

the wish is father to the thought. Some years ago (May, 1908) a meeting of State Governors and other distinguished and scientific men was called at Washington by President Roosevelt to discuss the conservation of the national resources. Amongst others who attended this meeting was Andrew Carnegie, and in his address he made the statement that the United States was even then within measureable distance of the exhaustion of their supply of anthracite coal, and he placed the life of the Pennsylvania coal fields at less than fifty years, even at the then present rate of consumption. This statement has since been confirmed by scientific authorities.

Preservation is the first law of nature, and it is therefore probable that long before the coal in the United States becomes exhausted, the entire supply will be taken over by their Government and conserved in every possible way for the national benefit. One thing is certain, not a single pound of it will be allowed to be exported from the United States.

What Can Ontario Do?

This being the case, what remedy will the people of Ontario have? So as far as I can see, their remedy can lie only in three directions:

First, the application of scientific methods to our great virgin forests and the reforestation of cleared lands which are unsuited for agriculture. The application of scientific methods to our existing forests could be quickly brought about, but, unfortunately, only a small proportion of our standing timber is suitable for high-class fuel, and could never take the place of coal, either for heating purposes or for the production of power. In addition to this, the supply is situated far from our present commercial centres, and, even were it suitable, the freight would enhance the price so much as to make its use almost prohibitive.

The reforestation of old Ontario,

especially with hardwoods suitable for fuel, would be a very slow and expensive process, but it could be done with profit to the community generally, and the sooner such a policy is entered upon by the Government, the better it will be for the future of the province and for those who will come after us. For not only will such forests produce valuable commercial timber as well as fuel, but they would materially help our farmers by increasing the rainfall, diminish the danger from spring floods, and increase and equalize the flow of our rivers so as to render them more valuable for the development of hydro-electric energy.

Second, the exploitation of the immense beds of peat fuel to be found within the boundaries of the province.

Third, the nationalization and development of our water powers. This has already been taken hold of by the government of Ontario, under the management of the Hydro-electric Commission, and they are at present endeavoring to supply the people of Ontario with power as near its actual cost as is commercially possible. This is not only a new but a true national policy, which will ultimately be of advantage to every man, woman and child in the province of Ontario.

[Mr. McNaught here gives a detailed estimate of Ontario's water-powers, which total as follows: Niagara River, 3,000,000 h.p.; Central Ontario, 2,201,187 h.p.; Northern Ontario, 2,030,600 h.p.; total, 7,231,787 h.p. In order to be on absolutely safe ground he assumes that they would have a minimum development of 3,000,000 h.p.]

Value of Ontario's Water-powers.

On the assumption, therefore, that we can always depend upon our water powers for a development of 3,000,000 h.p., what does this really mean to the people of this province?