

## "TO GET RID OF THE TIMBER."

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"To Get Rid of the Timber" was the answer sent from the State of Arkansas, two years ago, to the Michigan State Forestry Commission when inquiring about that State's policy respecting its timber!

Yet, strange as it may appear to many, this is the exact answer that would have to be given to-day, if properly replied to by either the Government of the United States or Canada, as whatever policy they have had (*whether of one political party or the other*) has hitherto been simply "to get rid of the timber." The United States parted with its land, having tens of thousands of feet of the finest timber per acre, on exactly the same terms as that having no timber whatever. While Canada sold its land and timber in like manner, and granted timber limits in areas of 50 square miles each and to the extent of thousands of miles at a time, at merely nominal rates, to such of its constituents as might desire this concession, till, at the present moment, it has little of any immediate value left. This being the manner of disposal of such property by the Government, one can readily conceive why it is difficult to create any interest whatever in the preservation of timber property. Moreover, when we consider that only a few years ago the great obstacle to contend against was the size and quantity of timber necessary to be removed, in order to locate a home in the wilderness of trees and to make way for the plough and the reaper, it is not to be wondered that this should be the case; but, now that the railways have spanned the Continent and demonstrated the fact that the country is, on the whole, a prairie, and treeless one, rather than a wooded one—that the timber is peculiar to the coasts, lakes and water courses, while the vast interior is bare of timber—coupled with the further knowledge that this originally vast wooded area, extending from Maine to the Mississippi, can now show "but a few scattered remnants" of its once great wealth of timber, one would naturally expect more intelligent consideration of this important question.

Not so, however; in both countries "to get rid of the timber" is still the first order of the day, and the same policy, or rather want of policy, as regards timber exists—each, in its own way, being equally negligent or indifferent, and equally willing to get rid of the timber. Some slight interest is taken in the subject of forestry—the most momentous question possible as affecting the future welfare of the country—by a few thoughtful persons; but how little effect it has yet had on the consciousness of the general public, or of even our legislatures, is shown, when, in the arrangement of a tariff by the Government of the United States; the direct aim of which is to reduce the revenue