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SOIL SURVEYS—FORESTRY

SPEECHES

OF

HON. CHAUNCEY M. ^{St. John} DEPEW

OF NEW YORK "

IN THE

SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 7 AND APRIL 30, 1908



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SPEECHES
OF
HON. CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW.

FORESTRY.
May 7, 1908.

The Senate, as in Committee of the Whole, having under consideration the bill (H. R. 19158) making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1909—

Mr. DEPEW said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I listened with great interest to the remarks of the eloquent Senator from Idaho when this bill was last under discussion. He illuminates every subject which he touches, but some of us are compelled to differ with him upon his premises, his facts, and his conclusions. If we were back at the time when the country was all forests and wilderness and there were few settlements, his argument would be most impressive, but even under such conditions the flaw in it is that as scientific forestry is now understood and practiced the early settlers, instead of sweeping off the woods with reckless haste and waste, would have preserved a portion of them for the benefit of themselves and their posterity, both in wood supply and for water.

There are few subjects upon which the American people are so keenly alive as this one of forestry. I do not believe there is any branch of the Government where the appropriation commands more general approbation. The forests on the public domain are an estate belonging to the whole people of the United States. The cost of their houses and food largely depends in the future upon scientific forestry. It has been our habit always to get all possible out of the present without reckoning the future. We nearly killed off our game and exterminated our song birds and insect-destroying birds for sport before we became alive to the necessity of their preservation.

We had reduced the fish in our rivers to a point where this food was no longer available at prices which brought it within reach of the people before we adopted a system of fish hatcheries. In some of the rivers when shad was thus propagated the fishermen, who thought the price might be reduced by an

abundance of fish, attempted to assassinate the commissioners of the State. Within our recent memory we have been depleting the forests of the country. It has been done by the most wasteful methods. The business has made some of the largest of multimillionaire fortunes. Now, in the older States, tree planting is considered as necessary for agriculture or for profit as tree cutting in the olden time was essential for the clearings.

The State of New York has within the last few years spent nearly two millions of dollars in purchasing what remained of primeval forests in the Adirondack region. They were being so rapidly depleted by wasteful lumbering that the effect was already disastrous upon the navigation of the rivers, water for the canals, irrigation of the farms, and the prevention of floods. It was only day before yesterday that a shipment of a million trees arrived in New York City from Germany in this movement to reforest the Adirondack region.

We have in the United States now a supply of timber sufficient only for the next thirty years. When we consider the economical uses of wood this is appalling. It will be a serious blow to the poor man seeking to secure a home and independence when his material must be either steel, brick, or concrete. The cost then becomes prohibitive. Already hard wood for furniture and domestic purposes has so risen in price as to prove a serious tax upon the homes of the American people. Every tree that is cut down for ties for the railroad requires two growing ones to replace it, and forests are cut from year to year to supply the tremendous demands of our 200,000 miles of railroads. Every one of our great dailies exhaust in a short time 10 acres of spruce cut for wood pulp. There is no doubt that if our forests were thrown open as heretofore a few great lumber companies would make enormous fortunes, but at an expense to the whole people of the United States in generations to come which would be a thousandfold more than the fortunes thus accumulated in one generation to be dissipated in another.

Mr. Cleveland, who did many things in his Administration for which he will receive the praise of posterity, commenced the policy of forest reserves. He placed under the protec-

tion of the Government about 20,000,000 acres, but for several years there was no policy of administration for the forests. On the contrary, they were practically locked up. This left them subject to forest fires and timber thieves. Unpopularity of this isolation of a product of public necessity led whole communities to condone the stealing of the wood. In 1898 Mr. Gifford Pinchot was asked to take the head of a Bureau of Forestry. He was at that time the only thoroughly educated and experienced forester in the United States. There were only two others besides himself who had ever given attention or study to the business. He was, happily, so situated as to independence that he could lay aside careers which were open to him in the professional and business world, where large accumulations might have been had, to devote his time, talents, and experience to the public service. This he has done for ten years with astonishing and most beneficent results. When he took up the work the United States had but 40,000,000 acres of this locked-up and unadministered forests. Now there are one hundred and fifty millions, but so managed that the public of the whole country are deriving inestimable benefits from their preservation and use. Mr. Pinchot, as a profound student of this question, had not only learned methods and results in older countries, but experimented practically upon the estate of a gentleman who was deeply interested in the preservation of the woods.

