

THE OBSERVER

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ON TIMBER FIRE LOSSES.

While it is difficult to secure accurate data on the amount of damage done annually by forest fires, the last report of the division throws interesting light upon the matter through numerous tables estimating the approximate losses in various parts of the country. This report also contains historical data showing that forest fires have been occurring ever since there were forests, fire-scarred trees in California dating back to 1245, 1441, 1580, and 1797, and traces of forest fires in Colorado going as far back as 1676.

The annual fire loss in the United States is approximately about \$25,000,000 in value of trees, with many millions more lost in stock, crops, buildings, with at least 70 human lives. The loss runs much higher when the destruction of young trees' growth is taken into account, as well as losses incurred by interruption of business and depreciation of property.

According to the report, lightning is responsible for about 17.5 per cent of forest fires, with railroads, campers, brush burning, incendiary and sawmills classed as contributory causes. Even spontaneous combustion is credited with having some share of responsibility in causing forest fires.

That the recorded "dark days" in history have been caused by forest fires, instead of having any dire significance, is another fact brought out in the division of forestry report. The dark day of 1780, known as

"Black Friday," and dark days of 1819, 1881, 1894 and 1903 are all shown to have been caused by the smoke-laden air from forest fires.

That the most serious loss from forest fires is the timber destruction is shown, finally, by an estimate that the forest area, which is two-fifths of the entire land area of the United States, is being seriously depleted by forest fires. Three-fourths of the original standing timber has been culled or cut, and the present rate of destruction is three times that of the growth.

"At present," says the report, "the standing timber is about 2,800 billion board feet. The annual cut is about 160 billion board feet, and the loss from fire, covering 10,000,000 acres, varies according to whether the greater areas are virgin forest cut lands or re-burns. We are prodigal of our heritage, both principal and interest. We cut each year 3 1/2 per cent of the stand and burn almost all, if not all, of the growth."

At this rate, it will not be long before the timber growth in the country will be entirely gone.

PLENTY TO READ.

With 500 new volumes as the autumn contribution to book lore, it is very evident that the author of the book of Proverbs put it rightly when he said: "Of the making of books there is no end."

It is a much mooted question as to how much of the yearly literary output is adding anything of value to the world's thought. Unquestionably the bulk of reading matter which is put out is of the frothy kind which is purely transitory, and which, in point of influence, is scarcely worth the paper it is printed on.

At the same time, it is perfectly evident that the vast majority of readers demand light, entertaining reading, and that they are growing more and more clamorous for reading matter which is strictly up-to-date.

Love of the classics is being revived to a gratifying extent among

discriminating readers. This is especially evident from the widespread interest in this country, and the genuine tributes paid to the works of this master of his craft. At the same time it must not be forgotten that here is, in this country especially, a big percentage of toilers who are too tired at night to read ponderous tomes, and want something light and pleasing in the way of entertainment. These readers do not read to weigh and consider, but to be amused.

The 500 books just added to the bookshelves are largely of the entertaining class. These authors, a good many of them, are students who have found it possible to deal with weighty topics in an interesting manner. Magazines have proved this in recent years by presenting a good many topics, formerly relegated to very ponderous tomes, by skillfully treating these subjects in a light conversational way pleasing to readers of all classes.

Many a deep thought has been disguised in a popular novel which is not infrequently classed among the "best sellers."

Of course we did not need 500 new books this fall, but since they are here, let us exercise critical discrimination in choosing which ones we read. Wholesale condemnation of book reading is not only unwise, but shows lack of discernment as to the great mental awakening going on in this country. The fact that people are reading anything at all is one of the most hopeful signs of the time.

Eighty-four a Pennsylvania town of 700 inhabitants, is declared to be the strongest democratic community in the entire country. No Republican candidate has ever made a respectable showing there. This town, which is situated in Washington county, was named in 1884, after Grover Cleveland's first victory, in honor of that event. Previous to that time it was called Fifty-six, because Buchanan was elected president in that year. A movement is now on foot among the residents to rename the place Nineteen Twelve, in celebration of the Wilson victory.

A vigorous nation or community gives evidence of its virile powers through action. Action is the secret of life. Football indicates that the spirit of action in La Grande is strong. Energy expended in the right channel wards off decay and stagnation.

An Easterner now declares that a safety razor is a dangerous weapon. He must have tried to strop the blade with one of those patented appliances.

