

A Rational and Hopeful View of a World Without Forests

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Those who are worrying over the fate of humanity when wasteful generations of the present day have destroyed our forests may find some relief in the outlook visualized for future generations by Research Engineer Weiss, who is not alarmed in the least, but rather fancies a pleasant existence with more substantial substitutes. The following article contains the chief points on the subject, embodied in a report by Weiss, read before a meeting of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers which was held early this month at Madison, Wisconsin.

— Editor.

A NEW ERA in forestry is upon us.

With the advance in civilization dependence upon forests has become appreciably less. Only in the rural districts is wood now used to any extent for fuel.

In the cities, the burning of wood has become a luxury, a sort of ornament for the home, coal and oil having long since replaced it. Likewise, man has ceased to depend upon the forests for his supply of meat, and the pursuit of game is now almost exclusively a sporting proposition.

A similar transformation is rapidly occurring in regard to the forests as a source of building material. Each year we are becoming less and less dependent upon wood for the construction of our homes.

Both the per capita and total consumption of lumber are rapidly declining, and for the more modern types of buildings, wood has been almost completely supplanted by other materials. In fact, in several of our cities we even have legislated against the use of wood, and such legislation is now spreading to the smaller communities.

Hence the decreased use of wood for structural purposes cannot be attributed entirely to the decreasing supply, but is due in a large measure to the fact that wood does not possess those qualities which our more advanced civilization demands.

It lacks the strenght, or the resistance to fire, or the permanency now required. There is no doubt but that these inherent defects of wood, coupled with its growing scarcity and increasing cost, are hastening the day when wood, as a structural material, will be used only for certain special requirements.

Anyone who has studied this situation with an unbiased mind, will come to this conclusion. Hence the substitution of other materials for wood is not lowering, but on the contrary is elevating, the standards of our construction.

In the vast majority of cases, wood is used as a building material, not because it is the best material available, but because it is the cheapest. So long as we exploit our virgin forest resources, wood will remain a comparatively cheap commodity, but when we are forced to cut timber from forests that we have grown, then wood will become a much more expensive commodity than it is today.

The extent to which it is grown and the price to which it goes will depend upon the ability of wood to compete with other products in the world's commerce.

As a nation, we have been reckless in the treatment of our forest areas, but this is because those areas are of so little value that few of us care to bother

with them. Thousands of cutover forest acres every year are returned to the counties and states, because of default of taxes.

In other words, the owners consider they are not worth their tax burden. Even on the lands which contain fine virgin forests, we market less than forty per cent of the wood on such lands.

It must not be concluded, however, that we are no longer dependent upon our forests, or that our forests will cease to remain an important factor in our life. While it is true that our use of wood as a construction material is on the decline, nevertheless, our consumption of it for other purposes is on the increase.

This is particularly true of the manufacture of pulp and paper and allied products. Here the consumption is increasing every year and undoubtedly will continue to do so.

HEALTH AND BEAUTY

Anon.

I SAY HEALTH AND BEAUTY, because if we do not have both, we have neither. All may not agree with me. Some may say that we can be healthy without being beautiful, but that is not true from my standpoint. Did you ever see a healthy, hearty, rosy-cheeked person, full of life, who did not enjoy nature and all her beauties? And did you ever see such a person (if you are not such a one yourself), that you did not say, either to yourself or aloud, "How I wish I were like her." Would you wish this if you did not admire her? She has a distinctive charm and beauty. You can be like her! The trouble with most of us — in this day and age of the automobile, street cars on every hand, taxie for a small sum, if our own car is out of commission — is that we never think of walking and drawing deeply into our lungs the pure fresh air that God has given us to breathe. We do not appreciate this air nearly so much as we would if compelled to pay for it. Walking in the morning is one of the most beneficial exercises we can take. Drink plenty of water during the day — eleven glassess or more are none too many — walk and breathe deeply and you will be healthy and beautiful. Walk to work in the morning and see how much better you feel during the day, how much more color you have in your cheeks and how much easier your work will be during that day. I know a girl who walks several miles to work every morning. Two or three mornings after she started walking, a friend in passing would ask her to ride. Now she walks several blocks out of her way just to avoid this friend and her car. Get this habit. It will keep you healthy and beautiful and if you are loosing health and beauty, try this simple remedy and watch the restoration of these wonderful assets of life.

HISTORY OF THE SAFETY PIN

(Kansas City Star)

A historian of invention tells us that to the wails of a long-suffering infant we owe the boon of the safety pin. Here is the story: A little boy named Harrison, an English blacksmith's son, had to look after his baby brother. The baby often cried, and its tears were usually traced to pin punctures. The boy nurse tried a long time to bend the pins in such a form that they could be used with safety to his brother's flesh. In this he failed; but his father, the blacksmith, perceiving the utility of the idea that the lad had been at work on, took it up on his own account and eventually turned out the safety pin that is in use today all over the world.

Man is like a tack — useful if he has a good head on him and is pointed in the right direction, but even though he is driven, he can go only as far as his head will let him.