

would be first of all, to supply information that might be of interest to agriculturists throughout the entire Dominion, and then to collect experience from all parts of the country and put it before the whole country, so that whatever was found advantageous in one place might be tested and tried in another. All this could be done by a Central Bureau with the least possible delay; and it is necessary that it should be done with the least possible delay because the race in trade now has become so keen that no country can afford to lack knowledge possessed by another.

Q. Why should the Federal Government charge itself with timber culture, seeing that the woodlands of the country belong to the Provincial Governments?—It is true that these woodlands belong to the Provinces, but then it must be remembered they form the groundwork of the greatest industry Canada possesses. After the agricultural exports, come the exports of forest produce. They amount to, I think, just about eight times as much as the exports of all the other industries of Canada combined. Consequently, as the Federal Government has charge of all that pertains to trade and commerce, it ought, to my mind, devote considerable attention to the greatest industry the country possesses. Moreover, this question of maintaining the supply of the forest wealth of the country is one which involves, not only the employment of 100,000 people, but the whole external commerce of the country is affected by it. In Quebec alone, there is scarcely a year in which we have not 600 or 800 ocean-going vessels coming in to carry away lumber. It has been said that this is a fading industry, but if it were to fade away altogether, so would the 600 or 800 vessels that visit Montreal and Quebec, and so would the large number of vessels that frequent the ports of the Maritime Provinces. If we drive away such an amount of shipping from the country, we would soon lose our position as fourth on the list of Maritime nations. Then again, another reason why every effort should be strained to make this a permanent industry is, that you have no better means of barter with foreign countries than wood. The demand abroad for wood is on the increase, and it is likely to continue on the increase, because the population of Europe is augmenting rapidly, while the area under timber is stationary; consequently, there is never any falling off in the demand for lumber. Such changes as affect the lumber market are changes which are brought about by the lumbermen themselves, that is, by over-production. For instance, the demand in England has been one of steady increase; and the consumption, taking a five years' average, has been as regular as possible. But, unfortunately, the lumber merchants, when they have one prosperous year, want to make a better one the next; the consequence is that they frequently flood the foreign market with lumber, and then comes a falling off in the demand.

Q. What benefits would you expect to accrue from the establishment of a Central Bureau, and what methods could it pursue to the interests of timber culture?—One of the first duties of such a Bureau would be to find out what methods prevail in other countries, what methods are most successful, and how they can be adapted to the wants and requirements of this country. This is information which, of course, could be furnished to all the Provinces. Besides, this Government has one of the grandest opportunities imaginable, to try on its own lands in the North-West, experiments in tree culture. There, you have a country which, whatever its other advantages may be, whatever its agricultural wealth may be, certainly lacks one great element supposed to be necessary in every other country, if the agricultural classes are to prosper—and that is wood; it is—or at least an enormous section of it is—a treeless waste. How can that country be supplied with timber sufficient to influence its very fickle climate, with its storms and blizzards? How can sufficient shelter be afforded the cattle on the large plains near the foot of the Rocky Mountains? How can sufficient fuel be supplied? The fuel question, as there is coal there, is not likely to be very serious, but the quantity of wood the settlers will require must be very large, and I know its price at the present time forms an enormous tax upon the settler going into the country. So that the Federal Government, by collecting information useful to the older Provinces, and by experimenting itself in the North-West, would have the opportunity of doing a vast amount of good. Nothing would be easier than at the present time to decide, before the organization of the new Provinces finally, that in