

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE report of the Ontario Forestry Commission, published elsewhere in this number, should be carefully studied by every lumberman in the Dominion. It contains valuable suggestions as to the methods of lumbering, as well as the course which should be adopted to perpetuate our timber supply. The work already accomplished has demonstrated the wisdom of appointing the Commission. In our next issue we hope to refer at greater length to this important subject of forestry.

THE lumber manufacturers of British Columbia have taken steps to secure the imposition of an import duty on lumber. At a meeting held at Vancouver on December 24th, and reported in our weekly edition, resolutions were passed favoring such a measure, and setting forth the unfair conditions now existing, as a result of which one manufacturer has already removed to the United States, and others promise to take similar action unless given some redress by the Dominion government. Elsewhere in this issue Mr. Vigars, of Port Arthur, also refers to the question. He points out that Western Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia are flooded with low grade lumber from the United States, which is very inferior in quality and sold at a price which will not permit of fair competition. Having a wide market for their good lumber, the United States manufacturers can afford to sell their low grade stock at cost of manufacture. Canadian manufacturers are debarred from the American market by a two-dollar duty, while American manufacturers are allowed free entry to the Canadian market. Until conditions are equalized it becomes the duty of the Dominion government to protect the Canadian lumbermen, and at the next session of Parliament we look for some legislation along this line.

THE LATE T. W. WALKER.

THOMAS W. Walker, a gentleman widely known in lumber circles, died at his home in Toronto on Friday, January 14th. For about a year he had not enjoyed good health, having suffered from heart trouble, which finally resulted fatally.

Deceased was born in Toronto on June 12th, 1852. He was the second eldest son of Sar-



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geant James Walker, who came to Canada from England with the 27th Royal Artillery, and had charge of the Magnetic Observatory established in Toronto for 27 years.

At the age of 15 years the subject of this sketch entered the employ of Joseph Davidson, who at that time had a large retail lumber yard. There he received his first experience in the business which he followed during the remainder of his life. After a few years, in 1872, he accepted a position as inspector with the late S. R. Briggs, wholesale lumber dealer, and while thus engaged

was associated with Mr. Joseph Oliver, now manager of the Oliver Lumber Company. His next position was with the late Wm. Latch, wholesale and retail dealer, with whom he remained only a short time, resigning to accept a more responsible position with the Rathbun Company, as their Toronto agent. In this capacity he purchased all the lumber for this company on the Northern and Midland divisions of the Grand Trunk Railway, handling as much as 30,000,000 feet of lumber and 5,000,000 shingles in one year. He remained with the Rathbun Company until 1894, when he formed a partnership with Mr. J. Watson, as wholesale dealers, under the name of Walker & Watson. Owing to the retirement of Mr. Watson, the partnership was subsequently dissolved, and since that time he had been engaged in buying and selling on his own account and for other parties. At the time of his death he had about concluded arrangements to accept a position with Messrs. Kingsford & Sons, starch manufacturers, of Oswego, N.Y.

The late Mr. Walker was a thorough lumberman, an excellent judge of lumber and a shrewd buyer. He enjoyed a reputation for fair dealing, and had many intimate friends. He was a great reader, well educated, and possessed a thorough business knowledge. In military circles he was also well known, having fought with the Queen's Own Rifles at Ridgeway in 1866. His funeral was attended by members of the Veterans' Association.

REPORT OF THE ONTARIO FORESTRY COMMISSION.

THE first report of the Ontario Forestry Commission was presented to the Legislature early in January. It treats of many subjects of interest to lumbermen and readers of this journal, and is therefore printed below in full :

TORONTO, Dec. 20th, 1897.

TO HIS HONOR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR :

The Royal Commission appointed in June last for the purpose of investigating and reporting on the subject of restoring and preserving the growth of white pine upon lands in the province which have been cleared or partially cleared by lumbering operations or by fire, and which are not adapted for agricultural purposes or for settlement, held its first meeting in the Parliament Buildings on July 7th. All the members of the Commission were present, viz., Messrs. E. W. Rathbun, Chairman, President of the Rathbun Company, Deseronto, lumberman; John Bertram, President of the Collins Inlet Lumber Company, Toronto, lumberman; J. B. McWilliams, Peterboro', superintendent of Forest Rangers; Alex. Kirkwood, chief clerk land branch, Crown Lands Department; and Thomas Southworth, clerk of forestry, Parliament Buildings. Mr. Rathbun was elected chairman of the Commission, and Mr. Kirkwood vice-chairman, Mr. Southworth having previously been appointed secretary by order-in-council. The organization meeting of the Commission was attended by the Attorney General and the Acting Commissioner of Crown Lands. The Attorney General gave his views as to the scope of the enquiry to be undertaken, and defined the object of the government in appointing the Commission to be the submission of a scheme for the reclamation of large areas of non-agricultural land now unproductive, and such suggestions for the carrying on of future lumbering operations as the information obtained by them would indicate to be desirable as a means of preventing similar land now wooded from becoming waste. It was thought advisable that members of the Commission should personally visit and investigate as large an extent of the forest area of the province as possible. During the summer and fall the members of the Commission visited the townships of Smith, Harvey, Galway and Burleigh, in the county of Peterborough; the territory along the north shore of Lake Nipissing and down the Vermillion River, in the township of Louise; the country round Thessalon, Algoma Mills and Killarney; the townships of Carlyle and Humboldt, and other points on the north shore of the Georgian Bay and in the neighborhood of Sault Ste. Marie. Your Commissioners also inspected some of the territory on the north shore of Lake Superior and the country along the line of the Port Arthur & Duluth Railway west of Port Arthur, in addition to taking a somewhat extensive trip through the Rainy River country, visiting also portions of the northern parts of Minnesota and Michigan in the United States.

