

of the News-Letter, "THE RELIGION OF
RUSKIN:

Ruskin's Domestic Tragedy.

"Ruskin was far too generous a man to parade any fault he may have found in his wife. He simply drew a veil of silence over the whole matter. Had it been left to him the world would never have heard of it. Only five years had passed away, when Millais, the celebrated artist, while a guest at their home, painted the portraits of both Mr. and Mrs. John Ruskin. Then followed, in quick succession, the return of Mrs. Ruskin to the home of her parents, an appeal, in a Scotch court, for a nullity of their tie, in which Ruskin acquiesced, and the marriage of the beautiful wife to Millais. This sad ending of his domestic life is, perhaps, without a parallel in all the records of family tragedies. That any man could be so finely constituted—so self-renouncing, as to sacrifice himself, in such a way, rather than contest the peace and desires of others is a very striking and singular instance of pure unselfishness. The experience as a whole, from the courtship to marriage, and from the wedding day to the close of the tragedy, was a full translation of the sentiment expressed in lines which he wrote in "Time and Tide," fifteen years later:

"And there, with many a blissful tear,
I vowed to love and prayed to wed
The maiden who had grown so dear:—
Thanked God, who had set her in my
path
And promised, as I hoped to win,
I never would sully my faith
By the least selfishness or sin;
Whatever in her sight I'd seem
I'd really be; I ne'er would blend,
With my delight in her, a dream
'Twould change her cheek to comprehend;
And, if she wished it, would prefer
Another's to my own success;
And always seek the best for her
With unobtrusive tenderness."

NATIONAL FORESTS AND LUMBER SUPPLY.

A point in the industrial progress of the United States has now been reached where development of the country is made, not in the face of the forest but with its essential aid. The old process of exhausting the supply of timber in a region and then seeking new fields is practically over. Already the lumber industry is turning back on its tracks. A quality of timber is eagerly sought in the Lake States which a few years ago was ignored as utterly worthless, and in the South the whole pine region is being gone over in a close search for the old field pine, a tree once despised but now bought up at prices much higher than those formerly paid for the magnificent timber of the virgin forests.

New Forests Needed.

Public opinion now demands, not that the government should dispose of its remaining timberlands as rapidly as possible and leave it to private enterprise to exploit the forest hastily, but that what remains of the national forests should be more conservatively used. The government has been forced into

the lumber business solely in order that a supply of forest products may be guaranteed to future generations.

Probably 65 per cent of the total stand of merchantable timber within the forests is located on the Pacific Coast, where for a long time the enormous supply of privately owned timber will satisfy most of the demand. This more accessible private timber surrounded the forests as the meat of an apple surrounds the core. It has been entirely eaten away in many places, while in others it is locked up by speculators. The thing to remember, then, is that this immense body of public timber is there as a great reserve against the time when private timberlands will be depleted, and for use as a weapon against monopoly.

Effects on Prices.

The first effect of national forests upon prices, particularly where there is still a great deal of available timber, is to raise the price of outside stumpage toward its actual value by withdrawing the excess supply of low-priced timber from the market. But later, as the supply of timber dwindles and values are forced upward by speculative holdings, the effect of the forests will be to check the advance of prices.

In the virgin forest, growth is just about balanced by decay. In the western forests, however, natural deterioration is greatly augmented by forest fires. The fires usually do most harm by damaging merchantable timber, but, great as this injury is, vastly more the yearly burning over of the grass and actual loss in forest wealth results from undergrowth of the forest. Ground fires do not consume the large trees, but they destroy seedlings outright and injure growing trees so that they quickly decay. Finally, the forest floor, composed of a mold of needles, twigs, and mosses, is burned away.

Far beyond the present influence of the national forests upon the lumber supply will be their importance in the future. The United States is now facing a shortage in the stock of available timber. The yield from the national forests will aid greatly to bridge over the period in which mature timber will be lacking, a period which will last from the time the old trees are gone until the young trees are large enough to take their places.

Many a man with a very good reason will become angry with himself and then proceed to vent his spite on somebody else.

Convalescent (effusively)—"How can I ever repay you, doctor?" Doctor (practically)—"By check, notes, or gold, and I hope soon, my dear sir!"

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