

WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE.



WE see now and again some emphatic protest made against the destruction of our woods and forests. Last winter the subject received more than usual attention, the Canadian Premier having been interviewed by a large delegation of representative men upon the subject. It is a scientific fact that the agricultural prosperity of the country, as well as the permanency of our sparkling rivers and great watercourses, depend upon the existence of our forests. The lumber enterprise throughout Canada is making annual incursions upon our forest domain, to the detriment of the agricultural and lumbering interests, and is gradually wasting the sources of fuel supply. Protests and representations to the Government will be of little avail unless followed by some statutory measure framed for the protection of the woods and forests. The fire fiend, which recently has been very wasteful of the forests in New Brunswick, is an element of great destructiveness, whose limits are almost impossible to be controlled by legislative enactments. But the actions of the woodman can be controlled so as to prevent his wanton destruction of nature's supply of a product so essential to the prosperity of the country from a national point of view. Laws can be enacted to regulate the lumbering operations in the great forests stretching along the rivers and bordering upon inland waters. Private ownership cannot, of course, as a rule, be interfered with, but there is no private ownership of some woodlands, which might not, perhaps, be subjected to Government regulations in the interests of the general public, and in some cases to the advantage of the private owner himself.

Regardless, however, of the difficulties to be overcome in the case of attempting to control the rights of private ownership of woods or forests, those difficulties do not seem to present themselves in the case of large areas that are annually denuded of forests in this country. Reforestation of bared areas should be made compulsory. Limits should be set to the operations of the lumberman and of lumber companies. The utility of forests and their indispensableness from the point of view of the country's best material interests should be made a subject of regular teaching in our schools. The full realization of the evils resulting from deforestation would thus be more adequately impressed upon the minds of the rising generation. The knowledge of the actual extent of Canadian forests, their value as an industrial asset, the annual rate of depletion of the same,