

ARBORICULTURE.

Editor of The Conservative:

I have been much interested in your articles in reference to the destruction of timber. From study, travel and observation, I know of no question so important to the people of the United States as the preservation of their timber supply. While in humid regions the precipitation will create quite a rapid growth of timber, in the semi-humid or arid sections, the growth of timber is always proportionately slow, where the method of conveying food for growth is in any manner lacking.

Increase.

Our first two tiers of countries from the Missouri river show an increase of timber above what existed there thirty-five years ago, but as we proceed westward it is doubtful if the amount of timber in our state exceeds the wild or natural amount, which could have been found growing in the valleys and along the water courses and in the canons prior to the date mentioned. In western central and western Nebraska, with the exception of the river valleys, the amount now growing in no manner can compare with the natural supply once growing on the islands and borders of the Platte and along the Loup, Niobrara and Republican and its tributaries.

Vital.

Scientific timber culture has never yet been attempted, yet this is one of the most vital questions that can be presented to the people of the state. In fact there is no question before the people of our country which excels this one in importance. Referring to history, we learn that in proportion to the decrease in their supply of natural timber, nations have deteriorated, declined and, in some cases, become extinct. Our western states of the mountain region will yet suffer so seriously that their principal industry, mining, will become so costly through the lack of sufficient cheap timber with which to pillar and case their mines, that this industry will be unable to be successfully followed. This has already occurred in Nevada, and Colorado is threatened with the same peril.

Extinct.

Certain natural laws teach us that where destruction occurs without replacement, that ultimately extinction takes place. That the humidity of the west is not increasing is one of the emphasized facts which the United States Weather Bureau has observed. That this detrimental condition exists and continues, is owing I think, largely to the extinction of our natural timber supply.

Water.

Prior to 1870, there was a continuous stream of water coming down the South Platte river from Colorado. The volume of water surging down the North Platte was much greater than at the present time. On the Rio Grande the same conditions existed, and even up to late in the summer a large supply of water formerly passed by El Paso on the Mexican border. The same condition of affairs is to be found all over the mountains of the west. This has been caused by the

rapid destruction of timber, which once sheltered and protected the winter snow from the rays of the sun and thereby maintained the steadiness of the supply of water.

Baneful Neglect.

Any further neglect of this important question is perilous, for already the supply of water coming down the North Platte, opposite this point, shows a great lessening, to the extent that there is not now sufficient water for the canals already constructed. Showing that preceding, and leading, the question of irrigation, comes the question of a protective timber supply

for the winter snows, which furnish the irrigable waters. Reservoir constructions will afford some help, but the protection and scientific culture of timber will be of more importance, while the prospective legislation of the national councils may initiate the reservoir movement. We are all aware that government work is slow, and as an observer, I can see where but little will be done that will materially affect the prevailing conditions within the next fifty years, unless it is associated with a re-forestation movement, annually carried forward.

Respectfully yours,
I. A. FORT.

North Platte, Neb., Jan. 14, '02.

Incorporated 1849.

FIFTY-FOURTH ANNUAL STATEMENT

....OF THE....

SPRINGFIELD FIRE AND MARINE INSURANCE CO.

OF SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

JANUARY 1, 1902.

Cash Capital, all paid up.....	\$2,000,000.00
Re-Insurance Reserve.....	2,163,584.45
Reserved for all Unsettled Claims.....	448,107.70
*Net Surplus.....	1,287,195.28
Gross Assets	\$5,898,887.43

Surplus to Policy-Holders, January 1, 1902, \$3,287,195.28.

A. W. DAMON, PRESIDENT. W. J. MACKAY, SECRETARY.

WESTERN DEPARTMENT:

171 LA SALLE STREET, CHICAGO, ILL.

A. J. HARDING, MGR. A. F. DEAN, ASST. MGR.

N. S. HARDING, STATE AGENT, NEBRASKA CITY, NEB.

*\$500,000.00 Surplus capitalized July 1, 1901.