

Forest wealth of Canada.

spool-makers is either used as firewood or left to rot. There are vast quantities of this wood in the interior, too far from navigation or rail to be of any value. It is mostly found on poor soil, mixed with balsam, small spruce and cedar. It makes good firewood when dry. The bark is useful to the Indian for the making of his canoe; the vessel for retaining the sap of the maple; his drinking cup and the cover of his wigwam. The yellow birch also provides him a cough remedy by boiling the sap down to a syrup and lastly, though not least, it furnishes the proverbial birch rod, which though almost obsolete, sometimes does good service, even in these days of advanced ideas. Vast quantities of the dwarf or black birch have been used as withes in rafting logs, some concerns using as many as thirty or forty thousand in a season, each of them representing a young tree, but little of this is done at present.

The elm is much admired as a shade tree and is of considerable importance. The rock elm found in Ontario, being tough and durable, is much valued for planking the bottoms and bilges of vessels, and where there is chafing on the guards. Common elm is used for barrel staves; it is not thought much of as fuel.

Oak is one of the most valuable woods of commerce. The white and blue oaks of Ontario were famous for their great size and length, as well as strength and durability. In ship building it has no rival, except it be the live oak of Florida. For wagon-making and articles requiring strength, it is invaluable, and is much used in the better class of furniture. The white oak found in Quebec is small and of little value; the red oak, however, is of good size, it makes excellent inside floors, and is much admired for household furniture. It is also valuable for hoghead staves; it makes, when dry, a hot fire, and is said to be good for burning out stoves.

Black walnut is almost a thing of the past, although forty or fifty years ago in the country between Guelph, the St. Clair River and Lake Erie it was cut down, burnt or put to the commonest uses, such as fence-posts, rails, hog-pens, &c. The value of this wood has changed so much since that time that I once saw a log which cost three hundred dollars delivered in Troy, N. Y.

Of the maples there are many varieties, two only which we will refer to, what are commonly known as the soft and hard species. The former is a rapid growing tree, found in low lands as well as on the hill-side, makes, when dry, a good firewood; when sawed into lumber is used for floors, furniture, gunstocks, and lasts. It is comparatively soft and easy to work. The hard, or commonly known as the sugar or rock maple, is one of the handsomest and most useful of our forest trees. It is emblematical of our nationality, is found in almost every part of the country either as shade or ornamental, or as a wood of commerce. As a shade tree it is hardly excelled by any other for the beauty of its foliage or the symmetry of its proportions. Who is it that has not admired the elegance and richness of the curly and birdseye maple, when worked into bedroom sets of furniture, and then the many uses it is put to, where strength and durability are required. By the millwright it is preferred to any other of our woods for boxes and bearings, for shafting when running in water, as well as cogs or teeth for gearing wheels. It is also a favourite wood with the lumberman, as it supplies him with one of the best materials for axe-handles, handspikes and cant-hooks for river driving, &c. As a sugar producing tree it is of great importance, saving a good deal of money to the farmer, as well as employment at a season when there is little else to do, and affording amusement to the young in having a sugar bee and a good time generally. Though a slow grower it will always remain a favourite.

The hickory, a tree of many species, is highly esteemed as being perhaps the best heat producing wood in our country, being considered better for this purpose than even the rock maple. It is much more plentiful in Ontario than Quebec. For toughness and strength it is not excelled by any of our forest trees, and consequently is largely used for axe-handles, and agricultural implement makers use it where strength and lightness are required.

Before closing I wish to call your attention to the desirability of doing what we can towards conserving our forest wealth. I think I am safe in saying that the yearly value of forest products in Canada is not less than \$40,000,000. Forests are also the regulators of the flow of water, holding it back in the glades and swamps, and thus preventing often times what might otherwise be disastrous floods.