

## ADDRESSES AND EXTRACTS.

The following address by Hon. J. Sterling Morton, delivered April 22, 1887, at the State University, Lincoln, Nebr., has a fitting place in a manual of Arbor Day:



### ARBOR DAY: ITS ORIGIN AND GROWTH.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Just as stars in the sky brighten all the firmament with light, so holidays and anniversaries commemorate exalted characters, recall noble deeds, and perpetuate pure principles, illumine the arena of human life, and light up the higher pathways for manly effort and ambition.

Ordinary holidays are retrospective. They honor something good and great which has been, and, by its exaltation, commend it to the emulation of mankind. Thus the past is made to inspire the present, and the present to reach into and influence the immeasurable and unknowable future.

But "Arbor Day"—Nebraska's own home-invented and home-instituted anniversary—which has been already transplanted to nearly every State in the American Union, and even adopted in foreign lands, is not like other holidays. Each of those reposes upon the past, while Arbor Day proposes for the future. It contemplates, not the good and the beautiful of past generations, but it sketches, outlines, establishes the useful and the beautiful for the ages yet to come. Other anniversaries stand with their backs to the future, peering into and worshipping the past; but Arbor Day faces the future with an affectionate solicitude, regarding it as an artist his canvas, and etches upon our prairies and plains gigantic groves and towering forests of waving trees, which shall for our posterity become consummate living pictures, compared to which the gorgeous colorings of Rubens are tame and insignificant.

The wooded landscape in sunlight and in shadow, which you—in the trees you have planted to-day—have only faintly limned, shall in the future fruition of their summer beauty compel the admiration and gratitude of men and women now unborn,

who shall see with interest and satisfaction their symmetry and loveliness. As one friend hands to another a bouquet, so this anniversary sends greetings and flowers, foliage and fruit, to posterity. It is the sole holiday of the human family which looks forward and not backward.

Arbor Day originated in Lincoln on January 4, 1872. Upon that day the festival was instituted by a resolution of the Nebraska State board of agriculture. It was my good fortune to have thought out this plan for popularizing arboriculture and to have originated the term or phrase "Arbor Day" and to have written, submitted, and advocated that resolution, and thus to have established this anniversary. It will grow in popular esteem from year to year, until finally it shall be observed universally throughout the Union of American States.

It has become the scholastic festival of our times. Common schools, colleges, and universities have taken its practical observance under their own special and intelligent direction. The zeal of youth and the cultured love of the beautiful combine to perpetuate and to popularize it.

That which should survive in America must harmonize with education and refinement. Whatsoever the schools, the teachers, and the pupils shall foster and encourage, shall live and flourish, mentally and morally, forever. Students, scholars, and philosophers have ever been associated with trees and their conservation. The Academeia of Athens where Socrates and Plato taught was only a grove of plane trees. There rhetoric, logic, and philosophy were given to the youth of Greece by those majestic men, whose great thoughts more than two thousand years after their death are still vitalizing and energizing the world of mind. The plane tree that Agamemnon planted at Delphos; the one grown by Menelaus, the husband of Helen of Troy; and that one which so charmed Xerxes with its surpassless beauty, when invading Greece with his great army, that he remained one entire day wrapped in its admiration, encircling it with a gold band, decking it with precious jewels, having its figure stamped upon a golden medal, and by his delay losing his subsequent battle with the Greeks—these are all historic trees and yet strangers almost to the average reader.

But the beautiful avenues and tranquil shades of the grand plane tree, which adorned the Academeia of Athens, are familiar to every student. The voice of Socrates mingled with the music of their waving boughs and Plato mused beneath their far-extending shadows. Thus the first fruits of philosophy are borne to us with the fact that Grecian civilization was a tree-planting civilization. And the transmitted wisdom of those ages illustrates how marvelously trees and learning have always been intimately associated together.

Upon the inner bark, called "liber," of trees came the annals, the lore of all the ancient world's written life inscribed by the stylus. Not only from tree bark has the intellect of man taken the record of its early development, but even the word "library," which embraces all the conserved thoughts of all the thinking ages, comes from the inner bark of a tree. And the word "book," take either derivation you choose, comes from one in German or Saxon or Scandinavian, meaning beech wood, because in the dawn of learning all records were written on beech boards, and the leaf and the folio which make up the book came to us also from the trees.

