

CHAP. IX.

WATER POWERS.

The Province of Quebec is bound to become the manufacturing centre of our Great Dominion. From the coast of Labrador, to its western boundary, the country abounds with magnificent water powers. Without its magnificent forests, these water powers would be comparatively worthless, because of the absence of raw material to supply the mills and because of the uncertain supply of water, consequent upon the denudation of the forest.

It is of the utmost importance therefore that the raw material, which our country produces so abundantly, should be retained to be manufactured within the Province. Our present system of selling water powers is not satisfactory as the value is not fixed by any certain standard. Water powers should be leased for 99 years at rental of so much per horse power utilized. Under this system the Province would derive an annual revenue largely in excess of the interest on sales of water powers outright.

The annual consumption of wood in the United States is estimated at 40 billion feet. If all the mills in Canada built and running and those under construction were running at their full capacity they could not supply the demand of Great Britain alone for pulp wood. The pulp mills actually in operation in Canada have a capacity of 382,000 tons a year. Their output in 1900 was 264,000 tons. The products of the forest in value and importance are second only to the agricultural products. The wood value of the pulp industry in the United States is over thirty millions of dollars. Spruce constitutes at least seventy-six per cent. of all the wood used. To secure the round two million cords of spruce