

when it becomes necessary for the Government to ask the Parliament of this great country—this Parliament which concentrates the intelligence of Canada—for liberal appropriations for the patrolling and protection of these forests the request is likely to be closely queried as to where the reputation of this Liberal Government for economy has evaporated to. There is in that country a vast area of timbered land and that timber has a value altogether beyond its commercial value. It is being lost year after year to a stupendous extent and if it is necessary to take active measures for the patrolling of these forests to secure their preservation against fire I hope the results of this convention will be of such a nature and will have such weight with Parliament that it will not be difficult to get the money required to secure the protection of these very necessary and valuable forests.

Then, there is the great question of the creation of forests or woods on the prairie. There are limitations in that direction which people in this part of the country can scarcely appreciate. Here you have to actually fight the timber to keep it from growing. I do not find fault so much—if I may be permitted to differ from the Premier—with the instinct of those people in this part of the country which prompted them if they saw a tree, to cut it down, because it was either the people or the tree. If the trees were here we would not be here. The trees had to be destroyed in order that the people might live. But, in the North-West it is different. There, it is difficult to grow trees. There you have the Chinook to contend with and in speaking of the growth of forests in the West I may say that it is not the cold of the winter in the west that prevents forest growth; it is the Chinook wind, the mild wind that changes the temperature during the winter and produces conditions of dryness in the early part of the summer which presents the greatest difficulty in the growth of forests in the west.

The Department is grappling with the question in a conservative, yet in a progressive way; in fact, it has adopted a truly liberal-conservative method of dealing with the question. We have established a forestry station under the superintendence of Mr. Stewart and under the management of Mr. Ross and I, having recently had occasion to visit that locality, have been credibly informed that the forestry station is doing good work, that the work is being very highly appreciated by the people of the country and that, as the result shows, very considerable progress is being made as the Premier has borne witness to in regard to the growth of trees. But, the greatest progress that is being made is not in the number of trees that has been grown but it is in the practical knowledge that has been acquired as to the growth of these trees and when the knowledge has become well-established.