

through the department of agriculture should do all it can by joining with the state governments and with independent associations of farmers to encourage the growth in the open farming country of such institutional and social movements as will meet the demand of the best type of farmers, both for the improvement of their farms and for the betterment of the life itself. The department of agriculture has in many places, perhaps especially in certain districts of the south, accomplished an extraordinary amount by co-operating with and teaching the farmers through their associations on their own soil how to increase their income by managing their farms better than they were hitherto managed. The farmer must not lose his independence, his initiative, his rugged self reliance, yet he must learn to work in the heartiest co-operation with his fellows, exactly as the business man has learned to work, and he must prepare to use to constantly better advantage the knowledge that can be obtained from agricultural colleges, while he must insist upon a practical curriculum in the schools in which his children are taught. The department of agriculture and the department of commerce and labor both deal with the fundamental needs of our people in the production of raw material and its manufacture and distribution and therefore with the welfare of those who produce it in the raw state and of those who manufacture and distribute it. The department of commerce and labor has but recently been founded, but has already justified its existence, while the department of agriculture yields to no other in the government in the practical benefits which it produces in proportion to the public money expended. It must continue in the future to deal with growing crops as it has dealt in the past, but it must still further extend its field of usefulness hereafter by dealing with live men through a far reaching study and treatment of the problems of farm life alike from the industrial and economic and social standpoint. Farmers must co-operate with one another and with the government, and the government can best give its aid through associations of farmers, so as to deliver to the farmer the large body of agricultural knowledge which has been accumulated by the national and state governments and by the agricultural colleges and schools.

The grain producing industry of the country, one of the most important in the United States, deserves special consideration at the hands of the congress. Our grain is sold almost exclusively by grades. To secure satisfactory results in our home markets and to facilitate our trade abroad these grades should approximate the highest degree of uniformity and certainty. The present diverse methods of inspection and grading throughout the country under different laws and boards result in confusion and lack of uniformity, destroying that confidence which is necessary for healthful trade. Complaints against the present methods have continued for years, and they are growing in volume and intensity not only in this country, but abroad. I therefore suggest to the congress the advisability of a national system of inspection and grading of grain entering into interstate and foreign commerce as a remedy for the present evils.

## INLAND WATERWAYS.

Great River Systems Should Be Made Into National Highways.

The conservation of our natural resources and their proper use constitute the fundamental problem which underlies almost every other problem of our national life. We must maintain for our civilization the adequate material basis without which that civilization cannot exist; we must show foresight; we must look ahead. As a nation we not only enjoy a wonderful measure of present prosperity, but if this prosperity is used aright it is an earnest of future success such as no other nation will have. The reward of foresight for this nation is great and easily foretold. But there must be the look ahead; there must be a realization of the fact that to waste, to destroy our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed. For the last few years through several agencies the government has been endeavoring to get our people to look ahead and to substitute a planned and orderly development of our resources in place of a haphazard striving for immediate profit. Our great river systems should be developed as national water highways, the Mississippi, with its tributaries, the standing first in importance and the Columbia second, although there are many others of importance on the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Gulf slopes. The national government should undertake this work, and I hope a beginning will be made in the present congress, and the greatest of all our rivers, the Mississippi, should receive special attention. From the great lakes to the mouth of the Mississippi there should be a deep waterway, with deep waterways leading from it to the east and the west. Such a waterway would practically mean the extension of our coast line into the very heart of our country. It would be of incalculable benefit to our people. If begun at once it can be carried through in time appreciably to relieve the congestion of our great freight carrying lines of railroads. The work should be systematically and continuously carried forward in accordance with some well conceived plan. The main streams should be improved to the highest point of efficiency before the improvement of the branches is attempted, and the work

should be kept free from every taint of recklessness or jobbery. The inland waterways which lie just back of the whole eastern and southern coasts should likewise be developed. Moreover, the development of our waterways involves many other important water problems, all of which should be considered as part of the same general scheme. The government dams should be used to produce hundreds of thousands of horsepower as an incident to improving navigation, for the annual value of the unused water power of the United States perhaps exceeds the annual value of the products of all our mines. As an incident to creating the deep waterway down the Mississippi the government should build along its whole lower length levees which, taken together with the control of the headwaters, will at once and forever put a complete stop to all threat of floods in the immensely fertile delta region. The territory lying adjacent to the Mississippi along its lower course will thereby become one of the most prosperous and populous as it already is one of the most fertile farming regions in all the world. I have appointed an inland waterways commission to study and outline a comprehensive scheme of development along all the lines indicated. Later I shall lay its report before the congress.

