

NECESSITY OF FIRE PREVENTION SHOWN

W. L. Bazeley, State Forester, Tells Need of State Aid for Woodlands

MUST BE DONE BY TAXATION

The importance of state action in forestry, especially in working out a rational system of taxation and in protecting forests from fire, was emphasized by Hon. William A. L. Bazeley, Commissioner of Conservation and State Forester for Massachusetts, in a paper read before Section K of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

"With proper fire protection, an insurable fire risk, rational taxation, and absorption by the state of the surplus idle and in the form of state forests, I believe that private forest owners will solve our Massachusetts forest problems," said Commissioner Bazeley. "Add to this, free advice as to forest management, low cost nursery stock, free of cost to towns for municipal forests and co-operation in marketing forest products, and I believe that you have an adequate forest program for a state with the conditions that exist in Massachusetts.

Efficiency Necessary

"The practice of forestry," said Commissioner Bazeley, "involves the curtailment of present revenue or makes present expenditure for the sake of future return, and this return may be fifty or sixty years hence. It follows, therefore, that only those situations which are stable, and which can look ahead to the future with a certainty of existence, can afford to practice forest management to the highest degree of perfection.

"It is the corporate community, whether the body be called nation, state or town, that has this necessary stability. The individual citizen lives but a short time, and wishes to secure the greatest satisfaction to himself during his life. He is necessarily selfish, ready to neglect the interests of his neighbors, and still more the interests of the future citizen.

"If the private land owner practices forestry he must be inspired by motives more or less altruistic. The attitude of the individual, however, as pictured above, need not be that of the lumbering or pulp making corporations, for they should look forward to a span of life greater than that of the individual and should be interested in perpetuating their business, provided that such forest control is not wholly incompatible with the earning of a present reasonable profit on their invested capital. Furthermore, there are returns that come to a community from the practice of forestry where the revenue cannot be figured in dollars and cents. These returns may be of little value to the individual woodland owner, but they are vital to the community, and, therefore, it is the community that must make the investment that will assure them.

Europe Lagged in Forestry

"In Europe it was the towns and small communities that started the practice of forestry, because in the 17th and 18th centuries these communities were the most stable organizations of government. States and empires were founded and swept away with kaleidoscopic rapidity in those unsettled times, and one could not expect an established policy so necessary to proper forest administration, to come from king or emperor. It was only after political shaos gave place to some degree of order and permanence, that state and nation in Europe gave thought to state forests and state forest policy.

"In the United States there are five agencies for the practice of forestry: The federal government, the state government, municipalities, corporations and individual landowners. It was more or less inevitable that forestry in this nation should start with the federal government, not because it was necessarily more stable than the state governments, but because it was better fitted to take the lead, and we have surrendered to it all matter of scientific research and forestry started in this country as a matter of scientific inquiry. Furthermore, it had on its hands millions of acres of public forest lands that were greatly in need of proper management and so was able to go into the forestry business extensively, with almost no expenditure of capital.

Question of State vs. Owner

"The question may arise whether the second stage of development should lie with the states, or with the towns or how far private interests can be relied upon to give us that forest management that we must have. As far as individual interest lies in the same direction as community interest, so far should individual owners be relied on. As far as the interest of the town is visible so far the town should be left to manage its own affairs, but these are matters in which the interest of the individual diverges from that of the community, or else these are matters and interests so large that the smaller commu-

nity cannot afford to take care of them. Then it becomes the duty of the larger aggregation, the state, to step in.

Limitation of Towns

"The town is permanent, yet in the average American municipality you will find the tendency to live in the present with small regard for the future. Furthermore, the rural towns that have the largest forest area are generally poor, unresponsive to new ideas and are less likely to take up a forest policy in an adequate way than those more thickly populated.

"It is not our intention, however, to throw cold water on the town forest idea, but simply to show that from the economic standpoint no large results can be expected for a good many years. If, however, the sponsors for town forests realize their limitations and rely on them merely for their educational value, their possibilities for recreation and as only one more step in the program of sustained forest management, they will prove of great service.

"It seems, therefore, that we must look to the state for the next significant advances in forestry. The two most essential conditions needed for the practice of forestry are a rational system of taxation and protection from fire. The first can only be provided by the state because it is the body that makes the laws for taxing real property. The second (fire protection) must either be provided by the state or by the town, or both in co-operation.

State Protection Necessary

"It is quite evident that the federal million acres of national forests has a large fire protection problem of its own. I am even sceptical of the wisdom of the present system of subsidizing fire protection on the part of the federal government, for it seems to me that each state should at least take the responsibility of protecting the property of its citizens without being assisted by the national government to perform this duty. It may be justified at the present time, but as a permanent policy, I question its advisability.

