

## THE NORTHERN PACIFIC AND TREE PLANTING.

So much has been heard of the Northern Pacific during the last few months that some comment upon one of its operations which is out of the usual class may be of interest. A handbill before us, which recipients are requested to "please post in a conspicuous place," gives details of the company's plans "to encourage the planting of forest trees in groves, shelter belts or live windbreaks." "To settlers and land-owners tributary to its lines and within the generally recognized treeless region" the company offer as inducements free transportation of forest trees not over two years old and tree seeds and cuttings to all prairie stations; also free carriage on improved varieties of small fruits, settlers being cautioned against ordering apple trees from east or south of Minnesota, as such trees generally fail. The next inducement is in the form of trip-passes for settlers accomplishing the best results. Although the single-trip passes offered are not intrinsically valuable enough to incite much effort, the competitors will be working for themselves; that is the most substantial reward, and the railroad takes the part of encouragement and education. Its other inducement is the gratuitous distribution of printed practical information about tree planting, and "the superintendent of tree plantations will, at such times as his active duties will permit, visit all localities on the lines of the Northern Pacific railroad where the people manifest an interest in this work, and will aid them by his counsel and practical experience, imparting such information orally in a conversational way, or in lectures, as will enable them to avoid the mistakes so commonly made, and also endeavor to show the way to the best results with the least delay and the smallest and most judicious expenditure of time and money."

The lumber trade direct between Puget sound and adjacent territory and Australia has become important. The point, however, occurs whether it is not desirable to adopt measures for the preservation of our forest timber. The Pacific coast is being rapidly denuded of timber, and nothing is done to compensate for the loss by planting new forests. Climatic changes of very serious character may be anticipated from the wholesale destruction of growing timber. Millions of dollars worth of valuable timber are annually destroyed by fire on the Pacific coast. It should be somebody's business to prevent this waste of national property. Congress would do well to consider this matter at its next session.

The vanguard of American civilization, moving westward, has always borne the axe, and "Chop! chop!" has been the American motto. The Sage of Chappaqua set up a wayside direction, not yet obliterated, sending the young man west, and one of the things he "knew about farming" was to go out and chop down a tree. Any man of fair health can do that in an hour or so; but it occupies the silent forces of nature a goodly number of years to set the tree up again. Tree and savage held the soil, and extermination has been levied against both; now it is time the axe rested and trees were allowed to stand until substantial reasons are found for cutting them. The forest primeval must have defenders or live only in Acadia and hexameters. The murmuring pines

and the hemlocks of the Adirondack region are already largely destroyed by bark-cutters and charcoal-burners; the retention of the duty on wood (said to be "protective" of something), the increase of exports of "wood and manufactures of," and the penetration of the remotest wood wilds by the destroying railroad, work all together.

The census forestry charts are most suggestive. It is not merely the exhaustion of wood that we have to contemplate, but, as man can never conquer nature, the penalty follows in drouth and tornado, alternated by flood. The last great outbreak of the Ohio was generally ascribed to denudation of its upper banks, although the conclusion was met by reference to a great flood long before that denudation; still, that there is a close connection between baring the soil and the excesses of too little and too much water is not doubtful. The tornado, which has become so persistent a visitor that special insurance against it has been discussed, adds its lesson, and the most valuable part of the lesson is that prevention is better than insurance. The St. Paul *Pioneer Press* regards windstorms as preventable. It argues that they are formed in the unbroken prairie stretches of the far west, and cites the familiar little eddies that are seen catching up dirt at a street corner. Contact with adjacent walls breaks up such eddies, which might develop resistless energy if unimpeded; the rotary movement which is only like this in its beginning on Nebraska or Dakota plains has force enough to devastate villages after it has traveled hundreds of miles. The ordinary course of settlement will do much toward reducing the dangerous level of the plains by interposing buildings, growing crops and trees. But the slow course of settlement of the country should not be awaited—tree-planting should be systematically pursued. Lines of trees regularly disposed, at intervals of a quarter-mile to a half-mile, would be the most effective impediments to the development of the cyclone, and the prevalence of growing timber is also the best protection against the prolonged heating of one spot, which heating is itself the provocative of cyclonic currents.

This is the argument. It is certainly most reasonable, and the phrase "windbreaks" in the railroad company's poster is suggestive. Tornadoes, like fires, are governable in their time and place of origin by prevention; so are drouth and floods, in some degree, by conforming to natural laws. Tree felling must be exchanged for tree saving and tree planting. Forestry is beginning to be studied, and not too soon. In some parts of New England village improvement societies have been doing good work, as shown by an item, several years old now, that "the Williamstown Village Improvement Society finished its tree planting last week, and there is now a continuous row of over 450 elms for three miles from the village to the North Adams line." It is pleasant to find the newly completed Northern Pacific taking part in the reform with such prompt and wise forethought.—*Bradstreet's*.

It has been decided by Judge Greene, of Seattle, that navigation on Puget sound is not "inland navigation" in the sense of the U. S. statute limiting the liability of ship owners. The decision says: "Puget sound lies directly open to

the sea, offering deep water, bold shores, safe harborage and busy ports to the ships of all the world. A considerable portion of the local freighting is now, and probably always will be done in vessels navigating the sound as part of routes which take them to other states and foreign countries. Now, does the law say that home-keeping craft competing with them in the same waters, must do so under an onerous excess of liability? I think not. Law abhors inequality. Maritime law especially reaches out after uniformity. Puget sound is similarly related to the Pacific as Long Island sound is to the Atlantic. To the latter has been extended by the courts the same rule that obtains on the ocean. From the cases cited in argument and the reason of the matter, I gather this principle, that navigation of waters, which, whether from their vastness and depth or from their commodiousness and free connection with the great sea, are traversed in the ordinary course of traffic by vessels such as sail the ocean, is not inland navigation within the true sense of the statute."

Mrs. A. S. Lovejoy, whose enterprise in operating fruit canneries in Oregon City and Portland has done much for the fruit interests of this state, has established a factory in East Portland for the canning of fruit and vegetables. Next season 100 men will be employed. The new cannery at Walla Walla has made a large pack this season and will no doubt demonstrate the fact that we can produce such goods equal to the best imported from California or the east.

Near Mount Adams, in Washington territory, is a cave floored with ice. Instead of running laterally into the side of a mountain the entrance is a perpendicular shaft fifteen feet in diameter and the same in depth. The change of temperature upon entering the orifice is like dropping from a hot kitchen into a refrigerator. The sun shines upon a mound of snow in the opening without producing any effect. Inside the cave one can walk seventy-five feet in any direction upon a pavement of solid ice, the ceiling above being studded with the most beautiful stalactites.

The Puget Iron Works were incorporated recently at Seattle. The company proposes to engage in the manufacture of engines and machinery.

The best photos, all styles and sizes, are taken by Abell. Gallery west side of First street, between Morrison and Yamhill.

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