

Quotes from *Forests of North America*

Shaler, N. S. 1887. *Forests of North America*. Scribners. May pp. 561-580

“Most persons will heartily agree that it is our bounden duty to transmit the inheritance which we enjoy in the earth unimpaired to the generations yet to be.”

“When the present crude notions of the rights of the owners of land have become qualified by reason, when it is accepted that the possessor of land has only a reasonable usufruct in the piece of the earth of which he holds, and that he has no right to use it wastefully or to his neighbor’s injury, we may meet this problem with fair success.”

“It seems to the present writer that the Government has a right to require that all the existing forests, the preservation of which may be deemed necessary to the good of the valley in which they lie, should be maintained in their present condition; or, if removed, that they should be replaced by equivalent plantations of timber.”

“Lastly, the abundant and cheap transportation of food-products from these prairies to the Appalachian district and the Atlantic shore lands spared their forests from the axe by making the tillage of all but the most fertile lands unprofitable. The effect of this Western food-supply has been so great that, since the middle of the century, it has not only in good part stopped the process of clearing away the Appalachian woods, but in certain districts, especially in New England, extensive areas of land which had been long under tillage have been allowed to return to the forest state.”

“In Massachusetts, for instance, it is probably that the area now possessed by timber is considerably greater than it was at the beginning of the present century. The present writer, in his many journeys through this State, has observed many thousand acres of woods where the marks of former tillage – corn-hills, and walls composed of boulders gathered from the once cleared land – attest the sometimes clearing away of the forest; but he has not, in all, seen as much as one thousand acres which had recently been won to the plough.”