Massachusetts has found by experience that in all such cases of federal subsidy it pays a large part of the bill and gets but a small rebate in return. When it comes to fire protection within the state, however, the state must lead and co-operate with the municipalities, especially the smaller ones and directly and indirectly render them financial aid, for, as has already been explained, those towns that have the greatest forest area are the least able to give that area adequate protection.

"I do not think that there is any opposition on the part of the residents of our cities to the expenditure of a small part of their tax money for protecting the forests in the rural towns, for they realize that the interests of the whole state are their own. It would not be easy, however, to convince them that they should contribute towards forest fire protection in Georgia or California. On the other hand, I believe that the state should not assume the whole direction and cost of fire protection, for to do so would take away the feeling of responsibility for fires on the part of the people of the towns.

"We find that, in spite of the feel-

Four Allied Interests

ing about home rule, many towns are only too ready to surrender it when there is an offer of financial assistance. Most of our rural towns already receive aid towards schools, libraries, roads, moth suppression, pensions, etc., and a state aid policy if carried too far may result in the creation of a lot of municipal paupers with all the faults that we ordinarily associate with the individual poor. Co-operation and aid in the direction of self-help seems to us the proper policy in fire protection, even though for the moment the results are not up to an ideal standard.

"When it comes to the third great problem in American forestry, the rehabilitation of our millions of acres of logged-off idle lands, there is bound to be considerable difference of opinion as to the relative parts to be assumed by nation, state, municipality and private owner. We can safely assume that the problem is large enough to require the combined efforts of all four. The national government already has the forests that came from the public lands and has several million acres purchased under the Weeks Law fund. This policy should be continued, but it should be confined to those sections of the country where the state and private effort is manifestly inadequate to handle the situation. The available territory is large. I personally discouraged the idea of a national forest in this state because it would be difficult to get a tract of sufficient size and also I felt that this state should of all states be able to handle its own forest problem. When it comes to the division of responsibility between state, town and private citizen for forest culture, it will be found in the end that the state and the private owner must assume most of the burden. In spite of the publicity given to the 'town forest idea' no great results can be expected from it simply because those towns that are financially able to establish forests have not the available territory and those that have the land haven't the capital to invest. The state must take the lead in reclaiming waste and idle lands because by the very absorption of a por-

tion of these lands on the part of the state the capital value of the remainder is raised to a point where the private owners of waste land can afford to invest money in its improvement.

"Contrary to prevailing opinion, too low a valuation on land is not an incentive to good forest management. When forest land can be bought and is assessed for \$5.00 per acre, a very meagre crop pays the interest and taxes on such a valuation. Of course one can see the other extreme where land valuation is so high that no forest crop can pay taxes and interest. Personally I believe that a basic land value of \$10 per acre means better forest management than five-dollar land. Assuming that there are 700,000 acres of waste and idle land in Massachusetts, I think the state will need to absorb about one-third of it before private effort begins seriously to take hold of the remainder.

State Reservations Inadequate

"The most optimistic believer in our state forests does not promise that they will ever provide all the forest products that Massachusetts requires. There are certain pulp and lumber companies that own large tracts of forest land. These companies do not by any means cut their entire supply of logs on their own lands. In fact their policy is when timber is cheap to get their supplies from the land of others and save their own, but when prices advance they cut their own timber. It would be most fortunate for the wood using industries of Massachusetts if they were the possessors, through the state, of such a reserve supply of timber. Just how much of the forest area of Massachusetts the state should own in order to have a workable timber surplus it is difficult to estimate, but probably not less than 10 per cent or over 20 per cent of the forest land.

Recreational Advantage

"Besides providing a timber surplus account to apply towards the depreciation of our private forests as a whole, state forests offer other returns in the form of recreational opportunities. Opportunities for camping, hiking and other outdoor activities can be provided without the slightest interference with the administration of the forests from the economic standpoint and even the protection of certain scenic features can be carried out with but slight disarrangement of utilitarian management. State forests fit in most admirably with the program of the sportsman, for they offer on the one hand opportunities for game protection and propagation, and on the other hand a place to hunt and fish without meeting the forbidding posters now so common on private lands.

"With proper fire protection, and insurable fire risk, rational taxation and absorption by the state of the surplus idle land in the form of state forests, I believe that private forest owners will solve our Massachusetts forest problems. Add to this, free advice as to forest management, low cost nursery stock, free of cost to towns for municipal forests and co-operation in marketing forest products, and I believe that you have an adequate forest program for a state with the conditions that exist in Massachusetts.