### Reclamation Work.

Irrigation should be far more extensively developed than at present, not only in the states of the great plains and the Rocky mountains, but in many others—as, for instance, in large portions of the south Atlantic and gulf states, where it should go hand in hand with the reclamation of swamp land. The federal government should seriously devote itself to this task, realizing that utilization of waterways and water power, forestry, irrigation and the reclamation of lands threatened with overflow are all interdependent parts of the same problem. The work of the reclamation service in developing the larger opportunities of the western half of our country for irrigation is more important than almost any other movement. The constant purpose of the government in connection with the reclamation service has been to use the water resources of the public lands for the ultimate greatest good of the greatest number—in other words, to put upon the land permanent homemakers, to use and develop it for themselves and for their children and children's children. There has been, of course, opposition to this work—opposition from some interested men who desire to exhaust the land for their own immediate profit without regard to the welfare of the next generation and opposition from honest and well meaning men who did not fully understand the subject or who did not look far enough ahead. This opposition is, I think, dying away, and our people are understanding that it would be utterly wrong to allow a few individuals to exhaust for their own temporary personal profit the resources which ought to be developed through use so as to be conserved for the permanent common advantage of the people as a whole.

### Public Lands.

The effort of the government to deal with the public land has been based upon the same principle as that of the reclamation service. The land law system which was designed to meet the needs of the fertile and well watered regions of the middle west has largely broken down when applied to the drier regions of the great plains, the mountains and much of the Pacific slope, where a farm of 160 acres is inadequate for self support. In these regions, the system lent itself to fraud, and much land passed out of the hands of the government without passing into the hands of the homemaker. The department of the interior and the department of justice joined in prosecuting the offenders against the law, and they have accomplished much, while where the administration of the law has been defective it has been changed. But the laws themselves are defective. Three years ago a public lands commission was appointed to scrutinize the law and defects and recommend a remedy. Their examination specifically showed the existence of great fraud upon the public domain, and their recommendations for changes in the law were made with the design of conserving the natural resources of every part of the public lands by putting it to its best use. Especial attention was called to the prevention of settlement by the passage of great areas of public land into the hands of a few men and to the enormous waste caused by unrestricted grazing upon the open range. The recommendations of the public lands commission are sound, for they are especially in the interest of the actual homemaker, and where the small homemaker cannot at present utilize the land they provide that the government shall keep control of it so that it may not be monopolized by a few men. The congress has not yet acted upon these recommendations, but they are so just and proper, so essential to our national welfare, that I feel confident if the congress will take time to consider them they will ultimately be adopted.

Some such legislation as that proposed is essential in order to preserve the great stretches of public grazing land which are unfit for cultivation under present methods and are valuable only for the forage which they supply. These stretches amount in all to some 300,000,000 acres and are open to the free grazing of cattle, sheep, horses and goats without restriction. Such a system, or, rather, such lack of system, means that the range is not so much used as wasted by abuse. As the west settles the range becomes more and more overgrazed. Much of it cannot be used to advantage unless it is fenced, for fencing is the only way by which to keep in check the owners of nomad flocks which roam

hither and thither, utterly destroying the pastures and leaving a waste behind, so that their presence is incompatible with the presence of homemakers. The existing fences are all illegal. Some of them represent the improper exclusion of actual settlers, actual homemakers, from territory which is usurped by great cattle companies. Some of them represent what is in itself a proper effort to use the range for those upon the land and to prevent its use by nomadic outsiders. All these fences, those that are hurtful and those that are beneficial, are alike illegal and must come down. But it is an outrage that the law should necessitate such action on the part of the administration. The unlawful fencing of public lands for private grazing must be stopped, but the necessity which occasioned it must be provided for. The federal government should have control of the range, whether by permit or lease, as local necessities may determine. Such control could secure the great benefit of legitimate fencing, while at the same time securing and promoting the settlement of the country. In some places it may be that the tracts of range adjacent to the homesteads of actual settlers should be allotted to them severally or in common for the summer grazing of their stock. Elsewhere it may be that a lease system would serve the purpose, the leases to be temporary and subject to the rights of settlement and the amount charged being large enough merely to permit of the efficient and beneficial control of the range by the government and of the payment to the county of the equivalent of what it would otherwise receive in taxes. The destruction of the public range will continue until some such laws as these are enacted. Fully to prevent the fraud in the public lands which through the joint action of the interior department and the department of justice we have been endeavoring to prevent there must be further legislation and especially a sufficient appropriation to permit the department of the interior to examine certain classes of entries on the ground before they pass into private ownership. The government should part with its title only to the actual homemaker, not to the profit maker who does not care to make a home. Our prime object is to secure the rights and guard the interests of the small ranchman, the man who plows and pitches hay for himself. It is this small ranchman, this actual settler and homemaker, who in the long run is most hurt by permitting the thefts of the public land in whatever form.

## FOREST RESERVATIONS.

They Should Be Vastly Increased to Conserve Resources.