One Chicago book store sold 5,000 Bibles in September. Probably somebody told the Chicago people that it was one of the latest publications out.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox says the majority of the men lie to their wives. It would seem as though Col. Lil Russell would be a better authority on this subject.

John D. says he is a progressive in church affairs. Then he is in favor of more than one oyster in each bowl of church social soup.

But the war in Turkey does not stop the manufacture of genuine imported Turkish cigarettes made in New York and Cincinnati.

325 SACKS OF BALD BARLEY at Conley warehouse for sale. See Frank Bridges, at Wade rooming house, La Grande. 11-28-12.

WITH THE BOXERS

George Carpenter, who recently lost a battle to Bill Papke, will meet Marcel Mareau in Paris Jan. 15.

Sammy Troit, the Cleveland lightweight, has announced his intention of invading Australia in the near future.

Promoter John J. Day, of Kenosha, Wis., is trying to stage a bout between Packey McFarland and Eddie Murphy, of Boston.

The followers of the boxing game in New York are anticipating a great clash when Eddie McGoorty and Mike Gibbons meet on Dec. 3.

It looks like a little more easy money for Johnny Kilbane when the champion meets Monte Attell in Cleveland on December 4.

George Memsic who is boxing under the name of Fred Corbett, has been making quite a clean-up of late among the boxers in the northwest.

The New Orleans promoters have cancelled the proposed Matty Baldwin-Joe Sherman bout as Baldwin intends to leave shortly for the Pacific coast.



Begin Your Xmas Shopping To-Day.



Only 21 Shopping Days till Christmas

Don't put off your shopping until the last few days before Christmas when you will find it inconvenient to make your selection among the hurrying crowds of Holiday shoppers.

By Beginning To-Day You Profit

by having larger stocks to select from and more time to consider the individual preferences of your friends.

You Can Please Everyone from Our Showing of Useful Gifts

The most appreciated of all gifts is always the one that finds some real use and all over our enormous stock is selected with a view of real usefulness in each gift.

We Can Wait On You Well the Day Before Christmas But We Can Wait On You Much Better To-Day

WEST'S THE QUALITY STORE

Resolution.

Be It Resolved, That the recorder of the city of La Grande be, and he is hereby authorized to give ten (10) days notice by publication in the La Grande Evening Observer and by posting notices thereof in three (3) public places in each ward of the city, of the general election to be held in said city and that the following officers are to be elected at said election:

- One mayor. One recorder. One treasurer. One chief of police. One councilman from the first ward. One councilman from the second ward. One councilman from the third ward. One councilman from the fourth ward.

Be It Further Resolved, That the polling places designated for said election, and the judges and clerks appointed to conduct said election are as follows:

- First ward: Polling place, court house; Judges, Don Turner, Hall Lane and W. N. Monroe. Clerks, Ed. Kammerer and W. A. Worstell. Second ward: Polling place, city building; Judges H. W. Stoner, Clay Ellsworth and O. F. Coolidge; Clerks, Geo. Lamoreaux and C. L. Mackey. Third ward: Polling place, 1907 3rd

Street; Judges, J. M. Hiltz, C. C. Pennington, W. D. Grandy; Clerks, Howard Davis and Will Hamilton.

Be It Further Resolved, That said election be held on Monday, the 5th day of December, 1912. Adopted by the council November 29th, 1912.



New Shipment of Swift's Premium Hams and Bacon Just In

CITY GROCERY AND BAKERY

Advertisement for skates: GET YOUR SKATES SHARPENED. The Dutch Pond is frozen. The River is freezing. And the big fun is on. LEIGHTON Sharpens Skates a little better than anyone else.

Advertisement for La Grande National Bank: We Now Have On Deposit \$800,000.00. We Now Have Loaned \$700,000.00. La Grande National Bank, La Grande, Oregon. Capital \$100,000.00. Surplus \$129,000.00. Resources \$1,110,000.00. President FRED J. HOLMES. Vice President F. L. MEYERS. Cashier EARL ZUNDEL. Asst. Cashier W. J. CURCH.



Advertisement for A.J. McLeod: The Wardrobe. Classy Suits And Overcoats Tailored to Measure \$20 to \$30. If you were in Paris or London and saw the crisp, dashing styles I have on display, you would not need any argument to persuade you to buy and you should not need any here. My goods do their own talking. A.J. McLeod, Prop. Fancy Cleaning and Pressing of Any Kind.