

THE HABITATION OF MAN

How Shall Posterity be Sheltered From the Wintry Blast?

(San Francisco Chronicle.)
 Astronomers tell us about dead worlds, huge masses of inert matter, still circling in their orbits with no other apparent purpose in the cosmos than to reflect such light and heat as they may upon inhabited planets and maintain the balance of the universe. A dead world, if such exist, must be like any other dead body—what remains after the exhaustion of its vital forces, by the action and reaction within its body of the substances and agencies by which life is maintained or which may constitute life itself, with gradually decreasing vigor as the years or the ages roll by until at length the feeble spark flickers and disappears and all is silent and cold. Whether there be such worlds we know not, but if any have come to that state it must be by the combustion and dissipation into the surrounding atmosphere, or submergence beneath waters, of those elements which are capable of those physiological processes which no man comprehends, but which constitute the phenomena of life.

Life is unquestionably a manifestation of power and the potential life on a planet must be in some measure commensurate with the potential energy which the planet is capable of developing and causing to do work. The potential energy of the earth has certainly been lessened during the existence of mankind by whatever amount of fuel has been consumed and probably by the submergence of elements of fertility. Whether ever the time shall come when this earth shall join a circling procession of dead worlds we cannot know. Matter; we know, is indestructible and the masses, whether dead or alive, are likely to hold their place, and it is hard to imagine a dead world while yet it enjoys the heat and light of the sun. Heat and light, however, are products of combustion, and combustion must cease with the exhaustion of combustible material.

A dead sun can be imagined. Lord Byron did imagine it. He wrote, as all who were schoolboys a generation ago well know:
 I had a dream which was not all a dream
 The bright sun was extinguished
 and the stars
 Did wander darkling in eternal space,
 Rayless and pathless, and the icy earth
 Swung blind and blackening in the moonlight air.

And then he goes on with a horrible vision of what would happen on a planet deprived of external heat and yet still inhabited and retaining combustible material within itself. It is a creepy subject best left to poets of morbid, even if prophetic, fancies. It does not concern this generation. As for us, let us eat, drink and be merry.

Such reflections, however, may serve to remind us that the increasing multitudes of mankind are pressing upon the stored provision which Nature has made for our maintenance and comfort, and that as the day has already come when within certain areas the inhabitants can consume in each year, save by borrowing from others, only what they can produce in that year, so in the nature of things the time must come when the world's current consumption cannot exceed the world's current production. And in no department of supply is the end of the stored product more plainly visible than in those virgin forests from which mankind has hitherto derived the material for his shelter and for the multifarious uses to which wood is put. The world's supply still seems to be abundant, but in many parts of the world the neighboring natural forests are exhausted, the reproduction insufficient and the cost of imported wood rapidly increasing.

It is already evident that, aside from the necessary restriction of the use of wood in crowded communities, in order to lessen the danger of fire, the day is coming and now is when in most parts of the United States it is worth while, even for detached buildings, to seriously consider materials other than wood for the structural members and exterior cover. The next generation will be considering devices for reducing the use of wood for interior finish to a minimum. This, of course, will not be with the object of making posterity more comfortable but from motives of economy on the part of those immediately concerned.

The forest reserve has issued a sheet showing the reported cuts of lumber for the years 1904, 1905 and 1906. The totals are not comparable for the reason that in 1904 returns were secured from 18,277 mills, in 1905 from 11,666 mills and

in 1906 from 21,077 mills. In each year there were doubtless great numbers of small mills from which no returns were received. The returns, therefore, even for 1906, are unquestionably too small, and yet they account for a cut, reduced to board measure, of, in round numbers, 37,500,000,000 feet, of which about 2,500,000,000 were exported. It is upon these figures that the forest service estimates that another generation will, at the present rate of consumption, see the end of the virgin forests of the United States. It is those figures which impress upon the officials who compile them the vital necessity of conserving the forests of the country and also of taking measures for preventing the remaining public forests from falling into the hands of what would unquestionably be consolidated into a private monopoly. This danger is imminent. According to the method adopted by the census bureau for estimating, the population of the United States in 1906 was 84,000,000, and the lumber accounted for, with a small allowance for what was missed, figures out an annual per capita consumption of 450 feet board measure. Applying that per capita consumption to a population of 120,000,000 would show an annual consumption of about 54,000,000,000 feet a third of a century hence. Where is that lumber to come from? Certainly not at that time from the virgin forests of the United States. Several independent and careful estimates of the stumpage now standing in the United States, outside of Alaska, place it around 2,000,000,000,000 feet. At our present rate of consumption and population that would last about 53 years, exclusive of what will grow during that time, but not only is our population increasing, but our per capita consumption of timber, which is now, as we have seen, about 450 feet per capita as against 60 feet per capita in Europe. And then there is the destruction by fire, so that roughly the forestry service places the limit, exclusive of growth, at about one-tenth of a century. As for the new growth, while it will produce timber for some purposes, it will not, in that time, produce any lumber whatever which we should now think fit for interior, or even exterior, finish. Of course, however, the per capita consumption will grow smaller as the cost of lumber increases, and we shall in due time be importing lumber from such countries as permit it to go out, which will not be all countries.

