

a home for himself and his family and who looks forward to spending a lifetime of growing prosperity in the home he is creating, is ready to take these precautions, for they are all in his own interest. But the so-called settler who has taken up a little patch of land merely that he may rob the country of the timber that stands upon it, is in a hurry to realize his gains, and expects to abandon the place as soon as he has done so; consequently, he has no more regard for the rights and interests of others than has any other pirate.

It is very satisfactory to be able to state that the fire-ranger system adopted by the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec is greatly reducing the destruction caused by forest fires. As that system is more fully established and covers a wider range of territory its beneficial results become more apparent. Countless acts of carelessness on the part of settlers, prospectors, sportsmen and others, which, in former days, would have resulted in widespread fires, are prevented or their injurious results checked in good time. The constant increase, in recent years, in the value of standing timber, means that the saving due to careful supervision is greater than it would have been in former times when a great portion of the timbered area had little or no value, owing to lack of facilities for bringing the product to market.

On the other hand, this increase in value means that there is all the greater inducement to the so-called settler to carry on his nefarious schemes. There is a tendency also to systematize this form of robbery, certain parties keeping as their employees or retainers a number of men who make a practice of securing timber lands by this illegitimate means of pretended settlement. The more valuable the standing timber becomes, the greater is the inducement to schemers of all kinds to find means of capturing the timber on the public domain without rendering an equivalent to the public either in money or in service. This means that the law should be made more and more stringent—on the simple principle that the more valuable the thing to be guarded, the more careful should be the watch that is maintained.

The public would be more alive to the importance of this matter, I believe, were it not for an indefinite opinion—but one strongly held—in the minds of many people that our timber resources are “inexhaustible.” With the keeping down of fires and the improved methods of taking off the crop, I believe it is possible to go on cutting spruce in our eastern forests for an indefinite time. But the same is not true of our pine, the crop upon which our calculations of forest wealth in the past have mainly been based. The pine tree does not grow so large or yield such good timber in the northern country as it does in the region where the most extensive lumbering