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VALUE OF TREES TO MAN TOLD ROTARIANS

(Continued from Page 57)

doubtedly deal with the Insect and Blight enemies of our trees. I will pass by it.

The present forest area, roundly, is put at 550,000,000 acres, but of this 81,000,000 acres have been rendered barren for a long time by repeated forest fires and about 80,000,000 acres never were and probably never will be capable of producing commercial lumber trees, though they do yield fuel, fencing and some small building material. At the

present, the forest area is commonly put at 470,000,000 acres.

The forests are chiefly in three broad belts. One extends over the whole region between the Atlantic ocean to about the 97th meridian, that is, just west of the Mississippi; the second extends eastward from the Pacific ocean across the Sierra and Cascade mountains. The third lies along the Rocky Mountain system from Canada to Mexico.

The eastern forest is or was predominantly hardwood in about half of its extent and the hardwoods are scattered among the conifers of the north and south. The hardwoods are scarcely noticeable visually or commercially in the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain forests. The eastern forest region is commonly separated into the northern or northeastern, central and southern forests.

The virgin northeastern forest (150,000,000 acres) was largely white pine, red spruce, hemlock, and other conifers, with an admixture of beech, birch, and hard maple. The pine and spruce have been heavily drawn on but there is considerable growth all the way from Maine to Minnesota. Unfortunately the new forest crop inclines to aspen and jack

pine instead of to the more valuable trees. About one-third of the area has been permanently withdrawn from forest; about as much more is reforesting and fires have made 30,000,000 acres non-productive at present.

The Central forest region (281,000,000 acres) is mainly one of hardwoods. More than 60% of its area has been permanently cleared for farms and there remains relatively little virgin timber in any part of it.

The magnificent Southern forest in the southeastern coastal plain is characteristically of yellow pine—chiefly long-leaf, slash, short-leaf, and loblolly. Cypress is found in the lowlands; there is a sprinkling of hardwoods with the pines, and in the alluvial bottom lands there are heavy stands of oaks, hickory, ash, elm, sycamore, soft maple, red gum, etc. The Southern forest is now the main source of forest products in the east, and the last reserve of hardwood. Its original area was 250,000,000 acres. Much of it has been permanently given over to agriculture; about 30,000,000 acres are virgin timber; about 70,000,000 acres support second growth; but fires have rendered 34,000,000 acres non-productive.

The Rocky Mountain forest is typically one of the western pine (Pinus ponderosa) so far as commercial importance is concerned, but there are large areas of white pine (Pinus Monticola) and other coniferous trees as well as some hardwoods. The original area is put at 65,000,000 acres; of this 38,000,000 acres are virgin; 4,000,000 acres have been cleared; 18,000,000 acres are more or less reproducing and 5,000,000 acres non-producing and 5,000,000 acres are non-producing because of fires.

The crude forest products are worth around \$1,600,000,000 a year at points of origin. That is twice as much as the wheat crop is worth and about equal to the whole of an average corn crop. Further manufacture doubles the value of the forest material. More than a million persons are exclusively employed in industries dependent upon the forest, and altogether the forest supports 1-10 of our American population. All the gold from the world's mines in 25 years scarcely exceeds the annual value of forest products and manufactures thereof. The placer and quartz mines of California have produced \$1,750,000,000 worth of gold from '49 to now, but the timber of the state has produced twice as much in real wealth in the same time.

I would like you to take home with you these facts. The forests are the greatest economic asset any nation can have. Year after year they will yield the nation more wealth than any of the natural resources. The product used in the proper place will last longer than most other materials. There are wooden temples in Japan that are 1,300 years old. Many well preserved wood articles were found in Tut's tomb dating back 3,500 years. Recently in an excavation in Washington, D. C., cypress stumps were found immersed in an ancient swamp which were not less than 20,000 years old. It behooves all of us to do all we can to prevent the devastation of forest fires. When riding through a forest country or vacationing in the woods, every care should be taken with camp fires, a carelessly discarded cigarette, cigar or match. And finally learn to love these gifts of nature.

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11:00 Morning Worship. Sermon by the Rev.

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5:00 Sermon by the Rev. James A. Richards

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