But leaving ancient times, ceasing to trace tree ancestry from words, and reluctantly remaining silent as to many delightful delusions concerning the sacred groves of Greece and Rome and their storied genii, who gave wisdom to sages and judgment to lawmakers, and skipping likewise all the tree lore and tree metaphor in the Bible—and that is indeed self-denial on an occasion like this—let us see how forests and our English ancestry are indissolubly connected, and how, by the very law of heredity, we should all become amateur foresters.

The Druids first planted forests and groves in England. In the misty twilight between barbarism and civilization the teachers and students of Great Britain were Druids. All their discourses and ceremonies transpired in the oaken groves and

sacred orchards of their own planting, and Pliny declares the word "Druid" to have come from the Greek word *drus*—an oak. And while no Druid oaks now remain, there are still in England many very venerable trees. Among them are the Damory oak, of Dorsetshire, 2,000 years of age; Owen Glendower's oak at Shelton, near Shrewsbury, from the branches of which that chieftain looked down upon the battle between Henry IV and Henry Percy in 1403. The great oak of Magdalen College, Oxford, was a sturdy sapling when nine hundred years ago Alfred the Great founded that institution of learning. It received injuries during the reign of Charles I which at the close of the last century caused its decay and death.

Windsor Forest is notable also for its majestic oaks of great age, one of them known to have withstood more than a thousand years of winter and summer storms. Not many decades have passed since Herne's oak, which had borne that hunter's name from the reign of Elizabeth, was blown down. In the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Shakespeare has told its story. Elizabeth, who was first saluted at Hatfield as "the Queen of England," in the shade of the towering trees of oak which line its broadest avenues, greatly encouraged agriculture, and was among the first English-speaking advocates of forestry.

When Columbus was seeking a new world, his crew, anxious and incredulous, even unto mutiny, the waves bore out to his ship twigs and foliage from the forests of the unknown land, giving him hope, faith, victory even, as the dove with the olive branch had carried God's peace to Noah centuries before.

Nearly two hundred years after Columbus came the Puritans, and then began the war upon the woodlands of America. Since then, ax in hand, the race has advanced from the Atlantic Seaboard westward for more than two centuries, devastating forests with most unreasoning energy, always cutting them down, and never replanting them. Hewing their way through the Eastern and Middle States, the pioneers have wantonly destroyed without thought of their posterity millions upon millions of acres of primeval woodlands.

Cleaving right and left through Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana, felling giant trees, rolling them into log heaps and destroying them by fire, emigration emerged upon the treeless plains of Illinois and the Northwest.

Nature teaches by antithesis. When sick we learn to value health; when blind we realize the beneficence, the surprising and delicious sense of sight; when deaf we dream of the music we loved to hear, and melodies forever dead to the ear float through the mind that is insulated from sound like sweet memories of the loved and lost. So these treeless plains, stretching from Lake Michigan to the Rocky Mountains, were unfolded to the vision of the pioneer as a great lesson to teach him, by contrast with the grand forests whence he had just emerged, the indispensability of woodlands and their economical use. Almost rainless, only habitable by bringing forest products from other lands, these prairies, by object teaching, inculcated tree planting as a necessity and the conservation of the few fire-scarred forests along their streams as an individual and public duty. Hence out of our physical environments have grown this anniversary and the intelligent zeal of Nebraskans in establishing woodlands where they found only the monotony of plain, until to-day this State stands foremost in practical forestry among all the members of the American Union.

An arboretum is to tree culture what a university is to mental life. The skilled forester gathers in the former all varieties of trees, studies the habits and requirements of each, and stimulates growth and defines forms by all the appliances of his art. In the universities are collected human intellects of all types and all degrees of strength and quickness. Here, as among the trees, are all the inexorable and ineffaceable results of the operations of the law of heredity. Here, as in the arboretum, we are taught that though nurture may do much, nature does most.

