

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I think it was made two years before, or more, and was for five years.

Arts and Agriculture—for the eradication or control of the white pine blister rust, \$25,000.

Mr. BURRELL: This vote covers the expenses in connection with the attempt at eradication and control of a very bad fungus disease threatening the life of the white pine in Canada. Early this spring the United States authorities became alarmed at the spread of this disease and we discovered its infection in Canada and realized that the \$200,000,000 worth of white pine left in Canada would probably be destroyed unless we could control this pest. We therefore entered into arrangements to co-operate with the United States authorities and the Provincial Governments of Quebec and Ontario, where the infection has occurred. We appointed Mr. McCubbin, one of our plant pathologists who had studied the disease for some years, to take charge in Ontario and make a general survey. There is some infestation, principally in the Niagara district. The disease was introduced through pine seedlings imported from Germany. The authorities on this continent were not aware that the disease was very general in Germany; in fact all throughout Europe, and that the American white pine cannot be successfully grown there on account of it. The European pines have apparently become immune to the disease. The fungus spends a portion of its life cycle on the red and black gooseberry and the raspberry plants. The measures necessary to eradicate the disease, apart from the general survey to watch for its appearance in different localities, include the destruction of infested trees and the cutting out of current and raspberry bushes on which the spores are found during June and July. It will

be necessary to follow up each of  
5 p.m. the shipments of these pine seedlings and to watch the plants.

Mr. SINCLAIR: As the forests of Ontario are owned and administered by the province, why does the Dominion assume the duty of eradicating this pest?

Mr. BURRELL: There is some strength in that argument, but if it were carried out in all matters we would have to stop our work in connection with plant pathology. As a matter of fact, we have practically the only men who are skilled in these matters and the provinces are very glad to have us co-operate in them.

Mr. KNOWLES: Where is Mr. Gussow now, formerly chief botanist?

Mr. BURRELL: Mr. Gussow is now doing some botanical work in the laboratory in connection with the Central Experimental Farm. It was felt that a civil servant of German nationality who had not become naturalized in Canada should not occupy the position of chief botanist, which would involve his travelling all over Canada. This gentleman was appointed by my predecessor, the Hon. Sydney Fisher, about eight years ago and is a very skilled man. He has a wife and five small children, and for humanitarian reasons, although many have taken the view that he should be dismissed, his services were retained in the position I have mentioned. As a matter of fact he has been offered a position in one of the southern universities and I have told him that we shall raise no objection to his accepting it.

Arts and Agriculture—for the purchase of seed grain, Governor General's warrant, \$500,000.

Mr. BURRELL: This is to repay the Governor General's warrant which was advanced. I think that, altogether, \$1,200,000 was advanced, all of which has now been repaid and has gone into the hands of the Receiver General. We have been entirely repaid and have a little to the good, and have also a considerable number of bushels of oats still on hand. We thought of disposing of these oats but came to the conclusion that it might be well to hold them over, considering the character of the oat crop in the West, until next year. We bought, cleaned, bagged and sold nearly 1,000,000 bushels of wheat and oats—largely wheat.

Mr. OLIVER: When and where?

Mr. BURRELL: Practically the whole of the wheat was sold in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. It was distributed among municipalities, farmers' organizations and farmers who chose to pay for it in carload lots. We have received a large number of letters from municipalities expressing their appreciation of the action taken by the department in this respect last year.

Mr. OLIVER: Was that the season of 1916?

Mr. BURRELL: The spring season of 1917. The action was taken chiefly because the ravages of wheat rust last year, together with the conditions affecting frozen grain in some districts, were such that about thirty municipalities were afraid that they