

APPENDIX "K."

CANADIAN WOODS AND THEIR ECONOMIC USES.

LECTURE BY THE HON. J. K. WARD, IN THE SOMERVILLE COURSE.

(Montreal Herald, March 22, 1892.)

In acceding to the request to prepare a paper to be read on this occasion on the Forest Trees of Canada, their use and commercial value, I did so on condition that my remarks would be of a practical character rather than theoretical or technical. What I will have to say has been acquired in the rough school of experience and not in academic halls or at the feet of wise men. Having spent more than half a century in the workshop, the forest, on lake and river and in the saw-mill, I am sure you will not think it out of place or presumptuous on my part to try to impart some of the knowledge I may have acquired in the way indicated, though it be ever so little.

The trees indigenous to our country and climate are of two classes, the coniferous or evergreen and deciduous or those that shed their leaves annually.

Of the first-named class is the common cedar, one of the most useful in our woods. It abounds in nearly every part of the wooded country, is largely used for fence rails, pickets, posts, sills for buildings, telegraph posts, railway ties, where the line is straight, it being considered too soft to resist the pressure on curves. It is very light and durable, has a pleasant aroma, said to be a protection against moths when used for drawers or chests. It also furnishes material for roof shingles for home use and exportation, a large quantity of which find their way into the United States from the Eastern Townships.

Not the least important of the evergreens is the hemlock. It exists in great quantities in almost every part of the province, and is usually found mixed with other woods; it is the cheapest class of sawed lumber that we have, is strong and durable when not exposed to the weather, and is used for rough work such as sheathing, roof boards for shingling on, holding nails better than almost any other wood, joists, studding, stable flooring, as it is said to be proof against rats gnawing through it on account of the prickly nature of the wood. But the great value of the tree when it is not too far from navigable water or rail is in its bark, which is almost invaluable for tanning purposes, and realizes from \$4 to \$7 a cord alongside railroad or barge. Trees that are taken for their bark are usually cut down and stripped during the months of June and July, when it peels easily, but it is no pleasant task for those who have to do it, as the plague of black flies and mosquitoes prevailing at that time can only be appreciated by those who have had some experience in the bush at this particular season. The tree, after the bark is taken off, if not too far from river or mill, is made into saw-logs and sold to the lumbermen or taken to the mill and sawed on halves, the millman taking half for his labour, the farmer selling the other portion or hauling it home for his own use. The extract of hemlock is used in medicine for its narcotic properties.

The balsam or sapin of the French, is of little commercial value. When large enough it is made into lumber. It is usually found in poor soil mixed with white spruce. It makes a nice ornamental tree, is graceful in shape, nicely pointed at the top and of a very dark green colour.

Our ordinary white spruce, one of the best known and most useful of the evergreens, is found in great plenty from Nova Scotia to the Ottawa, including the St. Lawrence and their tributaries, but it is not often seen west of the former river till we reach Lake Superior and Northern Manitoba. The wood of this tree is largely used for building purposes, making excellent floors and joisting timber, as well as for doors, sashes, mouldings and inside finishing when white pine is scarce. It also furnishes spars for sailing vessels, such as yards, masts, &c., as it is both light and strong.