It is an illuminating experience for an American to travel over the continent of Europe and to see the care and scientific skill with which governments there look after the woods. I know of communities in Germany where the forests, owned in common by the municipality, pay the entire taxes by their annual yield under a system by which they are kept unimpaired. Happily for Switzerland, the early inhabitants, over a thousand years ago, saw the effects upon their hillsides and valleys of the destruction of the forests. After visiting deforested mountain sides and devastated valleys in the United States, it is a liberal education to see the Swiss mountains cultivated up to the snow line, the farm houses perched so high that they look like fairy cabins in the air, and the trees so growing as to

catch and hold the rainfall and the water from the melting snow. Except for this intelligent care Switzerland would today be uninhabitable, these farms would long ago have disappeared from the mountain sides, the valley farms would have been destroyed by torrents, and the streams rendered useless by the uneven fall of the water. There is almost as much care in Switzerland, Germany, and France of the tree as there is of a human being to prevent injury or to punish injury.

These countries not only keep their forests up to a full state of efficiency and replacement, but they derive an income of from \$3 to \$5 an acre from them. There was more wastefulness of the forest in France than in any other of the European countries; but in repairing this France has been spending about \$50,000,000 in reforestation. During the last year the floods destroyed in some departments of France twenty-five to thirty millions of property and ruined thousands of families. The French have found that this was wholly due to cutting the trees from the hillsides, and it has led to an enormous increase of efforts for reforestation.

I had occasion at one time to study the Appalachian situation in our own country, and I came to the conclusion that with the deforesting of the Appalachian Mountains, which has already taken place, there has been a loss along the rivers which find their sources in these hills of more than \$20,000,000 a year.

Mr. BRANDEGEE. Mr. President—

The VICE-PRESIDENT. Does the Senator from New York yield to the Senator from Connecticut?

Mr. DEPEW. Certainly.

Mr. BRANDEGEE. Let me suggest to the Senator that not only are floods caused by deforestation, but the floods are succeeded by droughts, which destroy the navigability of the streams.

Mr. DEPEW. That is absolutely true. The droughts not only destroy the navigability of the streams, but the streams are filled up.

One of the greatest triumphs, in my judgment, of Mr. Pinchot and of his able assistants has been that he has captured the

intelligent lumbermen of the country. The lumbermen of the country see already the necessity of the work he is doing. I think it was at the last meeting of the Lumber Association of the United States that they passed resolutions to endow a chair of forestry in one or more of the universities of the country. Of course there are some great interests that are still opposed to this forest-reserve policy—and those great interests are sustained by honest, well-meaning, and intelligent people—

Mr. CLARK of Wyoming. Mr. President—

The VICE-PRESIDENT. Does the Senator from New York yield to the Senator from Wyoming?

Mr. DEPEW. Certainly.

Mr. CLARK of Wyoming. I dislike to interrupt the Senator—

Mr. DEPEW. It is all right.

Mr. CLARK of Wyoming. But for my personal information I should like to be advised as to what the great interests are and of whom they are composed that are opposing the forest policy?

Mr. DEPEW. I understand that many of the great sheep interests are opposed to the forest policy, and I understand that many of the cattle raisers are opposed to the forest policy, and I understand that many lumber companies—and they have come into these forests in spite of everybody and everything—are opposed to the forestry policy.

Mr. CLARK of Wyoming. The Senator, however, would not attempt to specialize as to what lumber interests are in favor of the policy and what lumber interests are opposing it?

Mr. DEPEW. No; I would not do that; but I know human nature and how it works, and I know how it has worked in the past. I call the Senator's attention especially to how the lumber interests have worked when they have had their own sweet will, unrestricted by the Government or by anything but their own judgment, in Wisconsin, in Minnesota, and in Michigan.

Mr. CLARK of Wyoming. I would ask the Senator whether or not he is informed that the largest private lumber interests in the world, the Weyerhaeuser interests, are in favor of the exact policy which the Forest Reserve Service is now carrying on?

Mr. DEPEW. Because they have been converted.

Mr. CLARK of Wyoming. After having acquired, substantially, all of the lumber in the United States save that which is owned by the Government.

Mr. DEPEW. Mr. Weyerhauser has got enough. He knows that if the Government should yield what it has, he would get that; but he does not want nor think it wise to have it all in private ownership.

Mr. FLINT. Mr. President—

The VICE-PRESIDENT. Does the Senator from New York yield to the Senator from California?

Mr. DEPEW. Certainly.

Mr. FLINT. I would suggest to the Senator from Wyoming that if the forest reserves had not been created the timber that has now been preserved and is in the forest reserves would be in Mr. Weyerhauser's possession, and he would have control of every bit of the timber in the United States.

Mr. CLARK of Wyoming. I am afraid the Senator from California misapprehended my position. I want to assure him that I am in favor of forest-reserves and not against them.

Mr. FLINT. I understand that.

