Our Most Useful Holiday

IT is but natural that the people of the United States should take an especial interest in Arbor Day, because Arbor Day has been from the outset a distinctly American holiday. Year by year it has come to have a more and more general observance. All over this country and in parts of Canada this interesting annual occasion receives, each successive year, an increasing amount of attention from the public. It has also become the custom in later years for the president of the United States to issue a proclamation to the school children urging them to devote the day not only to special exercises but also to actual tree planting.

Nor is it difficult to discover the main cause of this growing attention to the observance of Arbor Day. It lies in a deepening realization of the importance of trees to us as a nation. The American people have suddenly awakened to the fact that not only is the lumber supply of the country being exhausted at a dangerously rapid rate, with no prospect of replenishing, but, worse yet, the wanton waste of our forests has a sequel in climatic changes that may mean hardship for many citizens of the republic. Indeed, some experts go so far as to attribute to this cause the terrific heat of last summer and the approximately exceptional cold of the past winter.

"Tree Day" would be quite as appropriate a name as Arbor Day for the spring holiday and a notable feature of its observance in the average community consists in the planting of trees and shrubs along roadsides and in other suitable places. In some instances the work devolves, by decree of time-honored custom, upon magistrates, local officials or public-spirited citizens, but for the most part it is in the hands of the teachers and pupils of public and private schools. It is not too much to say that Arbor Day, like several other of the spring festivals, is primarily a young people's holiday.

For all that most communities observe Arbor Day in April, the fact remains that it is a movable festival, and there are some sections of the country where, owing to the climate, it is desirable to have the tree planting exercises at some other time of year. In a majority of our states the date for Arbor Day is either selected by the state legislature or by the governor of the state acting under legislative authority. Usually, superintendents of schools supplement the gubernatorial proclamations on the subject of Arbor Day by the issuance of open letters bearing upon the aim and object of the holiday and with due reference to the lessons it teaches.

The state of Nebraska gets credit for originating Arbor Day, for it was the pioneer in what has become a national movement. The individual who was the original author of the scheme was none other than Mr. J. Sterling Morton, who afterward became Secretary of Agriculture in the Cabinet of President Cleveland during the latter's second term in the White House. It was in 1872 that Mr. Morton conceived the idea of this unique holiday and he forthwith introduced before the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture, of which he was a member, a resolution setting apart April 10 of that year as "tree planting day."

The legislature finally adopted the resolution as proposed by Mr. Morton, although some of his colleagues thought that "Sylvan Day" would be a better title for the newly-created festival, and there is a portion of the public that inclines to this belief today. The new scheme proved an emphatic success and more than one million trees were planted throughout Nebraska on that first Arbor Day. Not only were the children of the public schools interested from the outset, but individuals and local societies of various kinds participated. This was due in part, no doubt, to the fact that the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture, which created the holiday, offered a prize of one hundred dollars to the agricultural society of that county which planted properly the largest number of trees, and provided a farm library and a purse of twenty-five dollars for the person who planted the largest number of trees.

The next year Arbor Day was observed throughout Nebraska with increasing enthusiasm and in 1874 the governor, by official proclamation, designated the second Wednesday of April as Arbor Day for Nebraska. In 1885, when the legislature of the state formally designated Arbor Day as a holiday the date was changed to April 22. If Nebraska can be taken as an example, the influence of Arbor Day is certainly most beneficial and the only pity is that other states could not have placed the holiday on their official calendars as early as did Nebraska. Statistics show that in a period of sixteen years following the date on which Farmer Morton secured the adoption of the Arbor Day project a total of three hundred and fifty million trees and vines were planted in Nebraska as the direct outcome of this movement.

The first states to follow the example of Nebraska in adopting Arbor Day were Michigan and Minnesota, which took action in 1876. Thereafter there followed a steady procession of other states, the legislatures of which became converts to the popular idea. In 1887 the movement took root in Canada, the Educational Department of Ontario setting apart a day on which the trustees of every rural school and incorporated village were desired to plant shade trees and make flower beds. Oddly enough, the State of New York did not fall into line in this movement until the year 1888, but when the state legislature did take up the matter it enacted very explicit legislation, prescribing for exercises in the public schools tending to encourage the planting, protection and preservation of trees and shrubs.

Thus far only one foreign country has adopted the American holiday known as Arbor Day. The nation that has paid us this compliment of imitation is Spain, but in the land of the Dons the festival is known as Festa del Arboi, meaning the Fete of the Tree. The Spanish holiday was inaugurated in 1896 and is celebrated earlier than in this country—namely, on March 28. On the first Tree Day in Spain the young King Alfonso with the queen regent and the ladies of the court proceeded to grounds situated near the village of Hortazela, some two miles distant from Madrid. Here the king planted a pine sapling and two thousand children selected from the schools of Madrid, immediately followed his example. Then gold medals commemorative of the event and duly inscribed with the date were distributed among the youthful tree planters. Although only Spain has actually copied the Yankee customs of Arbor Day, several other countries, notably France, Great Britain, Japan and New Zealand, have holidays that are very similar to our tree-planting festival.

