WISCONSIN FOREST TILLAGE.

The consideration I have been urging, however, of however large concern, I am not disposed to dwell upon save as being an introduction to one I deem of far greater importance. The proper way of viewing the timber domain of a commonwealth, is not as being a region which has a harvest upon it, from which to realize a larger or smaller sum of money once for all. Rather it is a domain lodged in the ownership of the state for successive harvests of timber, with which, in return for supplying the needs of growing civilization, to replenish the public treasure. Ill would the farmer be thought of, who, after garnering the bountiful gift of a single summer, should allow his field therein to have rendered its only contribution to his store. I repeat, the forest domain of Wisconsin was given to Wisconsin as a field for the perpetual tillage of timber, and this was the reasonable method of its management. It is the timber farm of the commonwealth. It is true, that in what is properly called the hard-wood portion of the state it has been necessary to retire the woodland before the advance of actual settlements, in order to give place for the areas of home, and ordinary farming. So also in the pine region, to some extent. But much of our domain is unsuitable for such uses—for a century will not be so used; and it has no doubt been predetermined by the character of its soil, for many scores of years, as a timber-raising garden. This is its proper and congenial use, destined
for it by nature in her wonderful foresight, in the interest of an enlightened public economy; a garden, I say, for the tillage of trees.

**What was Quite Practicable.**

I am afraid I may be speaking to some who think of this as something new. But it is not new, and the statement made in regard to the national domain is applicable here: Under proper management, on the principles which guide the farmer in the uses of his fields, very nearly an equal amount of pecuniary value might have been realized to the public treasury of the state from the sale of timber from its land at the actual legal valuation, allowing that there had been quite practicable protection from fire, theft, fraud and waste, and to-day the value of timber on this domain be left as great as if not a tree had been removed. Consider how the timber has been allowed to be cut; the dried branches inviting conflagration; how many young trees have been cut unecessarily that the older may be removed; how little care of the young trees; how much valuable timber cut and left unremoved; what little care in low cutting; how almost no attention to replanting; how much standing timber damaged, In 1880 four hundred and six thousand four hundred and twenty-eight acres of the best pine lands were destroyed in Wisconsin by fire, ten million acres each year in the United States; fires, unreasonable railroad grants, fraudulent entrance, thefts, premature sales, fraudulent sales!