

pending
early ex-
haustion of
United States
forests and
consequent
great demand
on ours.

Arbor day
holiday pro-
posed by the
Hon. Mr.
Joly.

Mr. P.
White.
Value of
timber de-
stroyed by
fire.

Lumbering
less destruc-
tive.

Destruction
of timber by
fire.

Hon. Geo.
Bryson.

Patrolling
fire inspec-
tors recom-
mended.

Mr. J. K.
Ward.

Reservation
of part of
the lot for
timber.

forests of the United States will be almost entirely exhausted ; which may be considered as usefully instructive to us, as certainly assuring us of the exhausting demand that long before the close of that term will be made on our forests to meet the requirements of the American market. The warning manifest in the facts given by Mr. Loring is timely ; and the wisdom of entering without delay on a course of action to meet the emergency as it advances, is obvious, whether it comes sooner or later than estimated.

Before closing my remarks on Mr. Joly's address I should have noted his judicious proposal of establishing an arbor day as an annual public holiday as calculated to give permanency to the recollection of the object of it, by linking it to the regular recurrence of a day of enjoyment of healthful recreation. The history of all holidays unquestionably demonstrates the soundness of this conclusion.

Mr. P. White, M.P. for Renfrew, Ontario, in a vigorous, clear, and succinct verbal address on the loss to the province from forest fires, estimates the value lost annually by them in the Ottawa District at twenty millions of dollars, meaning, doubtless, the value that the destroyed forest would otherwise have yielded compared with average annual value of timber exported. This estimate may be thought excessive ; but when we bear in mind that in addition to the value of the marketable timber, the fire destroys not only the smaller timber that would in future years yield successive cuts of equal value to all that was then marketable, but also in severe cases all the seedlings and seed cones, the germs of any future growth of pine till they are casually carried there after successive generations of the berry, the cherry, the poplar, birch, and spruce. Whereas the thinning out of the larger trees by the lumbermen, if not followed by widespread fires, hastens the growth of the younger trees that are to replace them, and might do so for ever. In speaking of the endeavours of the lumberers to prevent the setting of fires Mr. White justly remarks that the authority of Government is necessary, and, in his stating, in his position as a representative of the lumber trade, that the trade would not object to a special tax to meet the expenses of Governmental supervision, he has judiciously taken an important preliminary step tending to strengthen the hands of the Government in taking action. His suggestion that the period during which the burning of brush by settlers is interdicted should be extended to the months of June, September, and October, deserves serious consideration. Mr. Wright of Massachusetts, in relating his experience of forest fires in the west, said the fires started through the carelessness of settlers did infinitely more damage than the Indian fires. This is generally true, as every man who has lived a backwood's life for years knows well. But of all settlers the pretended settler, whose sole aim is to use the pretence of settlement to enable him to strip a lot or two of a fine growth of timber ; he makes a great "slash" by simply cutting down the trees on several acres, say from four to twenty acres, and when it has dried enough to render the tops and foliage of the trees highly combustible he chooses "a fine day for a burn" when there is wind enough to cause the fire to spread well, and then sets fire to it in many places, and this scorched "chopping" with a few round logs laid up in a square form is, when required, sworn to in formal affidavit as so many "acres under improvement" or probably as "cleared and cultivated" "with a dwelling house thereon." This abuse is too well known in its various forms and degrees in the Ottawa country. In one case on the Ontario side of my agency the doing of the settlement duties on 14 lots to secure the timber free of dues had, I was informed on good authority, destroyed the pine on nearly the extent of a township.

The Hon. George Bryson of Pontiac, whose position in the Legislature of the province and his almost life long residence in a lumbering country and intimate experience in its trade, and in the commencement of its settlements, (gives) weight to his opinions, concurs with Mr. White in recommending that patrolling fire inspectors be appointed by Government, and in the extension of the period of interdiction of the burning of brush, with the addition that it should include the month of May, as it is then the fires have their beginnings and gradually spreading become more conspicuously destructive as the dry, hot weather of summer advances. These suggestions will be remarked on further, on the conclusion of this memorandum.

Mr. J. K. Ward, whose long experience in the lumber trade qualifies him well to judge of it, spoke of the great destruction of timber by forest fires, and suggested the importance of establishing a reservation of 10 acres of standing wood in every hundred acre lot by its being sold ; subject to that condition the 10 acres to be free of price. His suggestion was made with a view of preserving necessary wood for fuel, fencing, &c. for the inhabitants, in consideration of their welfare. Dr. J. B. Hurlburt in one of the articles read by him suggested a reservation of 25 acres, for such purposes, which would be still better than 10, for the interest of the settlers in future. Such a reservation would be very easily