Mr. DEPEW. Mr. President, under the administration of Mr. Pinchot the work of forestry has been carried to the woods, where it ought to be done. It is no longer mere bureau-work of secretaries and bookkeepers. In 1900 we had about eleven foresters in this country who understood the business, and in 1908 we have more than twelve hundred. All European countries have schools of forestry, where young men are educated to enter upon forest care, both for the public and for private individuals as a career. One of the greatest successes of Mr. Pinchot is that he has convinced the lumbermen themselves how unwise it is to destroy in a few years this source of perennial wealth. There is no greater reproduction in actual life of the fable of the goose that laid the golden egg than the cutting off of the forests. The lumbermen now understand that, and at their annual meeting they decided to endow chairs of forestry in some of the universities. Under the system pur-

sued up to the present time the waste was incalculable and irreparable. That lumberman made the most money—and making money was all that was desired—who could best select the trees which would pay the best and could be most rapidly and cheaply cut down and conveyed to the sawmill or the market. Each year saw tens of thousands of acres rendered worthless for all farming or agricultural purposes forever.

But they saw more than that. These vast fields were the storage reservoirs of the rains which held the floods and distributed the water during the dry seasons so that the streams were kept up, navigation was secured, and farms could be irrigated. But with the woods taken off, the humus gathered there for centuries acting as a sponge to hold the water, the soil was swept into the streams and down upon the bottom lands, and then at the seasons of the melting snow or the big rainfalls the torrents did incalculable damage to vast regions of country.

We do not have to theorize or romance in order to establish the disastrous results of our former practice of lumbering. Corporations and individuals were working at their own free will and without any Government supervision or control. Fifty years ago the white pine forests around the Great Lakes stretched continuously across the northern part of the States of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. They were the greatest aggregation in one body of this valuable wood in the world.

To-day white pine has become so scarce and expensive as to be almost inaccessible to the ordinary purchaser. In these forests a half century ago was the almost incalculable amount of 350,000,000,000 feet, board measure. The great lumber companies rushed in, each striving to outdo the other in the harvest of the woods. They cut at the rate of nearly 8,000,000,000 feet, board measure, a year. They reduced the price by competition so that it paid only to take the best trees. The cuttings and the slashings and the slabs were left and became fuel for forest fires. These fires, fanned by the fierce winds of the North, burned over the areas from which the wood had been cut and into the woods themselves. They burned up the rich soil which had accumulated for centuries and left only the sand underneath. Then came the floods which washed these sands into the rivers, so

that many of the streams of the Northwest which were formerly navigable are now useless. Not only was it made impossible for these woods to grow again, but the whole region became an arid and uninhabitable waste.

The statement has been made that forests cut down this way will easily reproduce themselves without assistance or care, but it takes eighty years for a white-pine tree to reach maturity where it can be profitably cut. The lumbermen, in sweeping off the trees that were marketable and burning the rest, destroyed the possibility of a new growth, and the same would happen if our present forests were thrown open to this destructive competition. We must remember all the while that this destruction is upon the public domain belonging to the people of the United States, and of the property which should be for all time a source of protection and revenue to the people of the United States.

With all the figures that were presented here in regard to Idaho being deprived of her population in the future because of forest reserves within her borders, if I have calculated correctly from the figures given—I have not had an opportunity to examine them since—there is only 5 per cent of Idaho in forest reserves. But under the intelligent supervision and under the intelligent care of the foresters to-day we accomplish many things. They are running roads through the forests, to which they objected. They are extending telegraph and telephone lines through the forests, which were objected to.

Mr. BORAH. Mr. President—

The VICE-PRESIDENT. Does the Senator from New York yield to the Senator from Idaho?

Mr. DEPEW. Certainly.

Mr. BORAH. I simply wish to ask if the Senator stated that the forest reserves in Idaho are only 5 per cent?

Mr. DEPEW. That is the figure I have arrived at from the statistics presented. Is it more?

Mr. BORAH. I think it is 30 per cent.

Mr. DEPEW. It is my mistake. I made the mental calculation as the Senator's colleague spoke yesterday. They are running telegraph and telephone lines through these forests, with

the result that there is free communication in the forests, with the result that the homesteader can go through the forests, and the wood can be got out.

It is said the homesteader is deprived of his claim. But under the law passed two years ago any land within the forest area which is fit for homesteading can be located the same as it could ever have been before.

Mr. CLARK of Wyoming. I will ask the Senator if he is informed of the fact that the proclamations creating the forest reserves since that time have especially warned every person from making settlement therein?

