

Here, therefore, is a deplorable want well calculated to do us harm. It is to help supply this want that we have decided to prepare and publish herewith as complete a list as possible of our principal water-powers, basing ourselves to determine their respective capacity upon the authority of our most competent engineers and experts.

* * *

It does not come within our purview here to relate the history of the formidable power, which dates back hardly fifteen years and which has already effected such a revolution in the industrial world. It suffices to say that, disposing of the immeasurable forces which the genius of man has succeeded in storing and directing at its pleasure, *white coal* since it is thus that the motive power of natural sources and falls of water is designated, is tending daily to dethrone the black coal hidden in the bowels of the earth and to replace it. Over its competitor, it enjoys a double advantage : that of being less expensive. Above all, its superiority asserted itself when it was demonstrated that the energy produced by bodies of water could be transported to immense distances without suffering any appreciable loss. From that moment, its triumph was assured and the results have since proved that small, as well as large, industries could no longer dispense with so valuable an auxiliary.

True, Europe was the first to recognize the useful account to which these sources of energy, so long overlooked, could be turned, but America, and especially Canada, still more bounteously favored in this respect than the old continent, were not slow to hollow its lead and to experiment with the new discovery.

We had here the finest forests in the world and more particularly an admirable spruce region, co-terminous, so to speak, only with the geographical boundaries of the country itself. Alone, the province of Quebec had upwards of two hundred millions of acres of forest concessions composed in greater part of black spruce, the wood regarded as the best for the manufacture of pulp and paper in general. Now, to render all this immense wealth available, to convert this wood into pulp and paper, to light through the same medium our cities and rural districts, in a word, to produce rapidly and at slight cost, we needed the help of an agent of enormous power and this agent had just been found and harnessed. There were still some inherent difficulties in the first attempts, but science and oft-repeated experiments ended by overcoming these. Nature, which had strewn with pro-