It is probable that very few of the children who plant trees or assist in planting trees on Arbor Day realize that the United States government maintains a big institution the primary purpose of which is not merely to encourage but actually to carry on tree planting. This establishment, for the employes of which every day in the year is Arbor Day, is known as the Division of Silviculture and is a branch of the U. S. Forest Service. In the average year Uncle Sam's official tree planters set out upwards of half a million trees, most of them located in the national forests. Moreover, not only does Uncle Sam maintain his own nurseries as a source of supply for his perpetual tree planting campaign, but he also aids private owners who desire to set out trees on their property. Finally, Uncle Sam is conducting valuable experiments in nursery operations and planting work in co-operation with nine different universities and state agricultural experiment stations. The object of these experiments is to ascertain what species are best adapted to different regions and to improve methods of planting and cultivation.

Hurt Her Womanly Dignity

Fair American Would Not "Stand for" Time-Honored Custom of House of Lords.

"At his wife's behest, a travel-stained American whom I met in London wrote innumerable letters and made six different trips to the American embassy to secure a ticket admitting them to the House of Lords," said the traveler. "Even when backed up by an embassy, gaining admission to the House of Lords is no trivial performance. Through historic halls and lobbies and up staircases guarded by policemen the applicant makes his halting progress until the door of the lords is reached, where he sits cooling his heels for another ten minutes while the seal-bedecked doorkeeper without and the Black Rod within debate the genuineness of his credentials. After an interval which strained the Americans' patience to the breaking point they were ushered into the august chamber, where the woman was given a seat in a little back pew on the main floor, while the man was accorded the privilege of standing behind her. Once inside the hall, the man's political instinct asserted itself, and he became deeply interested in the debate, but, to his dismay, his wife got up after about five minutes and said:

"'Come on. I can't stand this.'

"Wonderingly he followed her into the lobby. 'What on earth is the matter?' he asked.

"'Matter?' she said. 'Just look at those men. They've got their hats on. You don't suppose I am going to stay any place where men keep their hats on in my presence, do you? I've never been used to it at home, and I shan't get used to it here.'

"With one regretful look backward at the noble earl who then held the floor, the man said, 'Very well,' and humbly accompanied her home."

Bath of Sentimentality.

Of John Grier Hibben, the new president of Princeton, a Peoria man said the other day: "Hibben had a keen intellect. Hence I'm not surprised at his success. Why, his fine, strong mind, his hatred of sentimentality and gush, were remarkable even in his boyhood here in Peoria.

"As a boy I was rather a gusher myself. I once went to a matinee with Hibben. The play was one of Daly's—a sentimental piece—and in the second act I began to blubber. Miss Rehan spoke beautifully her silly, sentimental lines, and big tears flowed, one after another, from my eyes.

"'Why, you're crying,' whispered Hibben.

"'Well,' said I, 'in a play as sad as this I ain't ashamed to show a little feeling.'

"'Feeling?' Hibben looked at my wet and teary cheeks, 'Oh, he said, 'feeling is all right, but you don't need to wash your face in it.'"

Make it easier for your fat friends by calling them portly.

Wants a Rational Calendar

British Columbia Man Boldly Asserts That He Can Improve on the Present One.

The calendar and the hours of the day seem to most of us almost like part of the natural and immutable order of things, and however much trouble the present indefensible system caused, men have felt that it was rash—almost impious—to suggest a change in it. "Give us back our eleven days!" cried the mob when the Gregorian calendar was introduced into Great Britain. From the days of Julius Caesar to our own he has been a bold reformer indeed who would suggest changes in the disorderly procession of months. Now enters Moses B. Cotsworth of Victoria, B. C., with a proposal for a rational calendar. He would divide the year into thirteen months, each of twenty-eight days, which would leave one extra day in the year, and this he beautifully plans as a free day for every one—free from interest charges on money, the necessity of work, the wage scale, etc. Then each month would commence on Sunday, and the first, eighth, fifteenth and twenty-second days of each month would be Sundays. President Hadley of Yale is quoted as saying that the month of four weeks "will come as a commercial necessity." The adjustment to the change would be very small compared to that necessitated when standard time was introduced on transcontinental railways. Mr. Cotsworth has literature to distribute, poking fun at the present system. If he wins, school children need no longer learn "Thirty days hath September."—Medical Journal.

