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Seen from

OCTOBER 9, 1913

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

1743

the railway line this forest was rather disap-
pointing, the tall dark tree trunks rising through
the gloom into the dense mass of foliage high over-
head which we expected to see, not being visible.
No doubt our ideals in that direction might have
been realized had we been in some parts of that
wooded country. What we did see was tracts of
land covered with trees, mostly fir or spruce, ap-
parently, of various sizes. Here would be an
area from which the mature trees had all been
removed, but now covered with a dense thicket of
young stuff from ten
feet high and down-
wards. Another tract
would have trees of a
uniform height of, say
twenty feet, and
limbed to the ground,
while the next might
be ten or twenty feet
higher, but always of
uniform height, with
the side limbs remov-
ed to about two-thirds
of the total height.
And so on to trees of
sawlog size, the whole
crop being always in
the same stage as re-
gards age and growth.
One hill-face we notic-
ed on which the young
trees were but of
planting size, and
scattered thinly all
over were mature
trees, one to each
three or four rods
square, which had
been left to produce
seed for the future
crop. All through the
Black Forest region
reforesting seemed to
be secured by self-
seeding rather than by
hand-planting.

But besides great
areas which have been
kept in forest for gen-
erations, the Germans
utilize isolated hills
and other waste spots
which occur in rich
farming districts by
having these planted
to timber. The town of Heidelberg, for instance,
is surrounded by hills about 600 feet in height,
many of them conical and all with rounded tops,
and these are covered with a dense forest growth
from bottom to top and down the other side.
From our hotel bedroom we could hear the song
of birds from the lower trees of the hill nearby.
Heidelberg Castle, a famous old stronghold built
in 1607, is set well up a hill whose slope is as
steep as the side of a railway embankment. The
bulk of the hill is doubtless of rock, but covered
with a surface of soil. At the time the castle
was built, or at a later period, the whole hill
had evidently been bare, for the forest which now
covers it has almost certainly been planted, con-
sisting as it does of larch and beech principally,
and all of about the same age. It would put
some new ideas into the heads of those people
who sneer at the possibility of planted trees
amounting to anything to walk up to Heidelberg

Castle. Not a blade of grass can grow on that
steep hillside, so dense is the shade of the trees.
The bare boles shoot straight up to a height of
fifty feet and over before any limbs appear. The
tops must average somewhere about a hundred
feet high. The only green thing on the ground
is ivy, English ivy as we call it, and many of
the tree trunks are festooned with it about half
way up to the limbs. We caught ourselves reck-
oning how many cords of wood there would be to
the acre. There is little doubt that to the lux-

told us that part of a wooded hill was included
in his farm. The timber and land were his, but
he was obliged by law of the Kantonsrat to re-
place every tree he cut down with another.

What is the result of all this? Lumber and
shingles seem more plentiful than with us. Rail-
way ties, telegraph poles, and poles of smaller
diameter, are more easily procured. On the river-
side dock at Zurich was a pile of poles, for what
purpose they were intended we did not learn,
about seven inches in diameter at the butt, and

many of them were
sixty feet in length.
They had been topped
off where the thickness
was about that of a
man's wrist and were
straight as a bamboo.
A very common kind
of picket fence
throughout the market-
garden district of
Zurich was made of
poles about three
inches in diameter
which had been sawn
down the centre. The
bark side seemed to
have dressed down to
a uniform half-round
size, and the top end
of each picket was
sharpened to a half-
conical point at the
heart wood. We
stumbled on a sawmill
in Lucerne one morn-
ing before breakfast,
and here were logs
sixteen to twenty feet
long and eighteen
inches to two feet
thick being leisurely
sawn into lumber with
an old-fashioned jig
saw. After a cut had
been made the sawyer
would pry the near end
of the log into posi-
tion, fasten it and set
the saw going, and
then unhurriedly walk
to the other end and
shift it to its proper
place. It seemed to
take about twenty

minutes to slice off a board, but it likely was not
quite so long. Minutes seem long before break-
fast. But it was sure if slow.

On the journey through the arable lands of
France a similar respect for trees was everywhere
noticeable. Precious in his eyes as is the re-
stricted acreage land which a French farmer tills
he does not seem to begrudge the space which a
tree occupies. To him a tree is worth its
room. Frequently one sees rows of poplar or
other tall trees from which the side limbs have
been trimmed leaving a mere tuft on top. The
why and wherefore of this practice we were un-
able to discover owing to the speed of the train
in part, but mainly because of a slight difficulty
with the French language, which we had neglected
to learn in the good old school days long ago.
The French farmer perhaps wanted a little fire-
wood or possibly wanted to restrict the area af-



Forest Growth Around Heidelberg Castle.

uriant leafage of these wooded hills, as well as to
the high culture and fruitfulness of the levelled
ground between, is due the popularity of this old
German university town for students and for
strangers.

Experts agree in testifying that the forests of
Germany return a greater net gain per acre than
could be obtained from any other crop on the
same soil.

The fruit-clothed mountains of Switzerland are
evidence that in that country also trees are
valued at their real worth. The proper name of
the lake on which Lucerne is situated is Vier-
waldstaattersee, and this nice little German word
literally means the lake of the four forest can-
tons. To what four counties of Ontario, or even
of the Dominion of Canada, would such a term
be applicable now? We have wasted what these
European people have been saving. Mr. Duben-
dorfer, the Swiss farmer whose place we visited,



The Forest Covers a Mountainous Tract Many Miles in Extent.