

Non-Agricultural Land Should Be Reserved

Minnesota Forestry Association
Favours this Policy Similarly
to Canadian Conditions

The Minnesota State Forestry Association is agitating for an amendment to the state constitution, to provide for the retention as forest reserves of all state lands found upon examination to be unsuitable for agricultural purposes. At present, such lands may be filed upon under the guise of homesteads, but, after the removal of the timber—and possibly an attempt at farming, foredoomed to failure—the lands are abandoned, usually in a completely denuded and burned-over condition, and revert to the state. A much better policy would unquestionably be to restrict agricultural settlement to lands clearly suitable for that purpose, and retain the non-agricultural lands for permanent forest production.

This same problem arises in many parts of Canada, in a similar way. Previously, there was no direction of agricultural settlement, and, as a result, much non-agricultural timber land was taken up under the homestead laws. This tendency was particularly strong at the time lumbering operations were being carried on. At that time the homesteader was able to find winter work in the woods, as well as an excellent market for the agricultural produce that could be raised during the few years that elapsed before the surface fertility of the soil, derived from the decayed mould from fallen leaves and branches, was exhausted. In very many cases, settlers have been stranded on these poor lands, and have become so impoverished that they are wholly unable to move away and set up lands really suitable for farm use. More recently, the provincial governments have made attempts at directing settlement, but the pressure for the opening up of timber lands has been strong, and arguments that the lands are suitable for agriculture have been so strongly urged that the attempts to withhold lands essentially non-agricultural have in many cases been unsuccessful.—C. L.

From information received by the Vancouver Board of Trade, it is learned that a fertilizer plant will be constructed on the Skeena river in British Columbia. At present the canneries make no use of the refuse from their plants, and representatives of the firm contemplating the construction of the fertilizer plant have entered into contracts with them for the sale of the offal. The plant is to be operated by the James M. Davidson Fisheries, of Edinburgh, and the machinery for the plant is to be shipped from Scotland. It is expected that the installation of the plant will cost \$100,000.—*U. S. Consular Reports.*

British Columbia Is Pioneer of Scientific Forest Taxation

Scale of Royalties to be Fixed which will Keep
Pace with Growth in Stumpage Values

For the first time in the history of Canada, a definite and scientific plan has been developed in one of the Provinces, by which the public is to secure the benefit, in the form of increased revenue, of the rise in stumpage values on crown lands which will inevitably come as a result of limited timber supplies and steadily increasing demands. This plan is set forth in a bill now before the legislature of British Columbia, which was introduced by Hon. W. R. Ross, Minister of Lands, following a most careful investigation by the Forest Branch, and a series of conferences with the limit-holders concerned. It is understood that the Bill harmonizes, so far as practicable, the interests of both the government and the lumbermen, and that its early enactment into law seems assured.

In other provinces, as also on the Dominion crown lands, there is no definite and well-understood plan for the gradual increase of stumpage dues, to be paid to the government as timber values increase. Instead, this matter is taken up at more or less irregular intervals, usually at the end of ten-year periods, and the outcome is the result of a contest between the needs of the provincial government for greater revenue, and the natural opposition of the lumbering interests to material increases in the royalties. This situation, through the increase in timber through the rise in many of the limits acquiring a large speculative value, which is taken into consideration in transfers from one person or

corporation to another, and this absorption of the surplus value has in turn made much more difficult the re-adjustment of terms between the government and the limit-holders. Apparently, this difficulty will now largely disappear in British Columbia, under the new plan developed by the Minister of Lands and the Forest Branch. The settlement of the controversy will likewise be of great benefit to the lumbering interests, since it will materially facilitate the financing of lumbering operations, by removing the uncertainty which has hitherto prevailed as to tenure and amounts of royalties to be paid.

