

FOREST TREES AND FOREST SCENERY

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Forest Trees and Forest Scenery by G. Frederick Schwarz

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G. FREDERICK SCHWARZ

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A River Scene in Florida

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PREFACE

IN the ensuing pages I have made simple inquiries into the sources of beauty and attractiveness in American forest trees and sylvan scenery. In the concluding chapter, by way of contrast, I have given a short account of the esthetic effects of the artificial forests of Europe. The system which shaped these forests and gave them their present appearance should, however, possess more than a comparative interest for Americans. It has, in fact, a further connection, though a slight one, with the subject, and therefore requires a few words of explanation.

It is well known that in many parts of Europe the forests have long been subjected to a systematic treatment known as forestry. The term, at first strange, is gradually becoming quite familiar to us Americans, for the application of this comparatively new science has already begun in many sections

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of our country. The principles of European forestry will naturally undergo many modifications in their new environment, and the vastness of our forest areas, as well as the long life that naturally belongs to trees, will impose a very gradual progress. Nevertheless, the movement for a rational use of our forests is rapidly advancing and is certain in time to find a very wide application.

Although the aims of forestry are utilitarian and not artistic, the technical character of the operations which it involves impresses upon natural forest scenery a changed aspect. Eventually the work performed upon our forests will be manifested in a new outward appearance, a change that cannot but be preferable to the scenes ordinarily presented by our cut-over and abandoned timberlands, and one that will be appreciated not only by forest lovers in general, but also by those who are engaged in the lumber industry itself, who are often forced through competition and prevailing methods to leave a desolate picture behind.

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In a word, forestry interests us here because, having already obtained a foothold in our country, through its forest beauty stands on the threshold of a new relationship. This relationship, which is to grow more intimate with time, appears to justify a certain discrimination in the choice of the trees and forests herein described, and an occasional reference to some of the less technical matters of forestry that may incidentally suggest themselves as being of some interest to the general reader. To have attempted more than this would have detracted from the unity of the subject. While the reader may, therefore, find in these pages some facts that are new to him, he will notice that these facts have been made subordinate to the leading object of the book, an appreciation of the esthetic value of some of our commonest forest trees.

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