

in the woods, leaves it in a much worse condition for the all but inevitable after-lumbering fire, which all too often leaves the land a waste, hence the net result of the greater demand for wood products in the case of lands held in private ownership is not an increased but a decreased production.

This tendency for an increased demand to result in the decimation of woodlands is not confined to North America, nor our own time, but has been the history of the forest wherever it is held in private ownership unrestrained by state control. There has, however, never been a better illustration of its workings than has been witnessed at our very doors throughout the farming sections of Ontario during the last ten and more particularly during the last five years. The value of standing timber has doubled within a few years with the result that the woodlots have been sacrificed at a hitherto unprecedented rate, and one that has alarmed every thoughtful observer. And yet not one farmer in a thousand, perhaps not one in ten thousand, has done any planting on a commercial scale. More serious still, not one farmer in ten has paid the slightest attention to caring for what woodlands remain. On the contrary, the all but universal practice of grazing the farm woodlands effectually prevents any recovery which nature might essay.

(3) A third plea may well be entered for the removal of all restraint on the production of a commodity which, while so peculiarly in a class by itself so far as regards the laws governing its production, is without exception the most useful raw material of all manufacture, and an indispensable agent in all production and transportation. Aside, indeed, from the character of its population, nothing contributes so much to the material progress and happiness of a nation as an abundant supply of timber at reasonable prices.

In view, then, of the value of woodlands to the community as a whole, the peculiar temptations to deforestation due to the long time element involved in the production of timber, and the indispensable character of wood in modern industrial life, the state may well exempt from taxation such private woodlands as are devoted exclusively to wood production, and which come up to a reasonable standard of production.

It stands to reason of course that such tax exemption should be made only in so far as seems necessary to prevent excessive deforestation in the agricultural sections, and to insure a future supply of wood for domestic use.