

### VALUABLE TIMBERS OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA.

The standing timber in the upper counties of the mountain region are of incalculable value, and strange to say in estimating the natural wealth of the country this portion of it is almost wholly ignored. The soil being extremely fertile and rich in potash, magnesia and other mineral elements which go to make up the ash of timber, produces hard, firm and tough wood, so that it is universally conceded by experts that our hickories, birch and dogwood are of far greater value for manufacturing than those grown in any other part of the United States. So, too, the grain and texture of the ornamental woods, black walnut, poplar, maple, cherry, black birch, ash, chestnut, oaks, plum, laurel, and other furniture and decorative woods, are unexcelled in any other locality. To enumerate all the purpose to which our timber are applicable and the numerous variety which grow here would be impossible for one occasion, and a large volume has been written on the subject. Still it may be interesting to note some of these. Black walnut grown here is remarkable for its exquisite veining and color and as it can be easily cultivated by planting, owners of suitable lands would do well to make plantations of this timber for future use. The stock of this timber is daily growing less and less and the largest stock is now found in these upper counties. Old fields may be planted with walnut and in forty years from now would be worth \$300 or \$400 per acre. What safer and more certain inheritance for his children could a young parent make, at less cost, than ten or twenty acres of idle land planted with this timber. Western North Carolina has a larger number of varieties of timber growing in its valleys and on its mountain slopes than any other part of the world. It has every known variety of ash but two, one more hemlock than is known elsewhere, all the walnuts, all the hickories, all the pines but one, all the spruces, and more herbs and shrubs useful for medical purposes. The chestnut is more handsomely veined than any grown elsewhere, the crooked maple, the poplar and the ash are more handsomely marked and the black birch vies with the best Honduras mahogany for fine furniture. There are many thousands of acres of lands which carry in the timber alone a greater value than would be sufficient to clear and fence them and put all the needed buildings upon the farms.

There is no other place in the United States where forest culture could be made more profitable; where the preservation of the standing timber should be more carefully guarded from destruction by forest fires and from the ruthless indiscriminating axe. We have seen a field of many acres in which the most valuable hickory timber had been girdled and destroyed, and many of these trees were singly worth more than the whole field cost at the original purchase. Our hickories and white oaks yield the very best timber for carriage and wagon work and before long, this region will be filled with large carriage and wagon factories, which will send their products to the low land in every direction. Our dogwood is now supplying the weaving mills of Europe with millions of shuttle blocks every year. The poplar forests will ere long be turned into paper pulp for the manufacture of printing paper and our timber is unexcelled for this purpose. Among the oaks we have the abundant chestnut oak the bark of which is the best material for the tanner, and other oaks furnish the best knees for the ship builders of the coast cities.

How to utilize these valuable timbers should be made a study by the owners of the fresh lands. First, the practice of burning the woods should be put an end to, summarily. The undergrowth can be kept down by ranging cattle in the timber and owners of such lands should fence them in and so utilize them to the best advantage. When old lands are thrown out they should be planted at once and so preserved from washing and waste and be made to begin a new course of profit. The cleared land should be cultivated under the most careful system by which the largest yield can be secured, and the farmer, instead of half working one hundred acres, should aim by good culture to get as much crop from forty, and so economize

his land or increase his income by keeping more stock.

The time will soon come when a good deal of forest land will be cleared by new comers who will bring them under cultivation; a judicious system of clearing land should be followed so as to prevent washing of the slopes and the drying up of our unanimous prolific springs and to preserve the full volume of our streams and rivers. The head of every branch, and around every spring, should be protected by sufficient grass, and every mountain farm should retain at least three-fourths of the land under timber and utilize this wood land for grazing sheep and cattle. By taking this wise course we should preserve our forest with our springs, our streams, our pleasant climate and abundant rainfall, and while so doing gradually draw from them in continuous instalments all the wealth which nature has stored up in them for our use and enjoyment.—Webster, N. C., *Enter prise*.