Women need not be beautiful every day of their lives; it is sufficient that they have moments which one does not forget and the return of which one expects.—Victor Cherbuliez.

TRESPASSERS ON RAILROADS

Many Lives Lost Every Year From This Cause—Reasons Why Trespassing Should be Stopped.

Washington, D. C.—Statistics compiled by the Interstate Commerce Commission are directing popular attention strongly to the large number of people who are annually killed and injured while trespassing on the property of the railways of the United States Refering to this subject in an address delivered before the Railroad Club of Richmond, Va., President Finley, of the Southern Railway Company, said:

"While speaking on the subject of preventable accidents, let me call attention to the great loss of life on American railways by trespassers on railway property. I will make no mention of the thousands of cases of personal injuries sustained annually by persons trespassing on railway property, in connection with which the railways are called upon to pay out annually large sums, or of the great damage done to railway property caused by acts of trespassers, I will simply refer to the loss of life.

"The statistics of the Interstate Commerce Commission show that no less than 51,083 people were killed while trespassing on the property of the railways of this country during the ten years, 1902-1911, and that out of the total number of people, 10,396, killed for the year ended June 30, 1911, 5,284, or more than 50 per cent, were trespassers. The railways, at an expense of millions of dollars for the installation of block signals, have carried the prevention of collisions so far that the total number of passengers and employees killed in such accidents annual is about 400. While we should aim, through greater efficiency of operation, to eliminate these accidents entirely, is it not worth while for the governments to take some action to stop the evil of trespassing which costs an average of over 5,000 lives annually.

"If for no other reason than for the protection of those who participate in it, trespassing should be abolished in some way. I mention this in the hope that not only those interested in the welfare and prosperity of our railways, but in the welfare of the nation, will do everything that is within their power to aid in bringing about the enactment of such reasonable and helpful legislation as will result in a great saving of life, and, at the same time, relieve the railways of the country of considerable trouble and expense."

Recreation of Authors.

Emerson Hough, author of The Mississippi Bubble, 54-40 or Fight, The Purchase Price, etc., spends several weeks each year hunting and fishing.

Frederic Isham is a confirmed globe-trotter. The Social Bucaneer and other novels from his pen have been written as he traveled.

James Whitcomb Riley is a lover of nature. Now he spends much of his time in a big motor car.

Wells Hastings, who wrote The Man in the Brown Derby, is an art critic. Much of his leisure time is passed in the galleries.

Harold MacGrath is fond of travel and visiting with friends. He says The Carpet From Bagdad gave him a fine excuse to go to the Orient.

Kate Trible Sharber, who can claim At the Age of Eve as her very own, is a great reader of serious things.

William Johnston wrote The Yellow Letter for recreation. During work hours he is a practical newspaper man.

Lloyd Osborne is an enthusiastic member of the Lambs' Club. A Person of Some Importance was partly written in the club-house writing room.

Miss I. A. R. Wylie studies international questions. The Germans admirably sets forth her ideas on this subject.

Howard Chandler Christy, the artist, is fond of out-of-door life, plays tennis and takes an active interest in the work about his farm.

Henry Russell Miller cultivates a back-yard garden. The Man Higher Up was written for recreation, but His Rise to Power was a serious effort.

Harris Dickson, who has made Old Reliable famous, visits New York City and his college at Washington, once a year.

Mrs. May Futrelle, author of Secretary of Frivolous Affairs, cultivates rare flowers.

Leaders Stand by Economy Idea.

Washington.—Democratic leaders of the house have determined to stand by their plans for economy in the appropriation supply bills and have served notice that the first clash will soon come in conference on the army appropriation bill. The senate committee on military affairs added to the house bill $7,537,453. The house Democrats declare that if anything will delay an adjournment of Congress in time for the national conventions it will be a refusal of the senate conferees to yield on the supply bills.

A Rich Young Grand Duchess.

London.—The new Grand Duchess Marie of Luxemburg will be very rich for she succeeds to nearly all the immense fortune of her father, the late grand duke, who was very wealthy and spent large sums on the duchy He used to pay the diplomatic representatives whom he maintained at Berlin, Paris, Vienna, Brussels and The Hague. In London Luxemburg is represented by the Netherlands minister. The grand duchess has been very carefully brought up. She has learned many languages.

The King's Gardener.

London. — The head gardener at Windsor Castle finds himself very busy at this time of the year. He receives almost daily visits from the representatives of some of the leading firms of horticulturists both at home and from abroad. The "travelers" in bulbs, roots and shrubs come with illustrated catalogues and price lists of the various plants and shrubs that may be required for "forcing" purposes. The plants that are ordered now will be delivered at Windsor in November.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

LESSON FOR APRIL 21.

THE APPOINTING OF THE TWELVE.

