

A pioneer who **TREE PLANTING.** came upon the treeless plains of Nebraska in 1854 takes inexpressible satisfaction in the fact that he has witnessed the enchantry of transforming prairies into groves and orchards. It is now a great effort to revive the mental image of desolation and treelessness which reached from the River to the Mountains. It is almost impossible to recall the sombre pictures of the first cabins on these prairies, unprotected from the blasts of winter and unshaded from the withering sun of summer by a single tree. It is a sincere solace to the editor of *THE CONSERVATIVE* to have aided in the beneficent work of planting trees in Nebraska and throughout the United States. The following literature relative to Arbor Day is therefore republished with a personal pride and gratification which even enemies may possibly pardon:

"What is now known almost throughout the civilized world as 'Arbor Day,' originated in Nebraska. At an annual meeting of the Nebraska State

Board of Agriculture, held in the city of Lincoln, Jan. 4, 1872, J. Sterling Morton of Arbor Lodge, introduced the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted, after some little debate as to the name, some present contending for the term 'Sylvan' instead of 'Arbor.'

'Resolved, That Wednesday, the 10th day of April, 1872, be and the same is hereby especially set apart and consecrated for tree planting in the state of Nebraska, and the State Board of Agriculture hereby name it Arbor Day; and, to urge upon the people of the state the vital importance of tree planting, hereby offer a special premium of one hundred dollars to the agricultural society of that county in Nebraska which shall, upon that day, plant properly the largest number of trees; and a farm library of twenty-five dollars' worth of books to that person who, on that day, shall plant properly in Nebraska the greatest number of trees.'

"Mr. J. T. Allan offered the following resolution, which was also adopted unanimously:

'Resolved, That the newspapers of the state be requested by the State Board of Agriculture to keep the resolution in regard to the anniversary day for tree planting standing in their columns until April 10th next, and to call especial attention of the people to the importance of the matter from time to time.'

"The newspapers of the state were generous, and kept Arbor Day well before the people. The result was that over a million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day, April 10th, 1872. The day was again observed

in 1873 with increased interest and results."

DEERFOOT FARM, SOUTHBOROUGH,  
March 25, 1888.

Dear Sir—I thank you for the opportunity you so kindly offer me of uniting my thanks with those of others to Mr. Morton on the 22d of April. I heartily wish all our newspapers could be as usefully employed on that day.

Our Teutonic ancestors, if they did not worship trees, at least held certain species of them sacred, and made votive offerings to them on certain days of the year. In this vegetable hagiology the oak and the beech held the first places, for the frugal reason, perhaps, that their mast furnished a gratuitous food for swine, the chief wealth, one may assume, of these dwellers in the primeval forest. If the Aryan races migrated westward from Asia, they probably brought this cult with them, for there, also trees are looked upon with religious veneration. The Greeks, in this, as in other things, had a more imaginative faith, and associated the lives of superhuman, though not immortal, things with those of trees.

I willingly confess so great a partiality for trees as tempts me to respect a man in exact proportion to his respect for them. He cannot be wholly bad who has a sympathy with what is so innocent and so beautiful. But quite apart from any sentimental consideration, the influence of trees upon climate and rainfall gives to the planting of trees, and to the protection of them where nature has already planted them, a national importance. Our wicked wastefulness and contempt for the teaching of science in this matter will most surely be avenged on our descendants. Nature may not instantly rebuke, but she never forgives the breach of her laws.

I am glad therefore, to join in this tribute of friendly gratitude to the inventor of Arbor Day. I think that no man does anything more visibly useful to posterity than he who plants a tree. I should answer the cynic's question, "What has posterity done for me that I should do anything for it?" by saying that it is all the pleasanter to do something for those who can do nothing for us.

Marco Polo relates that the great Kublai Khan planted trees the more willingly because "his astrologers and diviners told him that they who planted trees lived long." Let me hope that this may prove true in the case of Mr. Morton. Faithfully yours,

J. R. LOWELL.

WEST NEW BRIGHTON,  
STATEN ISLAND, N. Y., March 21.

DEAR SIR—I am very glad to join in grateful congratulations to the author of the suggestion which has resulted in so beautiful and serviceable an observance as Arbor Day. Whatever makes a village or town more attractive pro-

notes that local pride and public spirit which are the vital and conservative forces of a great republic; and if the planter of one shade tree is a public benefactor, what shall we say of him who stimulates the planting of whole groves and forests? Truly yours,

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

175 W. 58TH ST., NEW YORK,  
March 26, 1888.

DEAR SIR—I gladly join those who honor Mr. Morton for his zeal in promoting the planting of forest trees. The man who does that deserves well of his country.

I am, dear sir, very truly yours,  
C. SCHURZ.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 23, 1888.

DEAR SIR—The reformer in this world, when he begins his work is called a crank, when he has succeeded in bringing some of the more intelligent people to think and see with him, he is called an enthusiast, and when the results of his labors begin to show themselves he is called a hero and is worshiped. And well he ought to be! For he has had not only the right idea, but he has had the courage of a hero to stand by his convictions, be it in the wide field of political or national development, be it in the narrower field of economic or communal development.

The man who starts a new idea deserves credit first, the man who puts the idea into practice next, and the man who gains general recognition of its value next. I believe the credit belongs in all these phases to J. Sterling Morton for the idea of Arbor Day, and I gladly pay my tribute to the man who started, put into practice, and promulgated the new idea, which has now become generally recognized as one of the important educational means of changing a race of forest destroyers into a race of forest planters.

As an educational feature, to stimulate interest in tree culture, Arbor Day is now recognized by twenty-eight states; enough to make its observance as a national festival possible and desirable. As a means to produce actual quantitative tree planting—in the number of trees planted on that one day—I believe that Nebraska still stands ahead of all other states, thanks to the fostering care which has been bestowed by the agricultural and horticultural societies and public-spirited men upon keeping the interest in the day unflagging.

And while a comparison of the enormous yearly drain upon our forest resources—equaling probably not less than twice the amount of possible yearly wood-growth on our present forest area—with the amount of present tree planting does not lend strength to the hope that by such tree planting as may be done in one day, an appreciable amount of what has been used during the year is replaced, yet the observance of Arbor Day is aiding in bringing about a realization