The cottonwood can never become an oak, but it can pass the oak in the race for maturity. It can even aid the oak to become more stately in form, to grow straighter

and taller than when left to itself, without the competition of more swiftly shooting trees. A row of acorns planted between two lines of infant cottonwoods will come up and make an effort to reach sunlight, up beyond the shadows of their soft-wood competitors, which oaks never make when planted by themselves. Thus in the arboretum the less is made to act as a nurse and guardian to the more valuable timber. At Arbor Lodge some years since, in 1865, I planted a long row of black walnuts between two ranks of swiftly growing soft-wood trees—maple on one side and cottonwood on the other. During these twenty years I have watched the walnuts growing symmetrically and beautifully to great height, in their struggle to reach the light up and beyond the shade of their less valuable contemporaries and co-tenants. They are higher, better trees than they would have been without the rivalry of their neighbors—their classmates.

So mind by contact with mind and struggle of brain with brain is improved. The mediocrity of one is almost obliterated by contests with the superiority of another. Just as trees seek—must have—sunlight, just as they reach up into the sky for it out from shade, so the mind in competitive seeking after knowledge ever exalts itself, perfects and embellishes itself. A dull brain developing in solitude is dwarfed and gnarled like a lone oak on the prairie; but associated with the sharp, quick perceptions of its superiors, it becomes a better brain, and bestows benefits upon mankind where in solitude it would have withered into fruitlessness. The wonderful similitudes between tree life and human life are almost innumerable. They have been recognized in all ages, and man's metaphors for all that is beautiful, useful, desirable, and immortal have been, since written language began, largely drawn from sylvan life. The "Tree of Knowledge," the "Tree of Liberty," the "Tree of Everlasting Life" have been planted in all poesy; they have bloomed in all literature from the remotest of historic times. Books not drawing simile, metaphor, or other figure of speech from tree life have been rare indeed. But the most beautiful tree, with its sheltering arms and its many-voiced foliage singing in the breeze, dancing in the sunbeams, and motioning to its own reflections on the greensward mirror below, with all its lustrous burden of fruit or flowers shimmering in the light, has a lower life invisible to us. Deep in the dark, damp earth its rootlets are groveling for existence—seeking here and there all manner of rottenness and feeding thereon with gluttonous avidity. Up in the clouds, gilded with sunshine, resplendent with coloring, nods the stately head; but down in the darkness and dirt are its supporters.

And as trees thus lead a dual life, an upper and a lower, so does man. The intellect, the reason, bathes in the light of knowledge. It scales the height of the firmament and reads the story of the stars. It descends into the profoundest depths of the sea and wrenches the secrets of creation from the rocks and shoals. Beautiful, symmetrical, flashing, and entrancing as a grand oak in autumn when crowned with gorgeous gold and crimson and purple leaves is the sturdy mind of a mature man, who, in temperance and tranquillity, has during a useful life grown strong in knowle'ge, in truth, fidelity, and honor.

Man's intellectual life must dominate. His lower life must be subservient. His mentality, like the tree top with its foliage, flowers, and luscious fruit, alone bestows the blessings. That is man's higher life, and where it governs, man is man as nature meant man to be. The small trees of to-day's planting will develop into the groves and forests of the future. They will contribute the materials for ships, railroads, business edifices, and homes, to be used by those who are born in coming centuries.

The almost infinite possibilities of a tree germ came to my mind last summer when, traveling in a railway carriage amid the beautifully cultivated fields of Belgium, a cotton wood seed on its wings of down drifted into my compartment. It came like a materialized whisper from home. Catching it in my hand I forgot the present and wandered into the past to a floating mote like that, which had years and years before been planted by the winds and currents on the banks of the Missouri. That mote had taken life and root and growing to splendid proportions until in 1854 the

ax of the pioneers had vanquished it, and the saw, seizing it with relentless, whirling teeth, had reduced it to lumber. From its treehood evolved a human habitation, a home—my home—wherein a mother's love had blossomed and fruited with a sweetness surpassing the loveliness of the rose and the honeysuckle. Thus from that former feathery floater in mid-air grew a home and all the endearing contentment and infinite satisfaction which that blessed Anglo-Saxon word conveys—that one word which means all that is worth living for and for which alone all good men and women are living.

Here are a few acorns to-day; to-morrow, a century hence, they are sturdy oaks, then ships, railroads, carriages, and everything useful, and parts of homes which are all—in both poetry and reality—that is lovable, beautiful, and supremely tender in the career of humanity from birth to death. The real of to-day was the ideal of yesterday; the ideal of to-day will be the real of to-morrow.

