

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.

Notwithstanding the declarations of the leading populists, THE CONSERVATIVE would gladly welcome into Nebraska a couple of dozen healthy and enterprising millionaires who would develop an artesian well system for the whole state and thus remove all of its agriculture and horticulture from their dependence upon rainfall and from the danger of drouths. Millionaires—men who have the power of capital, cash, money, dollars—are needed in Nebraska and will be cordially received by intelligent citizens everywhere.

CURRENT COMMENT.

The Literary Impulse.

The desire to write is one of the mental diseases which numerous young men and women of good intelligence and education are certain to pass through in their ambition to attain an ideal a little higher than the immediate status. In spite of the experience of others, who have tried and failed, hope whispers to each aspirant of an exceptional career. The multiplication of newspapers of course offers a seeming gateway whereby success is made easier. In a measure the promise is not fallacious. Journalism indeed gives opportunity to many for the beginning of a career which otherwise would be attended with vastly more difficulty. For men and women of great talent and industry it has considerable rewards of money and reputation in store. But these, too, are only the exceptions, for journalism, like other intellectual professions, is greatly overcrowded. Every large city has scores of able and experienced men whose pens find only scanty and casual employment.

If this is the case in journalism, the conditions of which present the minor difficulty, the situation is still more intractable in the higher walks of literature, where the outlet is far more restricted, the tests of excellence in the exercise of the purely literary gift more rigid. It can be truthfully said that almost any other profession offers better ultimate hope of achievement and happiness than does the medium of letters. Even those who meet with creditable success are contented with returns which a relative rank in half a dozen other pursuits involving parallel ability and the same industry would greatly overstep. The most discouraging fact, too, in the writing profession is that even distinguished men are obliged to depend for the more certain substance of their income on the work for which they care least, but for which there is a larger market demand. In a recently published letter of Robert Southey, a writer of eminent talent and accomplishments if not of genius, there is a melancholy confession. In discussing the sources of his income he says, "Perhaps the average may be fair at last, but it is injurious as well as ridiculous that I shall derive my main support from what other persons might do as well and what might never be done at all, while for works of permanent value and great labor, for which peculiar knowledge, peculiar talents and peculiar industry are required, the profit I obtain would scarcely exceed and perhaps not amount to the expenses of the documents."

The way of the writer who has no other resources than his pen is for the most part a "via dolorosa." The wise

advice is always, "Don't." It is the inexorable law of nature that innumerable experiments and struggles are necessary for the emergence of the few. To be one of that few seems sufficient lure to risk remaining one of the unsuccessful many. So it will probably be till the end of time. It is the thrift of destiny.

The Mississippi Problem.

For half a century the riverine monster which cleaves through the heart of our country has baffled all attempt to permanently bridle its excesses. It made its great valley, and it will dominate it, let human opposition be what it may. The actual cost which its ravages of flood have made has been estimated to be equivalent to not less than five times our present national debt. The Mississippi river commission, made up of our ablest engineers, both military and civil, have spent \$20,000,000 within the last twoscore years devising means to control the flood, but the problem stands very much the same, always threatening, always demanding its dues. Captain Eads, it is true, solved one phase of the question with partial success in opening an outlet to the sea by his system of jetties. This simple but ingenious plan involves a self scouring channel, which so far has worked admirably. But without an equally effective embankment system, by which the flood in its persistent efforts to encroach on its limits can be restrained, the whole question remains a dreadful threat.

It is not merely at the times of its annual spring floods when the imprisoned snow and ice of half a continent swell its volume that the mischief is portentous. The cities of the lower valley are always in peril. Crawfish and various gnawing creatures of land and water, the swarming allies of the river monster, are perpetually undermining the strength of the levees. These often break with scarcely a moment's warning, and thousands of acres are submerged. Incessant vigilance is the price of safety. New Orleans, the great commercial emporium of the river, the creation of the river, the slave of the river, is today in a state of keen anxiety over the latest caprice of the flood which rolls by its wharves. The river is devouring the land at Carrollton, at Algiers and the extreme southern part of the city, where the riparian property is of great value. There seems to be great division of opinion as to what can be done to effectively meet the danger. The city and state engineers are at odds as to the proper division of their work. The money of the levee commission is said to be at its lowest ebb. The situation is an alarming one, and there seems to be no outcome except a great devastation of valuable property. New Orleans, to be sure, has passed through such crises before, but each fresh one threatens to surpass its predecessors in