

for such purposes in places where it must all be imported and is very high in price. Even in Venice, Italy, the lecturer saw in the canals several barges laden with firewood and he was astonished at the quantity of wood used for other purposes. In Italy the use of wood is reduced to the minimum, and yet the country finds it necessary to import twenty-five million cubic feet annually, although she herself produces two hundred and forty-five million cubic feet annually.

Then, we need forests to give an even flow of water in the streams, to prevent the washing away of the soil, and to act as a break to the wind. In some parts of the Northwest the soil is a peculiar clay loam that breaks beneath the feet like ashes. In other parts it is a light sand. Such soil is picked up and carried by the wind as if it were light snow. To prevent this drifting of soil the settlers are planting shelter belts in many places. The Dominion Government has already sent out from Indian Head eleven million trees free of charge for this purpose.

Forests are needed also for health, rest and recreation, and to furnish food and shelter for the game and the fish. The esthetic value the forests have for the country one learns to appreciate in travelling over it. The trees with their variety of form and richness of coloring, clothing the hills and bordering the lakes and streams, lend a peculiar grace and loveliness to the landscape.

Some of the reasons why forests should be preserved have now been given. They furnish wood, feed springs, prevent floods, hinder erosion, shelter from storms, protect the game and fish, and give the country esthetic features. How then can the forests best be preserved?

To protect the forest from fire is the first law. In our forests where old rotten logs lie everywhere on the ground, and where the lumberman leaves the tops of trees, and gathers the brush into heaps as if getting the woods ready for burning, the question is difficult. In Europe, where the brush is all utilized, and where even the stumps are taken out of the ground for fuel, the problem is comparatively simple.

The Forestry Branch of the Department of the Interior keeps constantly in the woods a large force of fire rangers, whose duty it is to prevent and extinguish forest fires. They prevent fires by posting along roads, trails and streams cloth notices which state the law in regard to the use of fire. They also call upon the farmers and caution them in regard to burning fallows, logs, stumps, brush, grass and straw stacks in violation of the law.

Then, these fire rangers extinguish fires that start in the woods. It is their duty to warn out the settlers, who are obliged by law to obey the summons, and direct them in fighting the fire.