And as arboretums are developing the infant forests, nursing tremendous timbers, whence masts and spars and sills and joists shall emerge into swiftly sailing ships



and massive marts of trade, which are to convey and cover the commerce of coming times, so in the schools, the colleges, and universities are growing the mental timber whence the State shall cull in the near future those pillars and supports which aid to bear up forever in America civil and religious liberty; that is, freedom to think, freedom to speak, freedom to trade, freedom to develop individualism, and to assert its consciousness of right without fear either of sectarian or partisan bigotry. Let us all, then, each in his vocation and sphere, plant wisely for the years to come, rather than dwell dejectedly upon the years gone and going—the farmer, his forest and orchard, the teacher his science and morals. Improved materially by the former, intellectually by the latter, the world will well with gratitude to both. But tree planter and teacher united in one shall be declared the best benefactor of modern times—the chief provider for posterity.

On the 10th day of July, 1886, from the crowded, hurrying streets of London I loitered into the solemn aisles of St. Paul's Cathedral. Around on every side were the statues of England's heroes. Upon tablets of brass and marble were inscribed their eulogiums. In fierce warfare on wave and field they had exalted English

courage and won renown for England's arms. Nelson and Wellington, victors by sea and land, were there, and hundreds more whose epitaphs were written in blood which, as it poured from ghastly wounds, had borne other mortals to the unknown world. Few men who won distinction in civil life are entombed at St. Paul's, but among them is the gifted architect, Sir Christopher Wren, in whose brain the concept of St. Paul's Cathedral had a mental existence before it materialized in massive marble. His epitaph is plain, brief, truthful, impressive; it is one which each honorable man in all the world may humbly strive for and become the better for the striving; it is one which every faithful disciple of horticulture, of forestry, will deserve from his friends, his family, and his country; vast orchards which he has planted and the great arms of towering elms, spreading their soothing shade like a benediction over the weary wayfarer who rests at their feet, and all the fluttering foliage whispering to the wanton winds shall tell the story of his benefaction to humanity, arbor-phoning that epitaph with perennial fidelity, "Si quæris monumentum, circumspice"—If you seek my monument, look around you.

Appropriately following the address of Mr. Morton, some extracts from an address of the Hon. B. G. Northrop, on Arbor Day, before the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, have place here:

#### OBSERVANCE OF ARBOR DAY BY SCHOOLS.

In this grand work initiated by Governor Morton [J. Sterling Morton], its application to schools was not named. The great problem then was to meet the urgent needs of vast treeless prairies. At the meeting of the American Forestry Association, held at St. Paul, Minn., in August, 1883, a resolution which I offered in favor of observing Arbor Day in schools in all our States and in the provinces of the Dominion of Canada (the association being international) was adopted, and a committee to push that work was appointed. Continued as their chairman from that day to this, I have presented the claims of Arbor Day personally or by letter to the governor or State school superintendent in all our States and Territories. My first efforts were not encouraging. By men in high positions Arbor Day was deemed an obtrusive innovation. It was no surprise to me when my paper on "Arbor Day in Schools," read at the National Educational Association (department of superintendence) at Washington, in February, 1884, called out the comment, "This subject is out of place here." Though that paper was printed by the United States Bureau of Education, it was a grateful surprise that the next meeting of the National Educational Association, held in August of the same year, at Madison, Wis., with an unprecedentedly large attendance, unanimously adopted my resolution in favor of Arbor Day in schools in all our States.

The logic of events has answered objections. Wherever it has been fairly tried, it has stood the test of experience. Now such a day is observed in forty States and Territories in accordance with legislative act, or by special recommendation of the governor or State school superintendent, or the State grange, or the State horticultural and agricultural societies, and in some States, as in Connecticut, by all these combined. It has already become the most interesting, widely observed, and useful of school holidays.

Arbor Day has fostered love of country. Now that the national flag with its forty-four stars floats over all the schoolhouses in so many States, patriotism is effectively combined with the Arbor Day addresses, recitations, and songs. Among the latter, the "Star Spangled Banner" and "America" usually find a place. Who can estimate the educating influence already exerted upon the myriads of youth who have participated in these exercises?

To the teaching of forestry in schools, it is objected that the course of study is already overcrowded—and this is true. But I have long urged that trees and tree life and culture form a fit subject for the oral lessons now common in all our best