The American children who are now coming into the world will be those who will be confronted with the conditions which we have described—conditions which, but in a less degree, already exist in some parts of the world—and in a less degree because by that time the North American continent will have ceased to be a source from which they can draw. The world will not be timberless by that time, or ever while the blessed sun continues to send us his rays, but we are not too early but too late in beginning to conserve the forests which are left to us—of which about two-thirds are on the Pacific coast. And the sooner we begin to learn the art of building houses in rural districts of other materials than wood the better it will be for us and especially for our children. And as to the farmer who, when he goes, leaves for his son a house of concrete or even adobe, instead of decaying wood, his children will rise up and call him blessed.

COMPLETE CHAIN OF THE WIRELESS

Navy Will Soon Have Communication From Alaska to San Diego.

Vallejo, Sept. 19.—The Sitka wireless station in Alaska is nearly completed, owing to the hard and conscientious work of Contractor George Hanson and the efficient force sent with him for this purpose. There has been much rain in Alaska since the party began active operations, and the good showing made, notwithstanding the wet weather, speaks well for the equipment working party. With the completion of this station the navy will have a complete chain of wireless stations from San Diego north, making it possible to relay messages from place to place in order to reach some far-away place, such as Sitka, which would be impossible without the chain of wireless plants. Commander Gearing, the head of the equipment department at the yard, is soon to inspect the two stations in Oregon and Washington to make his quarterly inspection report.

The tug Pinta, now stationed at the coal depot at San Diego, is to be brought to the yard, all government

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property taken from her and offered for sale, as were the Marlon and Lawton, recently sold. It is not known just when this tug will be brought to the yard, but after she has been surveyed and all fittings taken from her, blank proposals will be submitted to prospective purchasers for the purpose of bidding on her. A recruiting party from the cruiser California is soon to start out for the purpose of getting recruits. It is the desire of Captain Phelps to get, so far possible, only California material for his fine new ship, and to this end the recruiting party has been authorized by the navy department. This vessel is now ready for sea, but her complement is far short of the authorized quota. She has not had her shakedown run yet, after which, it is thought, she will sail to the Asiatic station. A handsome silver set is soon to be presented to the ship in the name of the people of California. Governor Gillett having appointed various committees to solicit subscriptions for this purpose.

Notice.

Holders of Kinney & Waite contracts for lots in Plats B, C and Boulevard Park are hereby notified to call at First National Bank of Marshfield and settle all payments now due or suit will be commenced at once. F. B. Waite.

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WANT ADS

- Rates—5c line first time, 3c line each succeeding insertion — — — Try a Times want ad.
- FOR SALE—26 feet new power fishing boat. Apply Max Timmerman.
- FOR SALE—Pure bred Brown Leghorn cockrels. \$2.50 each. See Jack Flanagan.
- FOR RENT—Half a store with nice large windows. Call at Taylor Piano House.
- FOR RENT—Elegantly furnished housekeeping and bed rooms close in. Reasonable. Coos Bay Auction Company.
- FOR SALE—Fine business block, good income, cheap. Furnished rooming and boarding houses cheap; will rent. Coos Bay Auction Co.
- FOR SALE—Household goods, complete outfit. Call Times office.
- LADIES wishing sewing done call on Mrs. T. Nussel and Mrs. Jack Rice, Pine street.
- TO LAUNCHMEN—E. C. Pentland, at 229 G street, Eureka, Calif. has a good launch business for sale. Three persons can each draw \$150 a month and put money in the bank besides from the profits. Business will bear investigation, but time is short; \$2500 required to buy plant, worth \$7500. First payment \$2000, balance by the month. Write or wire at once.
- FOR SALE—Good fisherman's dory in good condition, ready for use. Apply Charles Johnson, Brewery saloon.
- WANTED—Buy at Lockhart-Parsons Drug Co. Apply at once.
- WANTED—Good building lot or cottage. Coos Bay Auction Co.
- LOST—Row boat from Marshfield dock, painted red. Reward for information leading to recovery, Julius Larsen.
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