Mr. DEPEW. I do not know what proclamations have been issued. But the law has not been repealed, and every homesteader has his right under the law, and any proclamation which is in violation of the law is invalid; and I do not think such a proclamation would stand for an instant.

Mr. SMOOT. Mr. President—

The VICE-PRESIDENT. Does the Senator from New York yield to the Senator from Utah?

Mr. DEPEW. Certainly.

Mr. SMOOT. For the information of the Senator from Wyoming I will state that no matter whether proclamations have been issued or not, the people are now going into the forest reserves and making homestead entries there, and within the last few months over a thousand have been made in the forest reserves in this country.

Mr. DEPEW. There is another way in which the homesteader is protected. He has a home on the outside of the forest reserve, and under the administration of this great Department he can get wood free out of the forest for his house and his fences and his domestic purposes, while if the lands were in private hands, he would be fenced out and he would have no such privileges.

In the course of the debate on this question at various times there has been much said about these woods being cleared to furnish homes, but our experience has been that the methods we have adopted for the clearing of the woods have destroyed thousands upon thousands of homes already in existence and

left no region within what was the woods which could be utilized for homes.

Asia in ancient times supported myriads of people in countries which are now practically arid deserts. Modern scientists have demonstrated that this vast destruction of the productive power of the earth to sustain human beings has been the result of the waste of the woods.

Our forestry system, under Mr. Pinchot and his assistants, has gone far enough to demonstrate that the woods instead of being destroyed in thirty years can last productively forever for the people of the United States. With a sufficient number of trained foresters, with pathways and roadways, with telephone and telegraph lines for communication, and with proper apparatus, fires are reduced to a minimum and loss from that cause is practically eliminated. An intelligent cutting of selected trees and conservation of growing ones keeps the forests for all time in healthy and productive conditions. We are exhausting the wealth with which nature has so richly endowed us at a terrific pace. It is estimated that in a hundred years our coal will be gone; that within fifty years our iron ore will be exhausted, and our other minerals will be used up with equal rapidity.

But the forest is never exhausted. It replenishes itself. It is a perpetual source of revenue, safety, health, and income, and gives to the people of the country comfort and wealth, without cost to the National Treasury. Experience and criticism have done away with every complaint which can be legitimately laid against forest reserves. Instead of the land being taken out of public use, it is preserved for the public use. Instead of grazing upon the public domain being a privilege of the strongest and the most unscrupulous, it is now under the supervision and operation of the Bureau of Forestry, brought within the reach of every citizen who chooses to avail himself of the opportunity. Of course cattlemen of great resources, who, few in numbers, have virtually captured the whole grazing country belonging to the United States, make ceaseless war upon this opening to every citizen of his opportunity. Of course the more unscrupulous of the lumbermen, who would combine and seize upon and then destroy the forests, are opposed to the

system of preservation, conservation, and sale of the timber, without favors to any.

The home seeker can not complain, because if there is any part of the forests fit for him he can locate his farm. If he has laid out his home upon the borders of the forest, it is not the property of a gigantic lumber company which fences him out, but under the rules of the Bureau of Forestry he is permitted to take the trees that are necessary for his fences or his house and also the ground for the pasture of his stock. Citizens seeking health or sport find that they are no longer fenced out or driven out, but that the woods belonging to the Government, and, therefore, to the people, are open to them, and that the protection granted by the methods carried out by the fire wardens protect them from that danger. It has been said that the United States has no right to go into the lumber or grazing or cattle or sheep or goat business, but the United States has the right, instead of letting a few individuals or corporations have the public domain for nothing, to grant the privilege to all the people who desire to take advantage of it of entering upon the lumber or cattle or stock business within the public domain, upon such terms that the people of the country shall not be taxed to pay for the privileges which these few citizens enjoy. Those who make money by using these forests should contribute a portion of the cost of their administration and preservation.

The administration of the forestry division of the Government compares favorably not only with every other department, but with any private business in the country. The forestry administration in 1899 was without revenue to the Government, but in 1901 the Bureau had been practically organized. Then the cost of administration was \$325,000 and the receipts \$296,000. In 1907 there was a profit of about \$150,000, and in 1908 the area of the forest reserves had risen from about 40,000,000 to 150,000,000 acres. The cost of administration was, in round numbers, \$3,400,000. If we take out of that the permanent improvements and the forestry investigation, which is also a permanent improvement, the cost of the administration was only \$1,450,000 and the receipts \$2,000,000. To show how the people of the United States, without favorit-

ism, are enjoying the privileges of grazing within these forests, and for which a small charge is made per head, the number of cattle in 1901 was, in round numbers, 278,000, and in 1907, 1,200,000; of sheep and goats in 1901, 1,214,000, and in 1907, 6,660,000.

