

Our Invaluable Water-Powers.

Flowing from the great forest-clad hills and mountains of the Dominion are numerous perennial streams which in their descent form water-powers of immense possibilities and value and furnish supplies of moisture to the plains beneath, plains which, in many cases, require a substantial addition to the scanty rainfall which they receive, if they are to be cultivated successfully.

The possibilities of electrical development and other uses of the energy furnished by these streams open immeasurable limits to Canada's industrial future. In some situations the very existence of such water courses depends upon the preservation of the forests at their sources, and in all cases the forests regulate their flow. In Southern France the slopes of the Pyrenees, the Cevennes, and the Alps were deforested at the beginning of the last century and left bare to the action of the elements. The results were the transformation of even-flowing streams into rushing torrents, the erosion of the slopes into gullies and ridges, and the occurrence of destructive land-slides to such an extent that some 8,000,000 acres of once fertile land were rendered unfit for agriculture by the deposit of silt upon the plains beneath. To repair this condition of affairs and restore the forests upon the bare eroded mountain slopes, France has already spent \$20,000,000, and it is estimated that more than \$30,000,000 must be expended before the area which the Republic possesses (only some 800,000 acres) will be restored.

The point of the story is that Canada does not hold any special dispensation from Providence, and that a similar transgression of the laws of Nature will inevitably bring about the same results. Is there not reason, therefore, that the question of forest preservation should be given the most careful consideration by all seriously interested in the future of the country?