

the present demand for the products of our forests will be definitely maintained—nothing more probable than that it will be greatly increased.

In view, then, of the desirability of caring for the forests as a sound business proposition from the standpoint of direct financial returns and its necessity from the standpoint of wood production and water conservation, I submit that no time could be more opportune than the present for the inauguration of a national forest policy having for its object the conservation of the forests by wise use.

Forest Protection.

In this forest policy first place must of course be given to forest protection and more particularly to the prevention of forest fires, for without reasonable safety in this regard there can be no forest management. Considerable progress has already been made by several Provinces in this matter, but everywhere much remains to be done. Further progress is needed along three lines, namely:

Improved fire laws.

More efficient administration of the fire laws, and the

Disposal of debris incident to lumbering operations.

Nova Scotia has at present the best fire law though it is in some respects surpassed by that of New Brunswick, and Ontario has the most efficient administration.

Practicability of Disposing of Debris.

In the report of the Ontario Bureau of Forestry for 1904 I have discussed in detail the practicability of burning the debris incident to lumbering operations in pineries. I shall only repeat here that it has been demonstrated that a good clean job of brush burning may be done on pine lands at a cost varying according to local circumstances of from 12 to 25 cents per M. feet, board measure, of the timber cut. Whether a similar burning of the brush on spruce lands be also practicable has not yet been demonstrated by any fair test on a commercial scale. I submit, however, that the making of such a test is one of the most urgent duties of the Provinces selling pulpwood stumpage. It will pay any Province vastly better to take ten or fifteen cents less per cord for its pulpwood and secure the safety and advantage to reproduction which goes with the burning of the debris than to secure the utmost present cash return and leave the areas cut over for pulpwood in the deplorable and menacing condition which is to-day characteristic of Canadian pulpwood slashings.

It need scarcely be added that the state rather than the