The Government received for these grazing privileges in 1906 \$515,000, and in 1907, \$864,000. The timber sold in board feet in 1904 was 113,000,000, and in 1907 1,045,000,000. The receipts from sales of timber was, in 1904, \$58,000, and in 1907, \$687,000.

Mr. President, I submit as an irrefutable proposition that no other Department of the Government can show results like these. Our one hundred and sixty millions for pensions is a debt of gratitude to the men who fought to save the Union and those dependent upon them. Our two hundred millions a year for the Army and Navy are for the public defense in case of war. Our hundreds of thousands for the diplomatic and consular service are for peace and commerce. Our taxation through the tariff and the internal revenue are to pay this vast debt of gratitude and the annual expense of maintaining our position as a world power. We spend eighty millions nearly every year for rivers and harbors, and forty of that is thrown away because the streams are filled up again from the floods following the deforestation of the lands.

But here is a Bureau which preserves the streams for navigation and irrigation, preserves the mountain sides and the valleys with their productive possibilities for the farmer, preserves the timber for the manifold uses which are the necessities of the American people, and keeps down the price of the lumber so that it will remain within the economical reach of our citizens. At the same time it is carried on with such skill, efficiency, and integrity that, while thus preserving and enriching the nation, its administration is without cost to the Government, but, on the contrary, an annual profit is paid into the Treasury.

Sir, I trust that the amendment of the Senator from Idaho, prohibiting the transportation of wood out of any State, will be voted down, and that this appropriation, paid for already without taxation and without cost, will be passed as it came in the recommendation from the Secretary of Agriculture.

SOIL SURVEYS.

April 30, 1908.

Mr. DEPEW. Mr. President, I dislike always in any way to disagree with the conclusions reached by a committee, and would not in this case have said anything if there had not been such a radical change in the bill as it passed the House.

The Senator from Wyoming [Mr. WARREN] asks us where our information comes from, and if by any possibility it may be better than that which the committee received. My information comes from agricultural societies and granges in the State of New York. I have a letter here from a distinguished agriculturist inclosing a speech made by one of the members of the New York delegation during the debate when this subject was up before the House of Representatives.

It seems to me that the only question at issue is the time which will be involved in the performance of this work. Everybody admits the necessity for the work and its enormous value. The question is, shall it be done rapidly or shall it be spread over a longer period, and that depends upon the amount of the appropriation.

The information which I have received from these people who are so deeply interested and who have consulted with the Bureau of Soils is that the difference in this appropriation as it passed the House and is cut down by the Senate committee makes just double the time required to perform the work already mapped out.

This Bureau has done valuable service to the agricultural interests of the State of New York. The surveys which it has made in the counties along the Lake region in regard to grape culture have enriched that industry in that part of the State. They are now engaged in two kinds of work which interest greatly the farmers of New York, one in relation to the abandoned farms in the Southern tier and the other the cultivation of alfalfa for the dairy interests.

One would hardly suppose that there were abandoned farms in the State of New York, but it is a fact that in some of the counties in the southern tier the soil has become exhausted.



The people of the locality can not, by their own efforts, carry on the investigations which are necessary to make those farms sufficiently productive for profit or even for a living. The result is that farms are abandoned. The work which has already been done in a limited way by the Bureau of Soils survey has brought many of those farms into production again, and the whole of that section is looking with the liveliest interest to an immediate and energetic continuation of the work because of the results following what the Bureau has already done.

The dairy interests of New York are among the largest in the United States, and those interests have been suffering by the exhaustion of dairy soil and are alive to the necessity of finding fresh materials for feeding stock. It has been found that this necessity is abundantly supplied by alfalfa if the soil can be located which will economically and profitably produce it. That has been discovered in a great district, nearly 400 miles in length, between Albany and the Lakes.

Now, constituents of mine who are interested personally, and public-spirited citizens whose studies are in the line of agriculture, feel that unless this additional appropriation is made the work both of reclaiming farms and producing alfalfa will be delayed, to the infinite disadvantage of the agricultural interests of the State of New York.

We find that the committee of the House appropriated, on the information which they had, \$170,000. Then, in the debate, on information received from practical farmers on the floor of the House, the amount was raised there to \$323,000. Now, the Senate committee, on further testimony, has reduced it to \$200,000.

So the whole discussion, from its origin in the House committee until its arrival on the floor here, demonstrates that it is a fluid question, to be determined by the information we can derive from any source where that information can be procured.

Under the circumstances, Mr. President, I am compelled, much as I regret it, to differ from the conclusions of the committee and to vote for the restoration of the amount passed by the House of Representatives.

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