LESSON TEXT—3:7-19 and Matt. 5:13-16.

GOLDEN TEXT—"Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye go and bear fruit."—John 15:16 (R. V.).

Things do not happen in the realm of religion, they come to pass. No man can alone accomplish any great task. Every great leader has been blessed by one or more equally great helpers. Luther had his Melancthon; Wesley had his brother Charles, Whitfield and others; Moody had Whittle, Bliss, Sankey and more. These leaders but followed "in his steps."

Jesus' ministry made him very much observed and at the same time greatly multiplied his duties and burdens. When, therefore, he chose these disciples he desired not only to obtain help and to begin to teach those who were afterward to take up his work, but like every other act, he desired to teach a lesson to those who were so carefully observing his life.

So it was that the significant number of twelve, corresponding to the twelve tribes, at once confirmed his assumption of the Messiahship. This meant that in him those wondrous prophecies were being fulfilled, and it also served to stimulate those upon whom the choice fell. Moses who led this people out of Egypt had to be helped (Ex. 18:17-24) in his work and a greater who is to found a new kingdom calls about him those who shall do a greater work than merely to judge the people. Why greater? Because they are not only to judge results but are to change results by altering causes. They are to have power over demons even as the Master, for evil has no rights. The source of their power is to be Jesus for he is to be "with them"—power and protection as well. So with us. (Matt. 28:20.) Their power is to grow with usage, for we learn by doing, hence he sends them forth. Their going is for the proclamation of the facts of this new kingdom they are to preach, not to argue. Apologetics are well enough at time, but the disciple who brings things to pass is he who does not so much plead for God as he who witnesses for God. Those who are sent need never fear for not only is he with them but they are given authority to do this specified work, and with the authority is also given wisdom (Luke 24:49).

Some Things It Teaches and Why.

This lesson is different from our previous one where Jesus first called his disciples. Luke tells us that these twelve were selected from among the rest of the disciples. The greater nearness and more extended authority of these "messengers" called upon them greater testings than the others who were disciples or "learners."

Matthew tells us what Jesus said is to be the character of his representatives. He likens them to salt and to a light. "Nothing is better for the whole body than salt and sun" were the words of Pliny. Salt is a great cleansing agency; it is a strong tonic; it has great preservative qualities; it is a great preventive against corruption, but Jesus adds, if salt loses its saline quality it becomes like any other earth; it has no distinguishing essential, characteristic. Let not the Christian, who is "the salt of the earth" lose his identity, lose his saltness and become like the world about him. If he does he is fit then only to be trodden under the foot of man. These disciples are to be the light of the world. It is a good thing to preserve, to purify, to cleanse, but it is a greater thing to energize, to direct, to lead. The disciple is not only to be salt but sun as well. He is to be one who shall have no dealing with those who are the workers of darkness; he is to be a light, a city set upon a hill, one who shall direct, inspire, enthuse, energize. He is not to be hidden from men but note, he is to shine "before" men and not to be seen "of men." And it is by their good works that the Father in Heaven is to receive his glory.

How Men Are Saved.

These apostles came from many walks in life and represent varied temperaments. The aggressive Peter and the other "son of thunder" who would call down fire upon those who walked not with Jesus. The reflective cautious Thomas, the plotting practical Judas, "who also betrayed him." These are the men who are sent forth, some as public heralds (John 1:36) and some by personal solicitation (Jas. 1:41) to win yet other followers.

Men are saved through saved men and those whom he sends forth are those who have first learned to follow. Their work is made permanent only as they "abide" in him. God wants the hearing ear, the believing heart and the confessing mouth—(Rom. 10:14).

Those whom Jesus sends are to offer his kingdom to men not to force it upon them. They must expect to be received as he was received and how that shall be he plainly foretells (Matt. 10). Their work shall bring variance upon earth, yea even among those of the same family, but the man who refuses to go, to take up this cross, is none of his, "is not worthy of me."

Jesus called men (not angels) to help him establish this new kingdom because he needed their help. He took them apart often during the three years of their preparation. He promised to be with them in power, to protect them. He told them what to expect and his purpose in sending them out as his representatives.

Jesus saw plainly that the victories of his kingdom are often hindered rather than helped by the presence of great crowds (v. 12).

VERY GOOD REASON.

Startem—Why didn't you get a bigger automobile?

Shovem—I wanted one I could push up hill.

Marie Tempest's Nose.

At the Lenten musicale at the Waldorf-Astoria a young matron related a bon-mot of Marie Tempest's.

"Miss Tempest's nose is frightfully pug, isn't it?" she began. "Well, I met her at a tea once, and she joked about her nose as if it had belonged to someone else.

"'When the Creator,' she said, 'was looking for a nose for me he took, you see, the first one that turned up.'"