

not produce it, but simply appropriates what nature unaided has taken perhaps a century or more to produce.

Forestry for several reasons is a subject that belongs peculiarly to the State. One reason why this is the case is the far-reaching effects which the forests have on the character of the country in modifying its climate, and in regulating its water supply, both of which affect the community at large. Another reason is owing to the length of time required for trees to attain maturity. A long period of from fifty to one hundred years or more is required for our forests to attain their greatest commercial value, so there is no inducement to the individual looking to his own immediate interest to engage in the raising of a timber crop when he knows that his earthly career will have closed long before the return for his labour can be realized; whereas the life of a nation is not measured by years only but by centuries.

We have in that great region, which is well described as our subarctic forest belt, as I have stated, a vast tract largely unfit for agriculture. Within it are many great lakes and rivers which owing to the cool temperature of the water contain fish of the best quality. The land is covered with timber, a large part of which it must be admitted, is of less commercial value than that growing farther to the south, but which is already attracting attention for the manufacture of pulp. The most widely distributed tree of that region is the spruce, white and black, which is *par excellence* the tree for that purpose. This region too is the home of a great variety of the most valuable fur-bearing animals, and it is scarcely necessary to say that their existence depends very largely on the preservation of the forest which is their home. We have also in these wilds, owing to the numerous rivers and streams with which the region abounds, and the rough and broken state of the country, rapids and waterfalls innumerable which will furnish sufficient power for all purposes and at little expense. Of its mineral wealth it is too early to speak yet, but there is little doubt that the explorer will find rich rewards for his enterprise in this virgin field. The larger lakes and rivers afford means of communication throughout almost every part of this great district.

When all these conditions are duly considered, surely we have a region of country worthy of careful investigation. A moment's reflection will reveal what an important part the forest exerts over its welfare. Permit the destruction of this forest covering by fire or otherwise, and what will be the result? To say nothing of the evil effects on the climate of the fertile lands farther south that would result from the destruction of this barrier against the northern air currents, the severe winter of those high northern latitudes will be made almost intolerable by the winds that will