be possible to render our national woodlands available to private institutions, so that young men might have the advantage of instruction in arboriculture.

Dr. Lyons, in seconding the motion, stated that total amount of woodland in Ireland was only 350,000 acres, being 45 acres less than in 1441. The amount of timber in England was infinitely below that which she ought properly to possess for the purposes of the natural protection of the soil, and for the protection of our herds and flocks. The question of our timber supplies was of the greatest agricultural, commercial and industrial importance to this country.

Sir H. Maxwell said that there was an immense quantity of money wasted just now in mistaken forestry operations. (Hear, hear.) No one who had spent any portion of his life in studying the subject could fail to be distressed in going through the country to see hundreds and thousands of acres of neglected woodland. (Hear, hear.) Considering the amount of private energy and self denial involved in the formation of woodlands, it was not too much to ask the Government of this country to recognize that, and to take steps to place within the reach

of the public the best possible information on the subject.

Mr. Gladstone thought there was great room for improvement in the management of our woodlands, for there was a widespread and mischievous superstition against cutting down trees, and very few indeed understood how to cut down a tree. Everything was done too much at haphazard, and he thought the appointment of a committee might be of great advantage. But as to the establishment of a school he desired to keep entirely from any engagement.

Sir W. Barttelot, Mr. Ackers, Mr. Dawson, Dr. Farquharson, and Sir G. Campbell also spoke, and the motion for the appointment of committee was agreed to.

PRESERVATION OF OUR FORESTS.

There are reasons entirely independent of economic value which make the preservation of our forests a matter of prime importance, and would make their ruin a national calamity. It is not that they have much influence on the rainfall. Those who hold that they do so mistake effect for cause. The rain produces the forest and not the forest the rain. A forest growth may not of necessity follow an adequate supply of moisture, but the supply of moisture is an indispensable condition of it. The utility of forests, aside from their marketable value, lies in their power, not to cause the rainfall, but to regulate its distribution. In this they are of incalculable benefit. When they cover the ground about the sources of great rivers and their tributaries, the porous soil, with its mosses and its accumulation of fallen leaves, acts as a vast sponge to retain and slowly deliver the water that falls from the clouds in the form of rain or snow. When the sheltering trees are destroyed and the ground is laid bare, all the water runs off at once; the brooks that had before flowed continuously and with comparative regularity become roaring torrents in spring and dry channels in summer, while the rivers that depend on these sources of supply swell into freshets at one season and shrink into insignificance at another.

The recent destructive floods in the north of Italy, and notably along the river Po, with all the misery they have brought, are ascribed, and no doubt with truth, to the partial denudation of the mountainous country about the sources of streams. The arid and comparatively valueless condition of certain parts of Spain is due to similar causes. It is for us to see, while there is yet time, that similar evils do not fall upon us. That wonderful region of the West known as the Great Divide, gives birth to the Missouri, the Yellowstone, the Columbia, the Colorado, and the North Fork of the Platte. The preservation of its sheltering forests is of vital interest to all the regions watered by these

rivers. The same is true, in a different degree, of the sources of many lesser streams within our national territory. Sometimes, as in the case of the Hudson, the sources of the river and its whole course lie within the limits of one State, and the local government is therefore master of the situation. If New York should permit the Adirondack forests to be destroyed, she, and she alone, would be answerable for the consequences. But, in most cases, our great rivers rise in one or more States or Territories, to flow through or by the domain of others on their way to the sea. Here the State authorities are powerless, and if the remedy is to be applied at all, it must be applied by the Federal Government. Momentous interests are at stake, and the welfare of the whole nation demands careful consideration.—Francis Parkman in June Atlantic.

COMMENCING BUSINESS.

"Never start until you are ready" is an old proverb, and we venture to think that if 50 per cent. of travellers and clerks who start in business as timber merchants, were to pay a little attention to this old adage, there would be less competition, fewer bankruptcies, broken hopes, and homes. It should be the aim of every man to improve his position, but we can recollect some cruel turns in fortune's wheel to young men who, having accumulated a little money or having had it "left" them, have decided to cease making a fortune for another and have started in business for themselves. It generally happens that these aspirants are good employes, and as such command fair salaries, but they have had no experience in knowing what it is to have plenty of debts on one's books, and plenty of bills to pay. There seems to be an idea among some men that they have only to fit up an office or stock a yard, and then orders will flow in, all of course for cash, and a round of prosperity, culminating in a fabulous fortune, will be the result. Unfortunately this does not generally happen. The few "friends" who promise to do their best for the new aspirant soon get used up, business does not roll in in an unbroken stream, bills are not paid promptly, and he has to wait an unconscionably long time for his money. We have known such men, with plenty of money on their books, who soon found themselves in financial difficulties. And this kind of business soon tells, for beginners, as a rule take orders at the lowest possible figure, in the hope of building up a connection, and when they get it they either linger through years of mental misery and penury, or seek the relief which the Bankruptcy Court affords. Between bad debts, comparatively few good orders, and dull times generally, the business quietly dies out, and is quickly forgotten by all save the man who ventured his all in it. And he, broken in heart and pocket, becomes a wiser and a sadder man.

No greater mistake is made by men of too little capital than starting in business. Here and there we have examples where men have been exceptionally lucky and have pulled through, but in many cases the struggler only goes through a brief period of hope to a crushing disaster. And the worst feature of these small capital men is that they who, above all others, need a fair return for their goods, sell them at ruination prices, and when looked at from a sensible standpoint seem to invite the ruin they try to avert. Thus striving for business by working for less than a fair remuneration is productive of other evils than those it entails upon those who practice it—it tends to reduce prices all around, and to awaken suspicion regarding the credit of men who will meet their bills. Whilst we rejoice to see men from the ranks come to the front, we have no sympathy with those who start without looking fairly ahead, and trust to good luck to pull them through, or the Bankruptcy Court to lift them out of their debts and difficulties. One of the chief disadvantages that people with small capital have to contend with is that they are forced to buy on credit of the larger houses, then, in order to meet their engagements, they force trade and accept paper from people who are known to be untrustworthy. Some of the leading merchants in the West India Docks are well acquainted with all this, yet the evil continues. Meanwhile the discount houses grow fat, because among the impetuous classes they get, instead of a fair rate of interest, something like 20 per cent., and when once in these bill brokers' hands, life becomes a perfect misery.

In conclusion, we are of the opinion that employes in good positions are often far more comfortably situated than their employers, and it is worse than folly to commence business without sufficient capital, relying on connections which rarely are of much solid benefit alone.—Timber.

Durable Timber.

The durability of the framed timber of buildings is very considerable. The trusses of the old part of the roof of the basilic of a St. Paul, at Rome, were framed in 816, and were sound and good in 1816, a space of nearly a thousand years. These trusses are of fir. The timber work of the external domes of the Church of St. Mark, at Venice, is more than 810 years old, and is still in a good state. Alberti observed the gates of cypress to the church of St. Peter, at Rome, to be whole and sound after being up nearly 600 years. The inner roof of the chapel of St. Nicholas, King's Lynn, Norfolk, is of oak, and was constructed upwards of five hundred years ago. Daviller states, as an instance of the durability of fir, that the large dormitory of the Jacobins' convent, at Paris, was executed in fir and lasted 400 years.