

principal causes which are acting to produce their rapid and wasteful dissipation. There has been no change. The term of unusual dulness in maritime matters there spoken of *has* come to a close, the tree-destroyer *has* improved the interval in sharpening his weapon and "making broad his ways," and the remoter districts, which constitute the hitherto untouched reserve, begin to feel his influence.* The quantities of ship timber brought out during the past winter (in the two maritime provinces) is at least double the aggregate of the preceding season; while the great activity which now characterizes the deal and timber trade will undoubtedly swell their drafts upon the fast diminishing forests in at least an equal proportion. We have seen how, in the very nature of things, the time is rapidly approaching when, to continue the banking figure, those drafts will be dishonoured, unless the remaining capital be protected by a sagaciously devised and wisely administered conservation; a pressing duty, be it observed, and one which rests exclusively with the Government; for the people, as the student of history too well knows, will never lift its ear—much less desist from chewing the particular thistle of the occasion—at the voice of the warner, unless the warning be enforced by the cudgel of the law. Unfortunately the gentlemen who "go to Ottawa" are, with but few exceptions, no more observant of the evils upon which we are rushing than are the pre-occupied constituencies which they so fitly represent; yet, as sometimes "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," the few may make themselves felt before the case becomes altogether hopeless.

If we are to measure the ship-building resources of the country under the restrictive influences of the powerful society known as British Lloyds', the answer to the query propounded above will not be found reas-

suring. In the tables which it promulgates for the guidance of ship-builders, sixty-four varieties of timber, domestic and foreign, are variously rated, according to strength, elasticity, durability, and the particular structural function and position assigned, at periods varying from four to fourteen years; to which from one to three years more will be added by a compliance, on the part of the owner, with certain prescriptions relative to the kind of metal used in fastening, the application of preservative agents to the materials, and protecting the vessel from the action of the weather while in course of construction, etc., etc.; or seventeen years in all for the highest, and seven for the lowest original grades.

Now out of these sixty-four, there are but eleven varieties which are to be found on Dominion soil. Of these again, but *two* may exclusively compose a ship rating as high as eight years in original class, although they may enter into the construction of British built vessels, along with timber of the higher rates, to produce tonnage of any grade, more or less largely—not being absolutely excluded from even the fourteen year class in such connection. (For the elaborate code of this powerful society must be read between the lines to discover its full significance; and then it will be found that it has another object besides that of establishing the highest possible standard of perfection for mercantile naval architecture; to wit, the encouragement of the exportation of the colonial ship *matériel* to the mother-country, and the discouragement of its utilization at home.) And besides restrictions of class, there are disallowances with respect to size which materially narrow the scope of application of Canadian ship timber. Only three kinds, including the two just mentioned, may be used throughout in the construction of ships of all dimensions; four others may form the entire material of small craft of three hundred tons and under, only; and the remaining four can find but partial use

* Canadian Monthly, Vol. i, pp. 529-30.