

Editorial Comment

Conservation

There lived, some years ago, in this city a Scotchman whose name need not be given. His salary was but six hundred dollars a year. Yet he always seemed to be well clad and so did his family. If there was any hardship no one knew about it. Indeed he frequently used to refer to his "wee bit savings." At the same time all around the city were families in dire want although their earning power was greater than his. It was the Scotchman himself, who, in one of his unconscious bursts of wisdom, gave an explanation of the apparent anomaly. "Don't you see how it is, man? They all know how to make money, but I'm the only one of the lot who knows how to save it. They never look a day ahead."

Take the thought over into our national life. Our income, in proportion to population is princely, although it could be multiplied many times. Yet so thoughtless are we of the future that we have already impoverished our resources; it would not be extreme to say that in some particulars we are on the verge of bankruptcy.

Lumber.

Some years ago it would cost \$3,000 to build a house. To-day it will cost \$5,000. One reason is that the price of lumber has increased. It has increased because the lumber supply of the world has diminished. Every year the United States is using three times as much timber as it grows, and every year there is more timber burned than is used. And this in spite of the fact that between four and five million dollars are spent in protecting the forest reserves. Here in Canada we have preserves infinitely richer, and yet we grumble about spending one hundred thousand dollars a year for wardens, while the losses by fire are beyond calculation. Nor is this the only loss. In the very richest sections, the choicest lands are let for a mere song to men of another nation. The hundreds of thousands of profit are enjoyed by those who acknowledge another flag. True there are some of our own people who have succeeded in getting on the inside—but why should not the resources of the nation be preserved for the nation? The world every year requires a billion and a quarter worth of lumber. By conserving our forest lands by cutting trees at the ground instead of six feet from the ground; by clearing all dead wood instead of leaving it to feed the forest fires; by planting afresh denuded districts, we could ensure an income for all times. We could become fabulously wealthy.

This waste of timber, meaning as it does, an increase in the cost of building, has serious and far-reaching consequences in a democracy. It is no little thing if men cannot own their own homes. Patriotism and good feeling decline. A man's loyalty will soon wane if he has no financial interest in his country.

There is another side to this lumber industry. Most of the pulp-wood reserves are right here. Why should we not make them a source of wealth to our nation? Why should we ship out the manufactured article for a mere pittance, and buy the manufactured article for a prince's ransom? We are the only country in the world that has an excess of pulp wood. We should make it a source of profit for all times. It is too precious to be squandered. Just as some of the claims in California which were rented to private individuals were taken back by the state when it realized its foolishness, so the time has come for Canada in all matters of this kind to insist that national resources shall be used for national advantage.

A Song of Canada

By Robert Reid.

Sing me a song of the Great Dominion!
Soul-felt words for a patriot's ear!
Ring out boldly the well-turned measure,
Voicing your notes that the world may hear;

Here is no starveling—heaven forsaken—
Shrinking aside where the nations throng;
Proud as the proudest moves she among them—
Worthy is she of a noble song!

Sing me the worth of each Canadian,
Roamer in wilderness, toiler in town—
Search earth over you'll find no stauncher,
Whether his hands be white or brown;
Come of a night good stock to start with,
Best of the world's blood in each vein;
Lords of ourselves, and slaves to no one,
For us, or from us, you'll find we're—
MBN.

Sing me the song, then; sing it bravely,
Put your soul in the words you sing;
Sing me the praise of this glorious country—
Clear on the ear let the deep notes ring.
Here is no starveling—heaven-forsaken—
Crouching apart where the nations throng;
Proud as the proudest moves she among them—
Well is she worthy a noble song!

Bird Life

There is a conservation about which little is being said, the conservation of our birds. It is positive cruelty, this slaughter of the feathered tribe. Have you thought what it means to lose the song of the bobolink and the trumpet of the swan? Is it of no importance that in this whole world no one can find a passenger pigeon? The men of sixty years will tell you that in their boyhood they saw flocks numbering a million.

Wheat

Wheat! What a priceless heritage in our broad acres. Sometimes we think of the wealth of our gold mines. All the gold taken out of the mines of British Columbia from the beginning of time does not begin to compare with the value of the wheat crop

in Manitoba for a single year. And Manitoba is a small province. We now raise in Canada 1-20 of the world's wheat. We can raise $\frac{1}{4}$ —for a time. There's the rub—for a time! With bad cultivation the fertility of the soil will decline, just as it has declined in the United States. There the average yield once was 35 to 40 bushels; now it is less than 13. This in spite of the fact that agricultural colleges are at work enlightening the people. The fact is that agricultural colleges reach but a small percentage of the people. What is wanted is clear information disseminated to all the people. This means the teaching of the rudiments of agriculture in every high school and every consolidated school. Education should have some value for the leading industry of our land.

Meat

Then there is meat. Steak a few years ago was fifteen cents, now it is from twenty-two to thirty cents, and this because cattle are scarce. The farm has encroached on the ranch, and the farmer has not yet learned the necessity of mixed farming. For mixed farming may not be profitable immediately, but unless wheat legumes and manure are found together, the farmer might as well expect ultimate ruin. No soil can stand wheat raising alone.

Water Power

Then there is water power. It has been estimated that the water power of Canada is anything from seventeen million to seventy million horse power. Why should it not all be retained for national advantage? Fortunately there is little to complain of right here. As Canadians we still have the air and most of the water courses free from embargo. As a nation we are at the beginning of things. We must learn how to save, how to husband our resources. Then shall we have a prosperity which is not ephemeral. Our growth in population will be paralleled by a growth in resources and manufactures. These are the material conditions of all other prosperity.

Moral Quality

Above and beyond all material things is the character of the people. More important than anything else is this, that we preserve a reverence for all that is pure and holy; that we respect womankind and tenderly deal with children; that at home, in business and social relations, we honor and practice the Christian virtues—in short, that in all things we endeavor to exemplify that righteousness which exalteth a nation. Unless we conserve our own moral forces, there is no purpose in any other conservation whatsoever. It is not difficult to understand what duty this imposes on the family, the church and the school. The nation's prosperity depends upon the well-being of these institutions.