Optimism is a good characteristic, but if carried to an excess it becomes foolishness. We are prone to speak of the resources of this country as inexhaustible. This is not so. The mineral wealth of the country, the coal, iron, oil, gas and the like, does not reproduce itself and therefore is certain to be exhausted ultimately, and wastefulness in dealing with it today means that our descendants will feel the exhaustion a generation or two before they otherwise would. But there are certain other forms of waste which could be entirely stopped. The waste of soil by washing, for instance, which is among the most dangerous of all wastes now in progress in the United States, is easily preventable, so that this present enormous loss of fertility is entirely unnecessary. The preservation or replacement of the forests is one of the most important means of preventing this loss. We have made a beginning in forest preservation, but it is only a beginning. At present lumbering is the fourth greatest industry in the United States, and yet so rapid has been the rate of exhaustion of timber in the United States in the past and so rapidly is the remainder being exhausted that the country is unquestionably on the verge of a timber famine which will be felt in every household in the land. There has already been a rise in the price of lumber, but there is certain to be a more rapid and heavier rise in the future. The present annual consumption of lumber is certainly three times as great as the annual outgrowth, and if the consumption and growth continue unchanged practically all our lumber will be exhausted in another generation, while long before the limit to complete exhaustion is reached the growing scarcity will make itself felt in many blighting ways upon our national welfare. About 20 per cent of our forested territory is now reserved in national forests, but these do not include the most valuable timber lands, and in any event the proportion is too small to expect that the reserves can accomplish more than a mitigation of the trouble which is ahead for the nation. Far more drastic action is needed. Forests can be lumbered so as to give to the public the full use of their mercantile timber without the slightest detriment to the forest, any more than it is a detriment to a farm to furnish a harvest, so that there is no parallel between forests and mines, which can only be completely used by exhaustion. But forests, if used as all our forests have been used in the past and as most of them are still used, will be either wholly destroyed or so damaged that many decades have to pass before effective use can be made of them again.

All these facts are so obvious that it is extraordinary that it should be necessary to repeat them. Every business man in the land, every writer in the newspapers, every man or woman of an ordinary school education, ought to be able to see that immense quantities of timber are used in the country, that the forests which supply this timber

are rapidly being exhausted and that if no change takes place exhaustion will come comparatively soon and that the effects of it will be felt severely in the everyday life of our people. Surely when these facts are so obvious there should be no delay in taking preventive measures. Yet we seem as a nation to be willing to proceed in this matter with happy go lucky indifference even to the immediate future. It is this attitude which permits the self interest of a very few persons to weigh for more than the ultimate interest of all our people. There are persons who find it to their immense pecuniary benefit to destroy the forests by lumbering. They are to be blamed for thus sacrificing the future of the nation as a whole to their own self interest of the moment, but heavier blame attaches to the people at large for permitting such action, whether in the White mountains, in the southern Alleghenies or in the Rockies and Sierras. A big lumbering company, impatient for immediate returns and not caring to look far enough ahead, will often deliberately destroy all the good timber in a region, hoping afterward to move on to some new country. The shiftless man of small means who does not care to become an actual homemaker, but would like immediate profit, will find it to his advantage to take up timber land simply to turn it over to such a big company and leave it valueless for future settlers. A big mine owner, anxious only to develop his mine at the moment, will care only to cut all the timber that he wishes without regard to the future, probably not looking ahead to the condition of the country when the forests are exhausted any more than he does to the condition when the mine is worked out.

I do not blame these men nearly as much as I blame the supine public opinion, the indifferent public opinion, which permits their action to go unchecked. Of course to check the waste of timber means that there must be on the part of the public the acceptance of a temporary restriction in the lavish use of the timber in order to prevent the total loss of this use in the future. There are plenty of men in public and private life who actually advocate the continuance of the present system of unchecked and wasteful extravagance, using as an argument

the fact that to check it will of course mean interference with the ease and comfort of certain people who now get lumber at less cost than they ought to pay at the expense of the future generations. Some of these persons actually demand that the present forest reserves be thrown open to destruction because, forsooth, they think that thereby the price of lumber could be put down again for two or three or more years. Their attitude is precisely like that of an agitator protesting against the outlay of money by farmers on manure and in taking care of their farms generally. Undoubtedly if the average farmer were content absolutely to ruin his farm he could for two or three years avoid spending any money on it and yet make a good deal of money out of it. But only a savage would in his private affairs show such reckless disregard of the future, yet it is precisely this reckless disregard of the future which the opponents of the forestry system are now endeavoring to get the people of the United States to show. The only trouble with the movement for the preservation of our forests is that it has not gone nearly far enough and was not begun soon enough. It is a most fortunate thing, however, that we began it when we did. We should acquire in the Appalachian and White mountain regions all the forest lands that it is possible to acquire for the use of the nation. These lands because they form a national asset are as emphatically national as the rivers which they feed and which flow through so many states before they reach the ocean.

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