Makes Recommendations

"In connection with this paper, I read an article by the father of American forestry, Mr. Fernow, written for our State Board of Agriculture in 1902, entitled 'A Forest Policy in Massachusetts.' He summarized his recommendations as follows:

1. Improvement in forest fire laws making them general and under state supervision and co-operation.
 2. Appointment of a State Forester.
 3. Encouragement of financial aid of all associations and educational agencies concerned in creating an active interest in forestry.
 4. Acquisition by the state for forest reserves, of these stump and brush lands that by their location and condition are of importance to the welfare of the state and do not promise to private enterprise sufficient inducement to care for them.
 5. Establishment of nurseries for the distribution of stock at cost.
 6. Encouragement to towns to acquire forests, the state to loan towns money for the purpose.
 7. Encouragement to private owners to improve their wood lands by furnishing expert advice and by providing a just tax law.
- "It is interesting to note that twenty years later all of these recommendations except the third, which is constitutionally prohibited, have been carried into effect, a tribute either to Mr. Fernow's ability as a prophet or to the intelligence of a state in following good advice."

Freshmen Win Debate

The Class of 1926 at Williams College defeated the sophomores in the annual underclass debate. The subject was, "Resolved, that Williams College put in operation the Garfield plan, calling for the accommodation of each incoming class in a single dormitory, or group of dormitories, and at a common table, both to be maintained for a period of one year." The freshmen took the affirmative side.

Comes in Silence.

Joy descends quietly upon us like the evening dew and does not patter down like a hailstorm.—Jean Paul.

INTERCOLLEGIATE NEWS

New Publication at Vermont

Students of the College of Agriculture of the University of Vermont recently started a paper entitled "University of Vermont Agriculturist." This is intended to be a monthly of essentially agricultural character and, as such, will contain articles and essays on agricultural subjects.

Cause for Excitement

A pawnbroker's shop was on fire and a woman spectator was greatly excited. Every few minutes she would urge the firemen to greater efforts, until presently a bystander said, "What's the matter, missus? There's no one in there. What's all the fuss about?"

"Fuss? There ain't no fuss at present," replied the woman, "but there will be if they don't get the fire out soon. My old man's fall suit is in hock there and he don't know it."

—Gee Bee Record.

Builds New Dormitories

University of Michigan has recently started work on a new set of dormitory buildings that are expected to fill a long felt need. The money for this purpose was raised by a group of alumni who formed a corporation and put shares of stock on the market. It is expected that financial returns from the dorms will make it possible to take up this stock within fifteen years.

Harvard Lunchroom Fires Student Help

The management of the Harvard lunchroom has found it more economical to hire 15 outside colored employees than the 35 student workers it formerly used. The step was necessary because the undergraduates ate such a large proportion of food that their employment was too great an expense.

Football Game Broadcasted

For the first time in the history of the annual Army and Navy football classic, cadets of the military and naval academies, the officers and men on duty at distant Army and Navy posts, and all others who could not attend the game at Franklin Field Philadelphia, were able to follow their favorite team and hear the organized cheering from both the Army and Navy sections of the field. Three microphones, installed by WJZ, the Radio Corporation-Westinghouse Station a Newark, N. J., instantly relayed the singing and cheering of the crowd and vivid descriptions of the game by W. S. Flitcraft, sporting writer of the New York Globe, over a special Western Union wire to Newark, where they were broadcasted.

By special arrangement, prominent Army and Navy officials also gave short addresses before and during the game. Some of those who spoke were John W. Weeks, Secretary of War; Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Navy; Major General James G. Harbord, Deputy Chief of Staff; Rear Admiral Louis McNulton, Commandant of the Philadelphia Navy Yard; Major General Harry C. Hale, Commander of the 1st District; and Brigadier General Frederick Sladen, Supt. of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point.

Colonels to Play Penn
Centre College's famed "Praying Colonels" will be seen in action at Pennsylvania's Franklin Field next year in one of the feature games of the Pennsylvania State College, according to a recent announcement from Philadelphia. Because of the showing Centre had made this year on the football gridiron, Pennsylvania has given her recognition as a sister college.

Harvard Has New Publication
A new magazine has been added to the list of undergraduate publications at Harvard University. It is a quarterly journal of constructive thought entitled the "Gad-Fly" and put out by the Liberal Club for the benefit of its members. Its policy will be to contain articles on politics, studies, poetry, and affairs of modern interest. The first issue consisted of 40 pages and was limited to 100 copies.

Seniors Tutor Gratis
The Boosters Club of the University of Colorado has effected a scheme whereby the freshmen low in their studies are helped. The plan consists of supplying tutors from the senior class to those first-year men who express a desire for such additional instruction. This tutoring is given free and the members of the senior class volunteer their services.

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