

Scotch pine are close seconds. The black locust has the very useful power, like clover in this respect, of enriching the soil in which it grows by the colonies of bacteria which adhere to its roots. Thus, quite outside of its use as timber, it is useful as a culture plant. The wood, though not well known in Canada, is highly valued for work requiring toughness and firmness. Insulator pegs, vehicle and railway car timbers and fence posts are uses to which it is now put.

On a recent visit to the station at St. Williams, Hon. W. H. Hearst, Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines, expressed himself as astonished and delighted with the work that was under way and the progress that was shown. He further declared that the movement would have his still warmer sympathy and support since he had seen for himself what was being done.

PROTECTION ALONG RAILWAYS.

One of the things that is demanding attention is the protection of forests along railway lines by the clearing of debris from a strip two hundred feet wide on each side of the right-of-way. Mr. Clyde Leavitt, Chief Fire Inspector for the Canadian Railway Commission writes of this subject:

'Provision should be made, by either legislative or administrative action or both, of all the Provincial Governments of Canada, for the enforced removal of inflammable debris on lands adjacent to railway rights of way. This is absolutely essential to a reasonable degree of safety from fire, of forests and other property along railway lines. The Dominion Railway Act requires that railways operating under Dominion charters shall maintain their rights of way free from dead and dry grass, weeds and other combustible matter. The Railway Commission enforces this provision. It also requires the use of the best fire-protective appliances on the engines and also that the railway companies maintain patrols and take adequate steps in reporting and extinguishing railway fires.

'Engines still throw some sparks, however, and fires along railway rights-of-way are started as well by smokers, tramps, and numerous other agencies, either careless or malicious. Unless immediately discovered and extinguished, fires starting on the right-of-way quickly spread to adjacent lands, where, in the case of forest lands, the almost universal presence of large quantities of dead, inflammable material, facilitates the rapid spread of the fire, and renders extinguishing difficult, if not impossible. This situation is especially bad in the case of the large areas of cut-over lands, which so gener-

ally parallel the railway lines in the non-agricultural sections.

'If the land or timber owners removed this material on a strip two hundred feet wide outside the right-of-way, on each side of the track, it would enormously increase the efficiency of the measures which the railway companies are required to take, and would without question decrease to a remarkable extent, the destruction from fires along railway lines. Not only would the destruction of much private property be avoided, but large quantities of young forest growth on cut-over lands would be given a chance to reach maturity, instead of being burned over periodically and so being kept in a perpetual state of unproductivity.

THE FIRE-BUG AND THE EAST WIND.

E. T. Allen, Forester, Western Forestry and Conservation Association.

'It's time to hit the trail again,'
The careless camper said,
And left his little fire ablaze
Within its leafy bed.

'I'll light another cigaret,'
The idle loafer said,
And chucked his old snipe in the brush
One end still glowing red.

'No, I'll not burn my slash this spring,'
The moss-back logger said,
'I'll trust to God and luck again;
Expense is what I dread.'

'Let's punch the screen out of the stack,'
The donkey fireman said,
And so he did, and all the sparks
Sailed blithely overhead.

'Come on, we'll dump our ashes now,'
The railroad trainmen said,
The train soon fanned them far and wide
As on its way it sped.

'Good time to fire my slashing now,'
The thrifty rancher said,
And touched it off without a thought
Of how far it might spread.

'I'll think I'll blow an hour or two,'
The restless east wind said,
Then liked it so he changed his mind
And blew a week instead.

'Millions in lives and timber lost,'
The newspapers next said.
What made those fires all start at once,
We wondered as we read.

'It wasn't us, it was that wind,'
The fools in chorus said.
So they're alive and loose this year,
—We hope the wind is dead.