

FOREIGN FORESTRY LAWS.

MR. B. E. FERNOW, the forestry expert of the department of agriculture, at Washington, D.C., has summed up in the *Century* the forestry legislation of Europe. Continental experiences should have their lessons for Canada. A brief summary of Mr. Fernow's article follows:—

In Germany the various governments own and manage, in a conservative spirit, about one-third of the forest area, and they also control the management of another sixth, which belongs to villages, cities, and public institutions, in so far as these communities are obliged to employ expert foresters, and must submit their working-plans to the government for approval, thus preventing improvident and wasteful methods. The other half of the forest property, in the hands of private owners, is managed mostly without interference, although upon methods similar to those employed by the government and by trained foresters, who receive their education in one of the eight higher and several lower schools of forestry which the various governments have established.

The several states differ in their laws regarding forest property. Of the private forests, seventy per cent. are without any control whatever, while thirty per cent. are subject to supervision, so far as clearing and devastation are concerned.

The tendency on the part of the government has been rather toward persuasive measures. Thus, in addition to buying up, or acquiring by exchange, and reforesting waste lands, —some 300,000 acres have been so reforested during the last twenty-five years,—the government gives assistance to private owners in reforesting

their waste land. During the last ten years, \$300,000 was granted in this way.

In Austria, by a law adopted in 1852, not only are the state forests (comprising less than thirty per cent. of the total forest area) rationally managed, and the management of the communal forests (nearly forty per cent.) officially supervised, but private owners (holding about thirty-two per cent.) are prevented from devastating their forest property to the detriment of adjoining. No clearing for agricultural use can be made without the consent of the district authorities, from which, however, an appeal to a civil judge is possible, who adjusts the conflict of interests.

Any cleared or cut forest must be replanted or reseeded within five years; on sandy soils and mountain-sides clearing is forbidden, and only culling of the ripe timber is allowed.

In Hungary also, where liberty of private property rights, and strong objection to government interference, had been jealously upheld, a complete reaction set in some fifteen years ago, which led to the law of 1880, giving the state control of private forest property, as in Austria.

Under a law adopted in Italy in 1888, the department of agriculture, in co-operation with the department of public works and in consultation with the forestal committee of the province and the respective owners, is to designate the territory which for public reasons must be reforested under governmental control. The owners may associate themselves for the purpose of reforestation, and for the purpose may then borrow money at low interest from the State Soil-Credit Institution, the forest department contributing three-fifths of the