The essentials of the plan provided for in the royalty bill are explained in the following extract from the address by Hon. W. R. Ross, in presenting this matter to the legislature for its consideration: "The Royalty Bill fixes the royalty increase for 1915, and establishes a level of lumber prices on which future increases will be based. It provides for seven five-year periods for royalty adjustment; and it provides that for each of these periods a given percentage of the price increment for lumber shall be added to the royalty. This percentage is twenty-five per cent for the first five years, and rises gradually to forty per cent for the last five-year period. The fourth of the accomplishments of the Royalty Bill is to re-adjust the rentals between the Coast and the Interior, and fix them for the whole period of the Act."—C. L.

DANGERS OF CELLULOSE

The precautions necessary in handling articles made of celluloid have been emphasized in the report of a committee appointed by the British Government to inquire into the subject. The committee recommends that all articles made of this substance be marked "Inflammable."

Undoubtedly the manufacture and storing of celluloid need to be brought under public control. Last year, a fire in Moor Lane, London, Eng., started by celluloid, cost the lives of nine girl workers. Not counting cinematograph films, of which enormous quantities are now in existence, hundreds of articles are now made of celluloid, and very often the users are ignorant of their composition. The marking of these articles "Inflammable" would call attention to the danger and lead people to take greater care in their use. Where large quantities are stored, almost as much care should be taken as with gasoline.

CARE OF MANURE

Among the farmers visited in the Prairie Provinces in the Agricultural Survey work, in 1913, not one was found to be giving any care to prevent the waste of barnyard manure. In Ontario, so often called the "Banner Province," 93 per cent exercise no special care to prevent waste. In the Maritime Provinces, greater care is taken, about 40 per cent of the farmers visited having either manure sheds or cellars for storing the manure. Ontario may well copy this leaf from the book of the Eastern farmer's operations.

Prevention is better than cure. Prevent loss of the manure already being produced and it will not be so necessary to buy the expensive fertilizers to build up the sick and worn-out soil. Prevent the loss of the liquids by using some sort of absorbent. Prevent loss from heating by piling and mixing carefully in flat piles, not too deep, and keep tramped.—F. C. N.

Co-Partnership Housing

Successful English Scheme by which
Every Man may Become Part
Owner of his Home

Every man who is doing useful work in society, provided he is thrifty, sober and industrious, should be able to attain to the ownership of his own home. Much of the dissatisfaction with housing conditions that exists at the present day, arises from the unsatisfactory relations between landlord and tenant. Discontent will continue so long as it remains true that the vast majority of people can only call the houses they live in "theirs" from month to month.

A man receiving a moderate salary finds it exceedingly hard to save the first few hundred dollars and, if he borrows money on his individual credit, may be charged too high a rate of interest to make the venture profitable. Even if he does succeed in acquiring his own home, he may be forced to leave the district through loss of employment and, perhaps, have to sell his property at a disadvantage.

To overcome these drawbacks, a scheme has been put into operation in England which has met with very considerable success in various places through the country. A society of tenants is formed, who subscribe the share capital, which is payable in instalments, and issue loan stock at a guaranteed dividend of 4 per cent. A tract of land on the outskirts of an industrial centre is acquired, and the land planned out as a whole, and in accordance with the hygienic, artistic and economic principles of scientific town-planning. As soon as sufficient loan stock has been sold, work is at once commenced on the construction of the houses. Expenses are materially reduced because the society is able to buy materials in large quantities. When completed, the houses are let to the shareholders at ordinary rents. The profits on capital are divided among the tenant shareholders, who, however, are paid in shares and not in cash.

When the shares are fully paid up, the members of the society collectively own their own houses. If any member is forced to leave the district, he may still keep his shares and suffers no loss of his savings. Another advantage of this system of collective ownership is that untidiness and carelessness are discouraged by the public opinion of the neighbourhood, since everyone is interested in the proper care of all the houses. Finally, it may be said that there is no more sensible or safe investment for people of small means, no better way of putting by something for a rainy day, than by acquiring, through a co-partnership scheme, an interest in substantial well-built house-property.—P. M. B.