FUTURE TIMBER SUPPLY.

As your Commissioners are anxious, as speedily as possible, to acquire some general knowledge of the conditions existing in different parts of the province, they did

not make that minute examination into the silvicultural conditions and habits and rate of growth in the particular localities that will be necessary before submitting detailed plans for the care and management of the respective areas visited, and which may hereafter be put under systematic treatment. Their investigations, however, were of a sufficiently technical character to warrant them in coming to the conclusion that with sufficient areas set aside for the purpose, and with reasonable care and protection of the young and growing timber now upon them, the supply of merchantable timber in the province of Ontario will be vastly augmented. In most of the places visited, a forest growth was found in all stages of development, with the exception of some territory in the neighborhood of Port Arthur, where conditions seemed to be somewhat different from those observed in other localities. Wherever the original growth was pine, or pine mixed with other trees, the natural tendency is towards the reproduction of the same species. Unfortunately, however, this reproductive faculty in many instances has not been allowed free play. The former apparently limitless forest wealth of Ontario has led to careless and somewhat extravagant methods on the part of our lumbermen; a belief that so far as the timber supply of the future was concerned it made no practical difference how our forests were exploited owing to their immense extent, has resulted in wasteful and incautious practices. Large quantities of waste material and litter, consisting of the tops and branches of trees, were left lying on the ground to feed the destructive fires that almost invariably followed, and which, until a comparatively recent period, no effort was made to check. The action of these fires in sweeping away the trees left by the lumbermen had the effect of retarding the reproduction of the original forest growth, and sometimes resulted in a crop of other varieties, that for various reasons were more readily propagated. It is found, however, to be the case that where any of the original trees survived the fire and produced seeds, the forest has eventually, though perhaps slowly, assumed the characteristics of the growth indigenous to the locality.

QUICK REPRODUCTION.

The widely entertained theory that the white pine on being cut away is invariably and permanently succeeded by a crop of inferior varieties was completely disproved by the frequent instances observed in which tracts of flourishing young pine trees are growing up on cut-over land, and the prevalence of the idea can only be accounted for on the ground that fire has in so many cases completely exterminated the pine in all stages of growth. In most of the territory inspected forest fires, sweeping over the country after the lumbermen had removed the more valuable pine trees, have destroyed what was left. Sometimes the fire was not so severe as to destroy all the dormant seeds that may have been on the ground, protected by the leaves and forest debris awaiting favorable conditions to germinate, but in many cases these were destroyed, and few, if any, of the parent trees left to provide seeds for a future crop. In the case of such trees as the pines, this latter circumstance was an effectual bar to the speedy reproduction of the trees. Although the seeds of the pine are winged they will not, in falling from the cones, scatter very great distances from the trees, and where only a very few parent trees remain more time is required to seed a given area than if the seed trees stood more thickly and shed a more profuse and better distributed yield of seed. The question of how far the seeds of the white pine may be conveyed from the parent tree in falling is a point still being investigated by the Commission. In the meantime the seeds of the aspen poplar, the birches and cottonwoods, which from their downy appendages are capable of being carried great distances by the wind, soon cover the burned-over area, and a vigorous crop of these varieties springs up and speedily occupies the ground. In most cases, however, a few pines have managed to survive the fire, and where this is the case, their seeds are scattered among the young poplars and take root and grow in their shade. If a forest fire has completely bared the ground the presence of the young broad-leaved trees is essential for the successful growth of a pine forest. The young pine plants, particularly *pinus strobus*, or white pine, are extremely sensitive to strong sunlight, and if exposed to the sun are almost certain to be killed in the first ten days of their growth. Hence the cover afforded by the poplar affords the shade conditions needed for the young. If there were no fire, however, the cover afforded by the trees left by the lumberman would doubtless provide the shade required for the successful propagation of the pines, but after the forest fire the quick growth of the poplar is a favorable condition for restocking the burned area with the original and most valuable trees.

GROWTH OF THE PINE.

In looking casually at a young forest on one of these devastated tracts, the first impression conveyed is that poplar and other desidious trees form the sole vegeta-