

fact and figure to demonstrate their inability to make day wages out of cutting and marketing the pulpwood on their properties. That the Ontario Government should undertake to ross and market the pulpwood for the settlers is a piece of advice frequently heard but experiments in that paternal direction have not been notably successful. Again, the suggestion is made that the railway rates should be lowered so as to deliver the pulpwood at the United States border leaving a better margin for the settler. This in turn is countered by the statement that reduced railway rate on the T. and N. O. would be absorbed by the pulpwood buyers and the settlers would be no better off. The marketing of wood from clearings is complicated by many factors, not the least of which is the newcomer's inexperience in such forms of work as bush clearing, the scarcity of proper equipment, the relative rarity of good roads. In spite of these handicaps, however, the settlers shipped out last year, as mentioned above, the large total of 110,000 cords, and near such communities as New Liskeard one does not lack for examples of prosperous contented farmers who have braved the inconveniences of pioneer life and have come out at the happy end.

Unrestricted Burning.

These fortunate examples do not alter the fact that an influential percentage of 'local sentiment' throughout the Claybelt favors unrestricted burning off of the forest growth, not only what is immediately required for crop purposes but far in advance of settlement for many years to come. To make a living in the shortest possible time and by the most direct is the natural ambition of newcomers the majority of whom have almost no capital whatever. Whether the heavy clay soil would be the gainer by the avoidance of repeated fires is a secondary consideration.

The Leading Question.

The vital question in Northern Ontario resolves itself into the conservation of forest growth on lands not suited for agriculture and this automatically rules out, under present conditions, the Claybelt section. It is quite true that even in that enormous territory, some form of supervision of clearing fires would work in the interests of the settlers themselves and of every town and village, but until the absolute forest land of Northern Ontario, south of the Claybelt, and measuring roughly a thousand miles long and from one hundred to two hundred miles wide receives proper fire protection, the Claybelt itself can not be singled out for special treatment. Within this non-agricultural region are some Reserves and Parks; but the condition of much of the remainder shows how very urgently protection is required. From the appearance of much of the country south of Cobalt and for some distance back from the railway, with little or no settlement in sight, the combination of cutting and fire have left no very inviting prospect for the future. Ontario has over 2,000 wood-using industries and upon the supply of enormous quantities of materials from Northern Ontario their security depends.

All Favor Reforms.

As to the Association's suggestions for the better control of fires on non-agricultural lands, the Secretary found practically a unanimous opinion among settlers, merchants, miners and professional men of Northern Ontario. These men fully appreciated the value of standing forests as a source of supply for Ontario's industries and knew likewise the inadequacy of the present protective system. That forest rangers should be closely supervised was not disputed in any quarter.

The Editor of the Cochrane "Claybelt," an influential newspaper in