

CORRESPONDENCE.

Written for this Paper.

SPARE THE TREES!

In your issue of December 30, the article of Prof. C. A. Whiting, on the preservation of our native forests, was a most timely topic, and I feel sure that he gave voice to the sentiments of a large body of thoughtful people throughout the Territory, who, like him, hope that the near future will see measures taken to secure the ends pointed out in that paper. It is no longer a mooted question that forest areas have an immense influence in promoting the economic well-being of a country, and the question is sure to come home to us with increasing force the longer we delay it; for, soon or late, we shall be compelled to adopt systematic methods of preserving and increasing our forest growths.

In common with the greater part of the West, the forest growths of Utah are extremely meager, and are limited almost entirely to the mountain slopes. As the country was settled these scanty stores were drawn upon more and more heavily, until in the more populous centers there is no further supply to draw upon. In the mountains east of Salt Lake City, pine trees can only be found in inaccessible places, and the few that remain are secure simply because Nature, more provident than ourselves, has thrown around them a bulwark of rugged rocks. And yet in these pine trees, protected by an intelligent public sentiment and fostered by wise regulations, is to be found a source of wealth of no inconsiderable proportions.

It has been my fortune to travel over a large portion of the Territory, and wherever I have gone I have seen evidences of the same wasteful methods. Trees are cut down without the slightest discrimination, the only apparent object being to satisfy the needs of the moment. But even if it stopped here, there would not be so much room for complaint—how often are we called upon to witness those mountain fires, that sometimes burn for weeks at a time, lighted up by the stupid carelessness or wanton destructiveness of persons who, if they will not do better things of themselves, should be constrained to do so by the strong arm of the law! In some portions of the Territory, the mountains are clothed with a thick growth of cedars, which are being drawn upon for fuel, fence posts and other current necessities, without the slightest thought of any compensating measures for the future. The only thought of the man who goes to the canyon is, "where can I get my load the most easily and the most quickly?" By the drain upon it, the wood grows scarcer and more difficult to get with each successive year; and the simple wight soon bewails the lamentable fact that the "cedars are growing scarce." Poor improvident fellow! The very prodigality of nature has taught him bad habits. If he could only learn to see that there is a way to supply his every proper need, and still rather to increase than to decrease to the eternal detriment of the country he dwells

in, the store he draws upon! He must have the wood, but let him join in a common effort to make it a perpetual treasure-house to himself and his children.

During the past summer the town of Mount Pleasant, Sanpete county, was visited with a tremendous flood. Water came down from the mountains in torrents, carrying with it whatever lay in its path. When it subsided, a most promiscuous lot of debris was scattered in various parts of the town, and in the principal street was deposited a foot or more of soft mud. Even now traces of the flood are plainly visible, and the people of that place will long remember the flood of 1893. Other Sanpete valley towns have had similar visitations in the past two or three years, and are now devising plans for steering the floods away when they chance to come; but not one of them, so far as I have learned, has given any attention to forest culture as a means of keeping the water back in the mountains, so there may be no floods. These are object lessons that should awaken the people of Utah to a more enlightened policy.

But perhaps little can be done in this way without organized effort; and system and science must come in to direct this effort in the best directions. Prof. Whiting suggests a Forestry Association, and such an organization is an imperative necessity if we would secure results proportional with the importance of the matter at issue. It would serve as a center of inspiration as well as of information, and might be a worthy father to many local organizations in various parts of the Territory. Nor would we be trying an experiment. We have the example of other states and other countries before us, and although our condition and environments may call for special work, yet their experience will be valuable to us. Germany has a thorough system of forest regulations, reduced to a science, and that country has been wonderfully benefited by the organized efforts that have been made. The results could only have been gained by institutions for that purpose. If we better our condition, it will be only by pursuing similar methods.

The physical condition of every country is largely the result of the policy of its inhabitants in respect to forest culture. The Mediterranean countries of Europe are today suffering from the wholesale destruction of the mountain forests. Where once were springs are now dry places; and unless some compensating movement on a large scale takes place in those lands, decadence in material prosperity is certain to follow.

The famines of India and China in large part are traceable to the denudation of the mountain sides of their trees; the forests are no longer there to absorb the rains, which now run quickly off in disastrous floods.

New York has been agitated in recent years concerning the devastation of the forests in the northern part of that state, around the headwaters of the Hudson. Their disappearance was being followed by floods. The state is

now taking measures to protect them for the future.

Let Utah be as wise! We have no surplus to squander. The faults of the past may yet be condoned by a wise and vigorous policy for the future. Let us foster our meager forests and add to them by every means in our power, both as individuals and as members of an enlightened community—and success will be ours. Nature stands anxiously waiting to welcome us as laborers in her vineyard. Then let's to work, and the acknowledgements of a grateful posterity will commend the wisdom of the fathers!

AN OBSERVER.

Written for this Paper.

TALKS WITH OLD-TIMERS.

In reading over the sermons delivered at the late Semi-Annual Conference by the Authorities of the Church when the people were advised to be more economical and self-sustaining and to keep out of debt, I was reminded of a story told my companion and myself by a gentleman who had visited Utah early in the "fifties."

The gentleman was Mr. Joshua Woods, of Bristoria, Pa., and one of Green county's most respected citizens.

Hearing of our presence in Green county, he sent for us to come and see him which we did; and our visit to his home was a very pleasant one, not only for us but himself as well, for he enjoyed talking about "old-times." He said he went out West during the great gold excitement in California and traveled around in Montana, Wyoming and those northern countries and when winter came on he found himself in Utah and in the heart of the Mormon settlement. He was struck with awe when he entered the beautiful little city of Great Salt Lake and saw the people living so baply together in their comfortable little homes, when all around them for hundreds of miles there was naught but rugged mountains and barren plains to invite the weary wanderer.

He gave a good description of the city as it was then and said he never could forget his visit there; "for," said he, "I was treated just like one of the 'Saints.'" He spoke in glowing terms of the industry and frugality of the people and of their hospitable ways, and ever since his visit there he has defended them whenever an opportunity presented itself.

Some of the bread that the early Saints cast upon the waters returned to us in the form of Mr. Wood's hospitality, though it had been floating many years seeking a place to lodge.

Mr. Wood said the most unique and interesting feature about Mormonism was the preaching of its Elders which did not consist of some old story reiterated every Sunday morning, but the sermons were full of instructions about temporal as well as spiritual affairs; and he thought that was one reason why we made such successful farmers. He said that a good many farmers of this country lacked the advice given to those Mormons out in Utah; and when I look over this country and see some of the half-tilled farms, I cannot help but think if the owners of them had some man like Brigham Young or Heber C. Kimball to instruct them they would be better