### NEW FOREST PLANTATIONS.

We take the following remarks from Mr. R. Phipps' Forestry Report:

We can point to very few plantations of trees in Canada of such as to be useful for examples. A few will be found under this heading, obtained in various parts of the United States. It will be seen by observation of these examples, and, in fact, by reference to nature itself, that in starting a plantation of trees, in most instances it is well to mix the trees. Then there is a point in drainage to be considered. If we can, with a subsoil plough or otherwise, deeply cultivate the whole area of ground, it is all the better, and better still if done the year before. But if we are digging for each tree separately, we may dig in a light or leachy soil as deeply as we choose; not so in stiff clay, the water may lodge under the roots (unless, indeed, it be underdrained). The next thing to be considered is, that if we plant our young trees so as to shade a great deal of the ground and to shade one another's stems, they will grow all the faster. With this object it is well always to plant many more trees than we intend ultimately to remain there. Now, if we can mulch all the ground for our plantation, we can plant our trees as thickly as we like; but if we intend to assist our trees by cultivating the ground around them (it may be done with a crop, and often is so done), we must leave room for our cultivator between the rows. An artificial forest, planted and grown for the production of tall, straight clear timber, is a very different thing from our natural woods. In it the trees are planted as closely as experience teaches they will stand and thrive, giving each tree sufficient room for its branching top to extend and no more. Such a forest does not need, as does the natural forest, the protection of undergrowth below to shade its soil, its roots and trunks. Its own close-set formation gives shade in every part. The outside trees will branch to the ground—the inside not.

In all efforts at tree culture, it should be remembered that, though we look to nature as our original guide, yet experience teaches that, with our assistance, productions may be secured infinitely more valuable than we would otherwise have obtained. The wheat plant exists in nature, but not the wheat field. It is so with trees. If we plant them and no more they may grow and may not. But if we care for them, they can not only be made to grow far more rapidly, but they will grow in the peculiar manner, and yield the particular kind and class of timber we intend, just as certainly as the grafted orchard will bear the grafted fruit. Suppose, for instance, that we desire a closely set forest to grow us long, straight trees, fit to yield clear beams of either hard or soft wood, we must plant the trees at proper distances, thin them at proper times (the eye can easily tell when), always remembering the principle of keeping the ground well shaded, and keep the surface ground stirred and cultivated, taking care not to hurt the roots, which roots we will find will almost seem to be watching us and to know what we are about. If we give them the habit of having the ground lightly cultivated, we will find some inches of earth always left for that purpose; (and there is nothing that more benefits a tree.) Trees, too, bring their own

manure; they draw much nourishment from the atmosphere and from the rain; they drop it to their roots in falling leaves, which should be neither carried away nor blown away. But in speaking of a plantation where we can cultivate, cultivation will mix the leaves with the mould, and it will answer far better than the natural plan. Nature does not need a tree as soon nor as free from knots as we do. The next thing to consider is how to avoid growing those knots, and so we come to pruning. The rule of the best foresters in attempting to grow first class timber is that "the whole surface of ground should be canopied over with the heads. This canopy should, by gradual and annual thinning, be supported by the fewest possible stems. For pruning trees to grow to their plant and to the largest timber tree: Keep a clear leader. Cut off all branches large enough to compete with the stem, or which grow parallel to it. Strive the stem up one third of its height. Cut all close to the stem. With the above exceptions a tree cannot have too many branches, as the returning sap of each contributes to the growth in girthing of all that part of the stem which is below it, and to the growth of the root both in length and girthing. But pruning, like thinning a plantation, cannot be to gradual. It should be annual."

I would wish to press on owners of farm property in Ontario, especially those whose woodlots are cleared, or seem decayed past renovating, the great desirability of establishing a plantation of trees along the north or which ever be the most exposed side of their farms; call it, if we will, a shelter-belt, but when once about it, it would be much more advantageous to make the shelter belt broad enough for a small forest. When we consider that such a shelter has often been known to double the crops in the adjacent fields, remembering too, the value of the wood which may be produced there, and how greatly care and cultivation may accelerate the production, it is not too much to say that, in the rapidly approaching scarcity of timber throughout Ontario, five or ten acres so devoted might become more valuable than the rest of the farm.

