

on with many interruptions since the year of the Great Revolution, when M. BREMONTIER began the vast operations which covered great tracts of shifting sand in the west of France with a thick belt of wealth-producing pinasters. In 1883 the acreage of the forests of France was greater by 7,000,000 acres than it was in 1848. 'In that interval,' says MULHALL, 'no less than 9,000,000 acres of waste mountain lands have been planted, the increase of urban population causing a great demand for firewood, the consumption of which averages 23 cubic feet per inhabitant.' Between 1860 and 1888 over 300,000 acres of flood-devastated land were, through the efforts of the Forestry Department, reseeded, at a cost of more than £2,000,000. The French Government also planted largely in Algeria, as many as 12,700,000 Australian blue-gums having been set on an area of 130,000 acres at Lake Fetzara. The Duke of Athol and the Earl of Seafield in Scotland, and Lord POWERSCOURT in Wicklow (Ireland) are firm believers in the advice which the far-seeing old Scottish laird gave to his son: 'Be aye stickin' in a tree.' They are the most remarkable men in the revival of arboriculture in the British Isles. Lord POWERSCOURT's expenditure of £3 6s per acre on tree-planting in 1866 has produced a vast plantation which in 1915 will represent a value of £50 per acre. There's clearly money in this business.

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In 1894, according to MULHALL, there were 34,500,000 acres of forest in Germany, which afforded a decent living to a great army of 380,000 wood-cutters—or one axe-man to about 90 acres of timber. The vast forest area of the United States—which was officially stated at 458,500,000 acres in 1894—is being fast eaten up by the axe and the 'buzz-saw' to the tune of about £215,000,000 worth of timber per annum, not counting the demon's work wrought by the action of the fire-stick. Norway and Sweden—according to the Foreign Office report of 1893—possesses jointly 63,800,000 acres of forest-land; and their Governments are protecting this splendid national asset by laws which New Zealand legislators would do well to study and adopt. Timber-felling licenses there are issued only on conditions which provide for the systematic cutting-out in 'rotation blocks,' and equally systematic replanting. As a result, the forest areas never shrink, and a steady supply of timber is kept up for home use and for export; and tens of thousands of Swedes and Norwegians are eating the bread of comfort that has been cut—and we had almost said buttered on both sides—for them by the edge of their circular saws.

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In a report sent to the Wellington Land Board in 1899, Commissioner Mr. W. J. A. MARCHMONT said that 'the revenue derivable from the produce of the forests should more than recoup the cost of administration.' Elsewhere in the same report he said: 'Our indigenous forests are so extremely sensitive and subject to destruction that I am led to the conclusion that it will be difficult, even under the most stringent safeguards, to preserve them except in specially favorable localities. Nevertheless, no one can doubt that it is the duty of the Crown to do all in their power to postpone, or prevent altogether, such a deplorable result. Likewise, arguing from analogy and altered conditions, in other countries, it seems inevitable that should there be widespread and general destruction of the forest, scrub, and coarse vegetation throughout the several districts, the loss to the Colony and community would be irreparable; for the whole face of the country would be affected by the constant exposure to the rain and the sun; the better portions of the soil being washed off the higher lands, the surfaces would become hardened and less fertile, and consequently the productive capabilities of the land would materially deteriorate. The exposed watersheds would tend to the drying up of the springs and water-courses, bringing disaster in the form of drought. On the other hand, the rapid distribution of rain-waters and their accumulation in rivulets and rivers would lead to the washing down and removal of the soil from the mountains and hills, the scouring of channels, the flooding of low-lying lands, and the deposit of detritus thereon. It is unnecessary to revert again to all the important considerations which should spur the community by every means in its power to avoid such disastrous consequences as are indicated. It is sufficient here to say that,

under such conditions, the country would be afflicted and impoverished, and certainly would no longer be the beautiful and attractive region it now is.' And the moral of it all is this: that a live, energetic, and capable Forestry Department is, in a way, about as important for New Zealand as is our Ministry of Lands or our Ministry of Mines.

A CORRECTION.

In a paragraph which appeared in Saturday's issue of the *Otago Daily Times* it was stated that a temperance paper, about to be published in the Bruce district, was to be edited by the editor of the TABLET. The statement is incorrect. The editor is at present in Europe, and the acting-editor has nothing whatever to do with the matter.

Notes

'In the Wake of the Rising Sun.'

Our readers will be pleased to hear that the graphic and scholarly articles, descriptive of a tour in Egypt and the Holy Land, by 'Viator,' which appeared from time to time in the columns of the N.Z. TABLET within the past two years, will probably be published in book form. The articles were republished by the *Belfast Irish Weekly*, which, in its issue of June 6, makes the following announcement: 'We have had numerous anxious inquiries respecting the very interesting series of articles by 'Viator' on a visit to the Holy Land which have appeared in these columns, and which have recently been brought to a close, as to whether they would be preserved in a form more enduring than the ephemeral newspaper sketch. We hope shortly to be able to make a definite announcement, which will be gratifying to our readers, that the articles are to take permanent form.'

The Thermal Springs.

The enormous activity of the Waimangu geyser, chronicled last week, might be superstitiously connected with the arrival of the new balneologist, or hot springs expert, Dr. Wohlman. It was of this gentleman, it will be remembered, that the Agent-general wired that notwithstanding the foreign flavor of his name, Dr. Wohlman was of an unimpeachable British descent of four generations. But at that particular moment a certain class of the public were aflame with anti-Continental resentment, and would have scouted the appointment of a foreigner even though his credentials were as long as from Dan to Beersheba. The new expert has been duly interviewed by the ever alert reporter, and the verdict is highly favorable. The doctor is about 36 years of age, and 'comes to this Colony with a reputation as a balneologist. For the last nine years he has been practising at Bath, but on receiving information of his appointment visited the principal European watering places for the purpose of bringing his knowledge as much up to date as possible. His conversation indicates that he nowhere observed model conditions, but he has obtained a great deal of knowledge, which he hopes will enable him to place Retouna and Hanmer in the first rank of sanatoria. Dr. Wohlman is insistent on the virtues of advertising. He says the attractions of this Colony cannot be too widely known, and the money spent in the process will, he feels sure, be handsomely reproductive. He does not anticipate that we shall entice many visitors from the Continent for various reasons, but very large numbers of people can be attracted from England, America, and Australia (particularly Australia). Dr. Wohlman drops a hint also that mineral waters are not so expensive to handle as frozen meat, and he thinks that something may be done in that direction.'

The Tourist Traffic.

Readers of the newspapers are continually reminded of the valuable asset which the Colony possesses in its scenery, and of the vast advantage likely to accrue from the influx of tourists, who are expected to shower gold in a Pactolian flood into expectant hands. There can be no doubt that a continual stream of sightseers, all of whom would presumably be possessed of wealth, and not afflicted with a sordid tightness of the purse, would stimulate trade along the different tracks to and from the innumerable sights the Colony has to offer; but we question whether anyone has yet considered the general effect which would probably ensue. There is nothing derogatory in a stage-coach proprietor taking advantage of an invasion of tourists, nor in the keeper of a hotel or other place of accommodation making special preparations for it and benefiting by his enterprise. But in the wake of an extensive traffic of such a nature there must arise a horde of hangers-on, who will depend for their

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