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If we are to judge by the manner in which Arbor Day was commemorated during the present year, the enthusiasm which seized upon us some six or seven years ago for the conservation and renewal of our omnously thinning forests has subsided—in some places almost to the vanishing point. The Forestry Convention which was held in this city in 1882, which had been preceded by a similar gathering in the States in the previous year, certainly gave a wholesome and not unfruitful impulse to a movement which had hitherto been sporadic, undecided and feeble. The information brought within reach of the public on a topic in which every citizen was more or less deeply interested was valuable, both for its character and its extent. A special edition of one of our Montreal journals was devoted to reports of essays on every branch of the subject, in its relations to botany, to meteorology, to agriculture and to political economy. The meetings were largely attended. The public departments, the municipal authorities, the houses of education, the learned societies, the domain of art and industry, were all well represented. An annual holiday was set apart by the provincial governments for the express purpose of planting trees for use and beauty, and, above all, for example. But Arbor Day of 1889 came and went almost unobserved, even in great centres like Montreal. Was the agitation artificial? Was the alarm baseless, or, at least, exaggerated? Or did a few years of timely discipline suffice to recall those guilty of wilful or heedless waste to a sense of duty, and is the yearly lesson no longer necessary?

This is not a question to be answered in rash haste. That the forest preservation movement was not wholly without good results we have reason to believe. It served as a reminder that the seemingly "endless contiguity of shade" of our North American woods was not really inexhaustible; that some areas had already been left bare by ruthless fire and remorseless axe, and that, if some check were not applied, the day would surely come when our older provinces would be as scant of timber as the treeless prairie or the more northern zone of stunted growths. It brought home to our farmers the beauty of a few trees opportunely planted or left standing around their dwellings. It taught townspeople and villagers to cherish trees as shapes of beauty, in form and tint among the fairest sights of nature, and it led young people to study their kinds, their purposes and the effects of their presence or absence in certain circumstances. So far well. All was on the side of the promoters of forestry. But it so happened that, among the reasons especially adduced for the maintenance or renovation of forests in certain localities was their alleged influence in the determination of the climate. Floods,

plagues, droughts and other evils were ascribed to the removal of forests from certain sites, and copious instances were furnished in attestation of the correctness of the theory. Now, in Great Britain there are large proprietors of afforested land whom this theory suited exactly. Science was on their side, and those who complained of their William-the-Conqueror-like policy were flying in the face of Providence. But it would never do for men of science to be ranged against the cause of humanity. The relations of forests to climate must, therefore, be reconsidered. And now the opinion of the wise is divided, the unscientific public is left in doubt, the forestry movement languishes, and Arbor Day is only a name.

Most interesting to Canadians was the testimony so calmly given by Mr. Van Horne, president of our Pacific Railway, as to the traffic and travel by that great line. After sketching the political and financial history of the enterprise, Mr. Van Horne said that at first the road had more passengers than freight. The tea trade between Hong-Kong, Yokohama and Vancouver was sufficient to employ a line of 27,000-ton steamers. The arrangement made with the Imperial Government for a fast line that would make 17½ knots would enable the company to take passengers from London to Yokohama in 21 or 22 days, instead of 38 or 39 days, as by the Suez Canal. Questioned as to the present earnings of the road, Mr. Van Horne said that the gross receipts last year were \$13,195,535, the net earnings, \$3,870,774, which figures included the earnings of the lake steamers. As to the interstate law, the C. P. R. had conformed to its provisions. No agent had been sent south of the boundary till the Americans broke the agreement; then the C. P. R. made it hot for them till they gave in and shook hands. As to the working of the line, there was not a day in the year on which it could not be operated. Everything considered, Mr. Van Horne thought the Canadian Pacific could hold its own.

A pocket recently struck in the New Albion mines, Nova Scotia, yielded a box of quartz of extraordinary richness, and pronounced by competent judges to be the most valuable specimen ever seen in that part of the world. The mine in question is said to belong to the Hon. Mr. Annand. For some time past we have been hearing of other similar finds in the gold fields of Nova Scotia, and not long since it looked as though a regular gold "boom" were about to start in that favoured province. Meanwhile, what about the gold fields of the Province of Quebec? It is now nearly seventy years since a woman found near the mouth of the Touffe de Pins or Gilbert river, a tributary of the Chaudière, a small mass of heavy substance, which, on examination, turned out to be gold. In 1834 another woman, who was watering a horse near the same spot, saw what she thought to be a bright stone shining in the river bed, and, picking it up, she took it home with her. It was not for some time, however, that she became aware of its value. It was through Lieutenant (afterwards General) Baddeley, then serving in Canada with a detachment of Royal Engineers, that the discovery was made public in the pages of *Silliman's Journal*. The piece, which was 10.63 grs. in weight, had been chopped off a nugget that weighed 1,056 grs. The matter was, nevertheless, forgotten, and it was not till after the establishment of the Geological Survey that the auriferous region of Beauce was shown to be of economic importance. In 1846, M. de Lery obtained from the Crown the exclusive

right of gold mining within the limits of his seignory. He had the district explored soon after, but, unwilling to take the risk of working it, he leased his rights to the Chaudière Mining Company. Several other companies were formed later on, but the system in vogue was hardly in any case such as to really test the natural wealth of the Quebec gold-fields. Even since Confederation, though the business of developing this fairly extensive gold-producing area has never been altogether intermitted, it has never been pushed with such determination, with such employment of all available facilities, as to make the undertaking as profitable as, under favourable conditions, it could undoubtedly be made.

We received, some time ago, a pamphlet on a subject of no slight importance to the general travelling public—that of colour-blindness in railway employees. The question has been the theme of much discussion in recent years, but the importance of this little treatise consists in its practical application to the Dominion. The author, Dr. G. Sterling Ryerson, L.R.C.S., has not only studied with care all the works of preceding writers on the subject, but has made a special investigation on his own account among the employees of our lines of railway, the condition of whose sight would seriously affect the discharge of their duties—such as drivers, foremen, pointsmen, conductors, signalmen and station-masters. It is the rule that all such persons should, on applying for situations, be subjected to thorough tests, as to their faculty of colour discrimination, before being entrusted with the charge of human life. It is rather alarming to be told by Dr. Ryerson that the results of his examinations were not satisfactory, that, in fact, there is much room for improvement. It is to be hoped that the implied warning will not pass unutilized by those whom, in the first place, it concerns. This is a matter on which the public should have the fullest assurance that nothing has been omitted which would leave its safety open to the slightest question.

In connection with our dairy interests, to which we referred at some length in a recent issue, we would express the hope that the proposal to place the entire industry under the supervision of a special and duly appointed commissioner—a proposal which seemed to meet with the approval of the dairymen who met at the Ottawa convention—will, ere long, be carried into effect. How much good can be accomplished by proper organization we tried to show in our recent article. In fact, it is to organized effort that we owe the grand advance in cheese production and export that has been witnessed during the last few years. But for the disturbance of old routine methods, the discussion of improvements in the choice and treatment of cattle, in the supply of fodder, in the making and handling of cheese, and in putting it on the market, the surprising results to which we were happy to call attention could not have been secured. The inauguration of a herd-book alone is a great victory, though it came late. But much still remains to do. Canadian butter must be brought up to the standard of our cheese and the wheels of progress must not be allowed to stand still. A dairy commissioner, if the right man were chosen—such a man as Mr. W. H. Lynch, for instance—could, by giving his entire attention to dairy industries, impart force and direction to the enterprise of our farmers, and turn the possibilities of improvement and extension to the very best account.

In this issue our readers will find the second instalment of Mrs. Spragge's delightful and instructive