

used his forests would be perpetual; but he feels as if he alone cannot afford to shoulder the expense of reforestation, which is to benefit many others besides himself. He feels as if the question of taxation and protection of forests must be settled by the state before he can afford to change his methods. I believe that the lumberman would gladly assist in the enactment of laws that would solve the problem of forestry.

LOUISIANA IN THE PAST

Twenty years ago the pine, cypress, and hardwood forests of Louisiana were practically in a virgin state and unsurpassed for magnificence and wealth by any other state in the Union. Our own people did not realize the importance of these resources until foresighted men from other states, who had witnessed the destruction of their own forests, entered these lands from the states and Federal governments for a few cents per acre, and thus our own people lost golden opportunities to reap benefits from resources which were naturally their own. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that those same investors assisted materially in the upbuilding of the state, and only grasped opportunities which experience taught them were at hand, and which the Government encouraged. Railroads were built, new territories opened up, the demand for lumber increased, and Louisiana prepared to assist in supplying this demand. Dozens of saw and planing mills were erected; new towns laid out, and short-line railroads built to handle the products of the forests.

To-day Louisiana ranks second in the production of lumber of all the states in the Union, producing during the year 1907 nearly 3,000,000,000 feet, board measure; the state of Washington ranking first, with the production of nearly 4,000,000,000 feet. Fully fifty

of our state tend to absolutely denude these lands of the smallest pine saplings, leaving the country almost a barren waste, and the lands practically worthless, which can only be reclaimed by scientific methods, and the planting of trees.

These lands must remain barren until our parochial, state, and National governments adopt a system that will tend to reforest these lands, and when this is done, fully fifty years must elapse before such areas become profitable. In the meantime, soil erosion takes place; floods become frequent and evils of various kinds overtake us. At the present rate in which we are denuding our forests they cannot last twenty years longer, and it is a fact that in ten years' time over three-fourths of our forests will have disappeared. Already, experienced lumbermen and close observers see the beginning of the end and realize the magnitude of the disasters that must surely follow—we know what has hapened to Europe and Asia. Shall we adopt safe and sane measures that will protect us or must we actually witness the calamities that must surely befall us if we remain careless and indifferent before we take action?

The question that naturally arises after a person begins to realize that a crisis is approaching, and in a vague sort of way sees the dangers that confront him is—what shall we do?

THE ANSWER

It does not take a wise man to answer quickly. Protect your remaining forests and commence at once the reforestation of your denuded areas. Enact stringent forestry laws that will protect the state and Nation.

Ex-President Roosevelt says that it is the duty of the Federal government to cooperate with the state, in order to conserve the natural resources of our whole country. Hon. Wm. J. Bryan says of this subject: "Money spent in the care of the life and health of the

