

rotation of timber can be obtained. If the white oak tie is desired, the growth would not be attained under forty-five years.

The financial aspect of the undertaking is not at all unsatisfactory. A plantation of catalpas, in Kansas, in seven years began to reimburse the owner by thinning, the trees having attained a height of from 18 to 20 feet, and making two fence posts each, and the experience has been duplicated in many places. No one will assert that first-class ties will be procured fifteen years hence at present prices. If the cost per tie in 1915 be placed at 75 cents, a very low estimate, the value of an acre of ties, cultivated as suggested, will be \$2,100, with a life for the timber grown four times that of the best white oak. The land purchased will still be the property of the railway, but deduct its cost, say \$50 per acre, and \$2,050 remains as the result of the investment, or \$135 per acre per year as the value of the crop. What farmer can point to a yield so satisfactory? The expense will have been so slight that the value of the thinnings will be found sufficient to more than pay for the attention required. But it may be urged that fifteen years is a long way off, and that we should take "no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The advice may be good philosophy, but it is very indifferent practice in railroad affairs, and is not observed by any rational official.

The cultivation of forests would not be unattended with expense and supervision; it is a kind of agriculture and not merely the planting of seeds or plants; they must be cultivated and cared for systematically and intelligently until they are sufficiently large to shade out grass and weeds, until which time grass and weeds must be destroyed; they must also have protection against fire and live stock, and be managed as an investment. In proportion to the extent of the undertaking, it would require a forester who should have absolute control of the forestry; section men should be instructed by him how to protect the growing timber, not as a part of their regular work, but in the manner they now care for the telegraph line, in emergencies, until the lineman arrives. Such service would not be expensive, and the forester should be required to keep detailed records of the successes and failures of his department for future guidance.

The national government is ready to extend a helping hand to any railroad which desires it. The division of forestry of the department of Agriculture will give practical assistance to tree-planters in the selection of the right tree to plant, and in planting them rightly. The division will make examination of the ground proposed as a for-

est, prepare a plan for planting and caring for a plantation, which will best promote and increase the present value and usefulness of the land to the owner, and develop and perpetuate a plantation of forest trees upon it. Upon the completion and acceptance of the plan by the owner, the division will supervise the execution thereof, so far as may be necessary. If the area does not exceed five acres no charge will be made for services, but the division will not participate in the expense of planting and caring for a plantation except to defray the salary and expenses of its representative. If the area exceeds five acres a preliminary visit of inspection, if required, will be wholly at the expense of the division. If a plan is made and accepted, the owner must pay the expenses of the division officials according to a printed schedule of cost of services, which will always determine the amount of the anticipated expenditures. The department in every instance reserves the right to publish and distribute the plan for the information of others.

The general government has sounded the alarm, and as loyal citizens we should respect the warning. The progressive ideas which characterize railroad officials should cause them to be zealous advocates of a subject which concerns them so intimately and to support the state and national regulations respecting forestry. There is no way in which the present vague and imperfect knowledge of the subject can be changed into an active earnest interest in forestry than by an accurate acquaintance and agitation of the question. If railroad men become aroused to the importance of forestry, not only to the service but to the public of which they are a part, and with whom they must suffer any general condition, a sentiment will be awakened which will work wonders and cause future generations to rise and bless us.—J. Hope Sutor, in *Railway Age*.

ALEXANDER MAJORS.

Old Otoe county settlers will be pleased with this pen picture of an old friend, drawn by a master hand. Mr. Majors was a resident of Nebraska City for nearly ten years.

"Ah, the old days! How fast they are fled—and how far! Was California ever at the ends of the earth? Was there really a paleozoic time when men walked a continent's width to get to it; and a letter home cost as much postage as two hundred and fifty letters require now; and the Santa Fe trail was the overland line, with prairie schooners for Pullmans; a day of bullwhackers and the pony express? Aye there was—so long ago that doubtless not forty per cent. of the easy people who dwell in California now could give any intelligible account of what all things were and meant. How many of us are aware

of Alexander Majors, who died the other day at the mild age of 86? Yet this old man, superseded and poor, ran the first mail route and the first freight line across our continent. His caravans dotted the great plains, his headlong riders carried across a 2,000 mile desert the fastest mail the world has ever seen, at \$5 the half-ounce letter. Forty thousand oxen were locomotives to his Merchants' Express. Five thousand men were in his employ. They were the link between the hundred thousand rovers and the old folks at home. And now? Why we sit in upholstery and are in Chicago in three days. And so is a two-cent letter. Maybe there is no royal road to learning; but California is made easy—even though many never learn anything when they get here. As for the pioneers, they are few now. They were of the size of men, and another of the larger of them is gone, now, where railroads shall never come—God rest him.—Charles F. Lummis, in the *Land of Sunshine*.

A BLAINE IRISHMAN.

In commenting upon the acquisition of the Hon.

Patrick Egan, by the Bryanarchists, the *New York Evening Post* says:

"The last of the 'Blaine Irishmen' has gone over to Bryan, without even a parting tear from the *Tribune*. Patrick Ford and the Hon. Patrick Egan simply cannot resist the 'superb' democratic platform, and have cast in their lot with the Nebraska reviler of the hated Saxon. They are perfectly consistent. It is the republican party that has changed, not they. When they and their kind were coddled and honored by the republicans in 1884 and 1888, the *Tribune* and the other party oracles were accusing Cleveland and the democrats of being tools of England, just as Bryan now taunts McKinley with his 'ill-concealed' British alliance. In other words, the Blaine Irishmen went then, as they go now, with the loudest threats and the most voluble promises of a quarrel. Blaine boasted of being able to make good, by these Irish recruits, the defection of conscience republicans who could not stomach his candidacy. Now they have gone over to a demagogue who can out-clare even Blaine, and in their places the republican party is welcoming men like Mr. Fairchild, whom it attacked for English truckling. It is a pretty complete change of partners; and in the disgust which the republicans now feel for their late allies, they have a good measure of their own disgrace in ever having stooped to base arts to win such support."

THANKS.

The enemies THE CONSERVATIVE has made are its chief pride. They as a rule pay no taxes. They establish industries never. They improve nowhere. They are fused with calamity, amalgamated with disaster.