

FORESTRY. The American Forestry Association will hold an important meeting in Omaha on Friday and Saturday, September 9 and 10. This meeting is held in accordance with a vote of the association at its meeting held in Nashville a year ago and it was contemplated at that time that this meeting should be largely devoted to topics relating to the West; it has, also, been arranged that a number of Western men of many years' experience in the West shall be placed upon the program so that the "Great Treeless District" may have a thorough representation.

Some of the topics that will be treated are as follows:

Where Does Our Timber Come From?
Wind Break—Its Value and Form.

Conifers on the Plain.

The Catalpa in Plantations.

The Extension of Native Forest Growth in the Plains.

How Does Forest Growth Affect Climate?

The Forest Botany of Nebraska, Economically Considered.

Arbor Day and its Economic Significance.

Some of the well-known persons who will take part in the meeting by presenting papers are Dr. George L. Miller, Hon. R. W. Furnas, E. F. Stephens, C. A. Keffer, C. L. Watrous, F. S. Phoenix, Henry Michelson, S. M. Emery, George Van Houten, C. S. Harrison, Prof. Charles E. Bessey, B. E. Fernow, Prof. Lawrence Bruner and George E. Kesser.

The exact topic assigned to each speaker will be announced a little later but, in the meantime, it may be understood that it is proposed to have a thoroughly profitable program, made up from topics which will have the most interest to those who are likely to be in attendance. The low rates on the railroads at this time will make it possible for many to attend this meeting who could, perhaps, not otherwise come. The exact place of meeting in Omaha will be announced in due season.

Persons interested, or desirous of any further information, are cordially invited to correspond with F. W. Taylor, Superintendent of Agriculture and Horticulture, Trans-Mississippi Exposition, Omaha.

The officers of the association are: Hon. Francis H. Appleton, president, Boston, and George P. Whittlesey, recording secretary and treasurer, Washington.

When any human being ceases to learn it is time to die.

The present is undervalued and the past and future overvalued by most men and women.

The crops in Nebraska for 1898 are estimated by The Daily Omaha Bee of Tuesday, August 23.

The Bee shows the wheat yield of Nebraska for 1898 to be twenty-six millions;

oats, fifty-three millions; rye, between two and three millions of bushels.

The Bee figures on the coming crop of corn are discouraging. It will be not more than three-quarters of the usual yield per acre, and some say only two-thirds and still others only half a crop.

CURRENT COMMENT.

Conversation as a Fine Art.

A brilliant young Lochinvar in the shape of a woman professor of the art of conversation has come out of the west (in this instance she hails from Denver) to teach the young women of New York how to talk. She professes to have studied her art in the most polished European circles. With new world energy and originality, combined with old world culture, she has made a descent on the crude girls of Manhattan to gild their intellects with the highest of social accomplishments, while she gilds her own pocket withal in the operation. Her pluck is admirable, and it is to be hoped that she will make a financial success in her novel business, for there would seem to be ample field for its use. But we fear she proceeds on an unsound premise. The art of charming conversation is born in the individual and cannot be taught. It is a matter of tact and temperament and sympathy even more than of intellectual culture and vivacity. The most brilliant talkers are not always adepts in the art of agreeable conversation. To evoke from others their best, to put them at their ease and smooth away all sense of friction, to mingle with the stream of talk unobtrusively, as oil does with the dressing of a salad, blending and perfecting diverse elements—this it is to know conversation as a fine art. All the teaching in the world will not bestow it. A simple country girl may possess it. The most brilliant woman of society may lack its suave delightsomeness. If the equipment exists by nature, the higher the culture and intellect the more charming the art. Without the other essential gifts mere culture, wit and knowledge amount only to the beating of tomtoms, a pyrotechnic display of vanity. To converse delightfully is to be intent on making others talk well, no less than the personal achievement of display.

The Royal Geographical society has for a long time refused the persistent attempt made to have it father new schemes of antarctic exploration. But Sir George Newnes, founder of a number of successful periodicals, has taken up the rejected burden and given £50,000 to capitalize an expedition. It is proposed to exercise the tactics of Nansen in taking advantage of the drift of

the polar current. And a boat the exact model of the Fram will be used for the purpose. The head of the expedition will be a Norwegian naturalized in England, Carsten Egeburg Borchgrevink, who is a member of the Geographical society, an intimate friend of Nansen and an enthusiast in polar exploration, in which he has had some experience. The party, it is believed, will be gone at least two years. What end of science not already secured by north polar adventure can be achieved except the advancement of purely geographical knowledge it is difficult to see.

The latest decision of the naval board as to what should be recommended to congress at the forthcoming session is in line with the lessons of the war. The conviction is not that we should have the biggest navy in the world, but the very best warships which can be built. The factor of speed has impressed itself on experts as a superlative need in the most effective work. The new programme proposes three battleships of between 13,000 and 14,000 tons displacement and not less than 19 knots of speed. These would greatly surpass any battleships now afloat. For armored cruisers three are to be recommended of about 12,000 tons and of 24 knots speed, if possible, but not less than 22. Besides these a number of protected cruisers superior in class to Admiral Dewey's Olympia and several 2,500 ton cruisers are deemed important. It is in the line of increased speed that naval improvement now recognizes the most need.

A Misapprehension.

Many and grateful are the tributes paid to this country for the heroic stuff which enters into the composition of her volunteers. Among others is a glowing compliment from the London Daily Chronicle, involving, however, a slight misconception, which may be corrected. Quoth The Chronicle after enumerating the results of the war and specially emphasizing the results of the Santiago victory:

"Above all, they have improvised the army with which they did this part of the work. Not bad for the interval between rent day and rent day! The manner of this improvisation is a striking vindication in some ways of the American system. Most of the troops who swarmed up the slopes at Santiago and captured intrenched positions held by seasoned troops and swept by artillery were mere untrained butchers, bakers and candlestick makers at the beginning of the war."

All this is very nice and warms the cockles of the American heart. But it is based on a misconception. The excellence of our militia and volunteer system is that it draws into its service all classes, not merely that of the "butcher and baker and candlestick maker" al-