### PECULIARITIES OF THE LUMBER TRADE.

The following address was delivered before the Indiana lumber dealers at a recent meeting in Indianapolis:—

GENTLEMEN:—The peculiarities of the lumber trade are very peculiar, especially on peculiar occasions. Your president (not Cleveland, but your other president,) informs me that there is a rich and humorous side to the lumber trade. I believe him, but the funniest part of the biz. is to meander out into the yard with a country customer and sell him a good sized bill at a money making profit, and not have him ask you to wait until he sells his wheat, or brings his hogs to town, but pays cash, and don't ask a discount for the same. He would be one of the peculiarities of the season, and if I had run across one of them this year, I would have brought him as a curiosity. But that is my idea of the rich and humorous side of the trade, and if the president has had much of the rich and humorous this season, he is ahead of your humble servant by a large majority. But my friends and brethren, let us return to our text. Did it ever strike you as very peculiar that a 2x4 was only 13, that a 6 inch flooring board was only 5½, that a standard A contained plenty of shingles not better than 6 inch clear, that No. 2 was sometimes culls, that No. 1 was sometimes No. 2, that some yards sell for less money than others, that some yards give you better grades than others, that the first car is generally the best, and the peculiar part of the trade is to see how much more a car will hold when lumber is on a decline than when prices are stiffening, and another peculiarity is to see how nice the splinter drummers get around it. "What kind of a standard A have you?" "Well, about like so and so." "How much clear?" "Well as much as any one's." "Standard, how thick are they?" "Well, they were cut 6 to 2 inch, but as they are very dry, they won't quite hold up to that now." "Say, that last car of your stuff was very thin, why don't you make it 2 inch?" "Well, others are cutting in thin, and we have to do the same to meet competition."

Now the peculiarities are not all on the wholesaler's side. Who ever heard of a No. 1 board getting into a No. 2 pile in a retailer's yard; but it is a common occurrence to see some No. 2 crawl over to the No. 1 pile. Of course it gets there by mistake, but it is very peculiar, it never goes the other way. "Hello, White, have you any 10 inch clears?" "No sir, but I have a No. 1, 5 inch clear. It will make you a No. 1 roof. You only show 4½ inch to weather. Why don't it make you a good roof?" "Well, all right send me up enough for a 30x20 roof."

Some in same office two weeks after; "Hello White, have you any 5 inch clears?" "No, but I have a rattling good 10 inch clear 5 inch won't make you a good roof, it must be clear two laps." Now the peculiarity about this is, what a change two weeks makes in the shingles, for the man fully believes what he says both times.

Another peculiarity so trade is the differences of opinions in some localities between a saw-mill man and a yard man. Why, poplar is the best lumber that grows; will hold a nail better, and don't have the knots that pine does; and for flooring, why, sycamors can't be beat; and you take sweet gum, and it will make you the best joist in the market. Now hear the yard man to the same customer. Of course the pine has the knots, but they are all solid red knots, and will stay. Then of course you can paint over them; all you have to do is to use a little shellac. And pine stays where you put it. Poplar never does get dry. Why, I have an old wardrobe, made by my father 30 years ago, and even now, every once in a while it pops like a pistol. That is one of its peculiarities, it never gets done drying. And as for sycamore, why, it is only good to make tobacco boxes out of; it stays green so long it keeps the tobacco moist. And as for gum, why, I have a piece of 2x4 in my yard that twisted through a picket fence. Why, down my way they have boys at work around the mills called "lumber herders." When they see gum plank start to roll over and go out of a yard, they turn it the other way, and let it roll back. And so it goes, one sees it one way and another the other. Now it may seem very peculiar, but there is only one thing in the line that we all see alike, and talk the same about. In all lumber yards I ever visited, they seemed to carry the same kind and use the same expressions, such as "Holy smoke, Bill, have you got a sharp knife? See if you can get that contounded Norway splinter out." "Holy smoke" and "confounded" are not exactly the expressions used unless you have a church member customer, and it is one of the peculiarities of the trade to talk to suit the customer. Gentlemen, once more allow me to return to the text. I am much obliged to you for the kind attention given your humble servant during his address on the "Peculiarities of the trade," by a peculiar man, to a peculiar crowd, on this peculiar occasion.

### The Willow.

The willow may be profitably and advantageously cultivated upon ground where no crop can be grown, such as upon swampy lands which cannot be drained for want of proper fall, or river banks, where flooding renders cultivation for cereal crops precarious. Upon ponds, embankments, or other precipices where the earth is disposed to slip, willow possesses several advantages over trees (proper) for firming such embankments, as its roots spread over the surface, and penetrate to a depth almost equal to that of timber trees, whilst the wind produces no important influence upon it by shaking and loosening the soil, or of being blown down with the wind.

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