

## HOW THE DESTRUCTION OF TREES AFFECTS THE RAIN.

WE Yankees are a race of *dendrokopti*. (The word is tolerably fair Greek, and sounds better than its English equivalent, "tree-cutters.") To cut down trees and shoot Indians seems our national instinct. The narrow-bladed Yankee ax is more destructive to the forests than Sharp's rifle and Colt's revolver are to their red-skinned denizens. We suppose this instinct was implanted for a good purpose. When every foot of land was covered by trees, and when behind every tree lurked an Indian, it was quite necessary to shoot and chop indiscriminately. Civilized men must be suffered to live, and corn must be permitted to grow, Indians and trees to the contrary notwithstanding. But our destructive instincts should be brought under the control of reason; and passing by for the present the Indian question, we hope to be able to show good reasons why the indiscriminate slaughter of trees should cease.

The old Greeks were wise men in their day, and with them the word *dendrokopein*, "to cut down trees," meant also to destroy, ravage, and utterly ruin a country. We, or those who come after us, shall find to our cost, some of these days, that the Greeks were philosophers in so using the word. By cutting down the trees upon mountain sides and ravines, we are inevitably entailing two great evils upon posterity—a scarcity of fuel and a scarcity of water. The former evil is the more obvious, but the latter is equally certain and far more formidable. The lack of wood for fuel may be supplied from our abundant accumulations of coal; but no art or labor can supply a substitute for water.

The hidden fountains of all our springs and rivers are in the atmosphere. Every drop of fresh water is drawn, in the form of dew or rain, from these inexhaustible, ever-renewed reservoirs. Trees act in many ways in regulating and distributing the supply of moisture. In certain localities they even produce a sensible effect upon the amount of moisture deposited from the atmosphere. Thus, in the Island of Saint