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 : UNCLE SAM'S HIRED MEN WHO SERVE YOU.:

Here Is Colonel W. B. Greeley, the Government's Chief Forester,
 Who Has Risen from the Ranks--He Wants to Make
 the Nation's Forests Serve You Better.

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 By John Anson Ford.
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 : This is the eighth of a series of articles this :
 : publication is running, in cooperation with the United :
 : States Department of Agriculture, to acquaint our read- :
 : ers with the type of men who are making possible the :
 : wonderful service the department is rendering and stands :
 : ready to render our readers, that those not now availing :
 : themselves of these services may do so.-----Editor :
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The call of the wild and the influence of three men,--two former Forest Service chiefs and a much beloved old uncle--these were the factors which started William B. Greeley on a path that has led to noteworthy national service and only recently has brought him, at the age of 41, to the position of chief of the Forest Service, one of the seventeen branches of the United States Department of Agriculture.

As he sits at his flat-top desk in his Washington office and talks of the things the Forest Service has done and the still bigger work it hopes to do for the Nation, there is little in the appearance of Col. Greeley--the

title won during the great war still clings to him--to suggest that he is essentially an "outdoor man," but when he rises from his chair, bringing his big, spare frame to its full height of six feet and more, and strides vigorously across the room to grasp the hand of an incoming visitor, one discovers that he is powerful and sinewy, like the ranchmen among whom he lived so many years.

Combines East and West.

Greeley is a combination of the West and the East. Both sections of the country have shared in shaping him. He was born in Oswego, N. Y., and at the age of eleven moved with his parents to California. After seven years spent on a ranch in Santa Clara County, Greeley entered the University of California, where he remained for four years.

But in a very direct way the East influenced young Greeley. Back in Pennsylvania was an old uncle, William Buckhout, a close friend of early leaders in forest conservation in that State. Upon his advice, Greeley, after a year of teaching in Alameda (California) High School to replenish his bank account, entered Yale for two years of intensive technical study, in which he showed exceptional capacity and promise of leadership. While Greeley gives much credit to his old uncle for starting him in his profession, he also acknowledges a debt to Gifford Pinchot, then at the head of the Government's fast-growing forestry work, who early recognized his worth and encouraged his ambition for a life of valuable public service in this relatively new field.

In 1904 Greeley's connection with the Forest Service began. Little more than a year later he took charge of the Sierra National Forest in southern California. On foot and on horseback he explored mountains and

valleys, ascertaining the areas and boundaries of forested regions, locating streams and lakes, helping lay out new trails, sleeping at night in a settler's cabin or under the stars.

In the spring of 1908 Greeley was called to Washington to become assistant chief of the division of management, a task which put him directly in touch with much of the executive work of the organization. Less than a year later came another promotion through appointment as District Forester for District 1, with headquarters at Missoula, Mont. The administration to-day of the 29,000,000 acres of National Forests in Montana and northern Idaho, which were under his supervision, still bear the impress of his organizing ability and wise management. In directing the fight on the great forest fires in District 1, which caused much damage in 1910, he did especially efficient work.

Appointed Assistant Forester.

In 1911 Greeley was again called to Washington, this time to become assistant forester in charge of the branch of silviculture, which, through the district foresters, has supervision of the timber sales, timber and fire trespass cases, reforestation, and cooperative work with States and private owners in promoting fire protection. To this important assignment was shortly added oversight of the scientific investigations of the Forest Service, designed to secure new knowledge necessary for the better practice of forestry and better use of forest products.

There were still bigger experiences in store for the forester. Not long after the United States entered the great war, an urgent call came for forestry troops and the Forest Service was asked to recruit the needed men. It fell to Greeley to take charge of this. He was later sent to France where

he eventually became chief of the forestry section in the American Expeditionary Forces, in charge of 21,000 forestry troops and 95 sawmills, succeeding Henry S. Graves, who returned to the United States after serving on the general staff abroad.

Greeley's work was performed with distinction, and for it France made him a chevalier of the Legion of Honor, and England awarded him the Distinguished Service Order. After a little more than two years in the army, Greeley returned to take charge of the branch of forest management in the Forest Service, and with the resignation of Colonel Graves as forester in April, 1920, was appointed to succeed him.

Greeley's Two-Fold Duties.

As official head of the Forest Service the new forester's heritage of duty is two-fold. To make the ¹⁴⁶~~154~~ National Forests of even larger usefulness to the local and general public, as material and recreational resources, and to lead forward the movement, now becoming widespread, for adequate conservation of private forests.

The National Forests contain 154,658,373 acres of Government-owned land and are for the most part in the Rocky Mountains and in the far Western States, but there are two in Arkansas, two in Minnesota, one in Florida, and one in Michigan, and a number are being created through land purchases in the White Mountains and Southern Appalachians. One of the things in which Colonel Greeley is deeply interested is to make the recreational features of these forests better known and fully available to the people generally, though, of course, the proper utilization of their timber, ranges, water power, and other material resources bulks larger from a business standpoint. Another task is keeping down the fire losses--heroic work which each

summer puts the whole organization, from chief forester to the last ranger and forest guard, to its greatest test.

It is also the duty of the Forest Service to make sure that the grazing facilities of the forests are properly utilized. To-day the forests furnish range for approximately 2,375,000 cattle and horses, and 8,500,000 sheep and goats. Then too, there are the watersheds for some 1,200 cities and towns which lie largely or wholly within the National Forests and which must be guarded against contamination or despoliation. A further duty is that of scientific research to find out how to make better use of all our forests and of the timber and other forest products which they yield.

Apalling Timber Consumption.

Even more important, in many respects, is the timber business of the forests. The total saw timber stand on these tracts is estimated at 500 billion board feet, and the yearly cut for all purposes is over 800 million board feet. As the ripe timber is harvested new growth takes its place, and if protected from fire will in due time furnish another harvest. But this is not true of our privately owned forests. The cut of Government-owned timber is trifling in comparison with the average annual cut and loss, estimated at 26 billion cubic feet, for the entire country.

This condition justifies the utmost concern on the part of all whose interests will be affected by timber scarcity, and that means the whole Nation. Only one-fifth of our original virgin forest area is left in this country, while on all our forest lands, private and public, we are growing less than one-fourth the amount of timber annually consumed.

In the face of this ominous situation Colonel Greeley and the Department of Agriculture are urging a program to stop wasteful and unnecessary forest destruction and to keep our timberlands growing crops of trees. It calls for greatly enlarging the fire-protection work in cooperation with the States, and enlisting their cooperation to require private owners not to use methods that turn the land to a waste; extending and consolidating Federal Forest holdings; reforesting denuded lands in the National Forests; making a Federal Survey of the forest resources in the important forest regions and of our forest requirements, in order that the Nation may be in position to conserve intelligently its remaining timber resources.

"I want to make the National Forests of greater national service," is the way Colonel Greeley sums up his task. "I have seen how these great tracts can serve both material and recreational needs, and I want to raise this service to the maximum. At the same time we propose in every way possible to bring home to the people the need for a ^{same} ~~same~~ conservation policy with respect to private forests, for if the Nation fails to call a halt on forest devastation, it will pay a terrible price!"

Such is the story of the Forest Service and the man who is directing it. It is but one of seventeen bureaus of the United States Department of Agriculture, all of which are working together to serve the Nation.

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