American Society of Foresters

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Members of the Gulf States Section of the American Society of Foresters:

It is a distinct pleasure for me, on behalf of the administration of the Louisiana State University, to welcome you to our campus. A most cordial welcome I extend to you, and I am happy, indeed, that your visit should come shortly after the removal of our School of Forestry into its new quarters, where the University is furnishing it with new and improved facilities to further the education of technically trained foresters, and I feel quite certain that during your two days' visit with us, you will have the opportunity to visit our School of Forestry in its new quarters and thereby to obtain close-hand information of the progress that we are making at
the Louisiana State University in emphasizing the important work that is cut out for foresters the profession of foresters in this State, in the entire South and in the Nation.

In the last 15 or 20 years, Forestry, as a profession, has made great strides in the United States. We have come to realize more and more in recent times that the subject of forestry is a somewhat neglected but quite fertile field for action that is of vital importance to the continued prosperity of the country.

Your own Society of American Foresters, in the comparatively short period since its organization in 1900, has made important and lasting contributions toward the solution of forest problems in this country, and a meeting such as this, of representatives of the Gulf States Division of the Society
serves the very useful purpose of furnishing a common meeting ground for the dissemination of information on forestry in the South. When we consider the large timber production of our southern states such as Miss., La., Ala., and Texas and the resulting depletion of our forest reserves, we can, at once, realize and appreciate the need for just such a group of technically trained foresters as this. Men who understand and are concerned with and interested in all phases of forest production and forest management. A professional group, skilled in such problems as are presented in silviculture, in forest protection and in forest utilization, - a group of men who are dealing with the difficult problem of perpetuating and preserving our forests and yet at the same time procuring the full use and benefit of the forest.
Conservation and utilization of our forests are not entirely inconsistent aims. You are concerned with achieving the proper balance between the two.

We all deplore the ruthless depletion of our great forests. Unfortunately, mankind has not paused to realize in the language of Sir Thomas Browne that "generations pass while some trees stand, and old families last not three oaks", and as a consequence of our short-sighted policy of the past many "a brotherhood of venerable trees" has paid the supreme sacrifice to the demands of civilization without any policy of replacement in mind and with little heed to the needs of future generations. Although we have been deplore what might have been done in this country in forestry had the farsighted view of William Penn on reforestation been adopted, and although as a result
of our wasteful policies we have sustained irreparable losses, yet there is still reason to be thankful of the present enlightened attitude toward the question. Statesmen now realize that large areas not well suited to agriculture can be profitably utilized in reforestation projects and thereby protect our water sheds, prevent soil erosion and provide a continuous supply of wood. We can be thankful that progress is being made in this direction. Its future course depends in a large measure upon the professionally trained forester, who is competent to deal with the technical problems presented in such a program. Your society and the American Forestry Association have been and are destined to continue to be an entirely wholesome influence in American life - after all in connection with your work it may be said in the language of the
Bunne, in "The Heart of a Tree":

"What does he who plants a tree? He plants the friend of sun & sky; He plants the flag of breezes free; The shaft of beauty, towering high, He plants a home to heaven anigh For song and mother-croon of bird In hushed and happy twilights heard The treble of heaven's harmony— These things he plants who plants a tree."

In conclusion, I wish again to bid you a hearty welcome. We are glad to have you with us, we hope that you may come again and may you enjoy your short visit in the same measure that we enjoy having you as our guests.