

There is still more, however. The Government's policy would be a bad one if it could be defended solely by arguments "ad hominem." Our policy would be but one of expediency and of opportunism, if it could be defended solely by considerations connected with the Budget. The problem of the farming out of the public domain is a difficult and a complicated one, and it could not be solved by a dash of the pen or in a few words. I sincerely believe, however, that the manner in which the Government has solved it in the past is the only practical one, in any case, the only progressive one.

The objection has been raised that the forests are becoming more and more valuable. I am aware that the eventual high value of our forests is one article of the political creeds of many persons in good faith in the Province. It must not be forgotten, however, that it is the same with lumbering as with other industries; that it is liable to the hazards and risks of economic production. The value of the forests may increase, but it may also decrease. If the high prices that have ruled in past years are maintained it will be easy for the Government, in 1910, to increase the stumpage dues proportionately. If, on the other hand, prices fall, the country will be on the right side, and all the risks will be with the buyers. Moreover, after timber limits are sold, they are subject to a ground rent of \$3.00 per mile; this at the present time yields a yearly revenue of \$240,000, representing interest at 3 per cent. on \$8,000,000.

But, in my opinion, the greatest advantage of the farming out of the public domain lies in the protection it affords against illegal cutting and fires. In a single region, the county of Pontiac, the country lost by fire more pine timber than would have sufficed to pay off the public debt of the Province. Everybody is therefore interested in having the greater portion, at least the accessible portion, of our forest territories under license, so that the license-holders, whose entire fortune is frequently invested in the limits, may help the Government in providing protection against fire. Everybody is interested, I say, in obtaining the limit-holders' co-operation, especially since, under the new arrangements, the latter pay the whole expense of protection while the Government retains merely the supervision and control.

### NECESSITY OF TURNING POWERS TO ADVANTAGE

A final argument in support of the Government's policy lies in the neces-

sity of turning our great water-powers to advantage. A glance at what has been done at Grand'Mere and Shawinigan and at what is at present being done at La Tuque, will show towns that have sprung up spontaneously under the impetus of that progressive policy.

While on the subject, I cannot avoid speaking of two sales which have been strongly criticized of late. Mr. Bourassa has said that, on the 30th June, 1904, I had sold a limit to Mr. Dupuis, the then member for Chateauguay. I ask you to note the date—the 30th June, 1904. It is a trifling detail, but as a matter of fact, I was not then Minister of Lands and Forests. In their fury against me, my adversaries do not take the most elementary precautions against making themselves ridiculous. However, I was a member of the Government at the time, and I do not seek to shirk my responsibility. The sale to Mr. Dupuis has been made regularly and according to law at a public auction. Mr. Parent could not have refused Mr. Dupuis' bids, even if he had wanted, because public auctions are open to all and there can be no discrimination against anybody. Mr. Dupuis could also have used a borrowed name, as is done by the representatives of large firms, which do not wish to excite competition. That Dupuis story is ridiculous from beginning to end, and would even have seemed incredible, had not Mr. Bourassa, following in Mr. Leblanc's footsteps, invented the phantasmagoric scandal of the Breakey limits. The accusation has been reported four weeks previously in Mr. Bourassa's organ, *La Patrie*, and has never been denied or corrected by that gentleman. The charge has been made in the following words:

"In the month of June, 1905, another sale of limits took place in Quebec, and two citizens of Shawinigan who wanted to buy limits proceeded there. On their arrival in Quebec they went to Mr. Turgeon and offered him from \$250 to \$350 for a certain portion of the limits in question. Mr. Turgeon received them very politely and told them to wait.

"The auction took place on the following day. Mr. Turgeon began by putting the upset price at \$400. The two gentlemen could not go so high and nobody would bid.

"The sale was adjourned at half-past eleven o'clock. Mr. Turgeon went with Mr. Breakey, a speculator on a large scale, to lunch at the Garrison Club, and on his return he announced that he had decided to sell the whole in a lump, and he put the upset price at