

**THE FOREST TREE CULTURIST: A
TREATISE ON THE CULTIVATION
OF AMERICAN FOREST TREES,
WITH NOTES ON THE MOST
VALUABLE FOREIGN SPECIES**

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The forest tree culturist: a treatise on the cultivation of American forest trees, with notes on the most valuable foreign species by Andrew S. Fuller

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ANDREW S. FULLER

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FOREST TREE CULTURIST:
A Treatise
ON THE CULTIVATION OF
AMERICAN FOREST TREES,

WITH NOTES ON
THE MOST VALUABLE FOREIGN SPECIES,

BY
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P R E F A C E .

SOME years since, while gratifying my taste for Horticultural experiments, I was led to plant seeds of many of our native forest trees. The results satisfied me that nothing was wanting but a better acquaintance with the nature and habits of these seeds to insure success with them as uniform'y as with any others; consequently I gave the subject attention, and by observation and experiment learned how to manage not only the trees of our own forests, but many foreign varieties. I would not be understood to say that I have planted seeds and raised trees of every *species* and *variety*, but have experimented sufficiently with the different *species* as to know whereof I write. My success was such that the Farmers' Club of the American Institute desired me to give at one of their meetings an account of my experiments, which I did briefly. This was published as a portion of the Report of the meeting in the New York *Tribune*, and from that copied by other papers throughout the country. In consequence thereof, I have received many letters asking more definite information on different points, so many that I have been unable to reply to them so fully as I could have wished.

The following pages were written for the purpose of giving such information as the public seem to desire. I have avoided, so far as I could, the use of botanical and scientific terms, having written, not for professional horticulturists and men of science, but for prac-

tical farmers. I have therefore endeavored to give the *how* rather than the *why*, the practical rather than the theoretical. The man of letters will also undoubtedly find much to criticise in the literary character of the book; this fault I regret more than others can; but if I have so expressed myself that the reader can get my meaning, I shall be content. The book was written for the purpose of showing others how to benefit themselves, and while doing it to conduce to the wealth of the country. If it shall aid in awaking a more general interest in our noble forest trees, causing them to be more fully appreciated, not only for their intrinsic worth, but because they are of the many blessings bestowed by the Creator upon this our country, then my object will be fully accomplished.

WOODSIDE, March 30th, 1866.

THE
FOREST TREE CULTURIST.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

EVERY civilized nation feels more or less the need of an abundant supply of forest trees. Whether needed for timber to be used in the erection of houses, or in building ships, or for the more common but none the less important purpose of fuel, there is nothing that contributes more to the development of all the sources of national wealth and prosperity. America has felt this need the least; but the day is coming, if not already here, when her people will look back with regret to the time when forests were wantonly destroyed.

It is true there have been many cases where it was necessary to clear off the forest that the land might be cultivated and furnish the food necessary for the early settler; but it is well known that thousands of acres of valuable timber have been removed from land unfit for cultivation, the return from which would scarcely support the laborers who were employed in cutting and drawing it to the nearest market, or converting it into charcoal and ashes.

The land from which these forests were taken is now a silent waste, when, if the trees had remained upon it to

this time, its increased value would have paid the interest on its original cost and taxes, and left a large surplus to the owner. Regrets over past follies will avail nothing unless they teach us to be wiser in the future.

In all of our large cities anxious inquiries are made for that indispensable article, timber. If we would extend commerce, ships and docks are needed, and for these more or less timber is required. The builders, the houseless and homeless, rich and poor, know and feel the need of it. Trees suitable for piles now command twenty to thirty dollars each. One of my neighbors not long since sold one hundred for three thousand dollars; ten years since half that amount would have been considered an exorbitant price. Firewood on the lines of our great railroads, miles away from our cities, sells for seven and eight dollars per cord; and if the demand continues to increase, soon it can not be had for double that amount. The demand increases, although coal and iron are persistent competitors; but the supply of wood decreases more rapidly. There is no reason why the supply should give out; there is land enough within reach of our great cities that lies uncultivated, or, what is more lamentable, unprofitably cultivated, that might be made to grow forests of good timber that would return to their owners a large profit on the investment.

I know many large land-owners who have been toiling for the past thirty years to lay up something to keep them in their old age and leave a balance to their children. They have worn themselves out as well as their land, and that something for which they have so arduously labored

has not been obtained, and their children are likely to inherit a poor, worn-out farm instead of that competency which their father expected to have left them. Suppose these men had left one half their farms covered with the original forest, or if it was already cleared when they came into possession they had planted one half with forest trees, and then expended all their labor upon the other half, they would have produced better crops and with more profit; one half of their farm would have been rich, and the other half covered with a forest that would be a fortune worth inheriting.

Thousands of men are toiling this day to lay up wealth for their children, when if they would invest a small amount in land and then plant a few acres of our best forest trees, their money would grow into a fortune by the time their children had grown into manhood. To some this may appear visionary; but the writer has lived long enough to see trees grow from saplings that would hardly bear his weight at ten years old, up to great trees two feet in diameter, and he has scarcely passed the half-way house of three-score and ten.

In many portions of our country we need forests, not only for supplying us with timber, but for protection against winds and hurricanes. The farmer's grain is often prostrated by winds that never reached his fields until these protecting forests were destroyed. Fruit-growers are seeking the best means of shelter for their orchards, and a remedy for that dry atmosphere which sweeps through their gardens, shriveling up their finest specimens, checking, if not entirely annihilating, their ardor for fruit-growing.

The little stream that formerly came singing and dancing down from the great wood on the hill is now seen only for a few weeks in the early spring and fall, and then there is nothing left but its dry pebbly track. Is it not time we began to retrace our steps and again cover some of our now barren hillsides and many of our valleys with those trees which were not only an ornament and blessing to our land, but would now be a source of incalculable wealth?

The great West, with its wide-reaching treeless prairies, feels the need of forests even more than we do in the Atlantic States. The farmer on the prairies needs a shelter from the winds, the value of which no one but those who have experienced the want can appreciate. In no way can such a protection be provided better or cheaper than by a belt of trees. Then the convenience of having timber near at hand for building fences, stakes for vines, trees, and a thousand little necessities for which wood is indispensable.

A farmer who has provided a belt of trees around his farm has protected his fields from winds, and his grain will remain standing until ready to harvest. His fruit remains on the trees until ripe; and in a great measure his buildings are safe against those fearful hurricanes which frequently rush with such destructive force across those level plains. If people will persist in residing on those prairies, they certainly ought to be protected, but they should learn how to do it themselves, and not expect that Nature will rear it merely for the asking, without putting forth an effort on their part.

I have a vivid recollection of spending several years near those grand old prairies where the wind went and came