

particular importance here in Australia. We have no central mountain chains to feed perennial streams with melting snow, but are dependent mainly on local rainfall. The greater our necessity therefore to protect our watersheds with a forest sponge, which will absorb the rainfall gradually into the subsoil, and give it back again gradually in springs, and clear, gently-running streams.

What gives us shade and shelter for our stock? The forest and its trees. Where do we find restful, health-giving surroundings during our holidays? In the forests.

What makes human or animal life possible at all? Tree and plant growth. When we breathe we use up oxygen and give off a poisonous gas, carbon dioxide. The trees and plants take this up, absorb the carbon, and give us back the oxygen; and but for them we should soon die.

To our fathers the forest was an enemy. They had to strive and battle against it; sometimes it beat them. It was a curse, something to be wiped out, and we have largely inherited this idea. But there is a point at which this destruction must stop. Every country which has destroyed her forests to excess has suffered untold losses. China, North Africa, parts of France, Italy, and Switzerland are all suffering; floods, famine, and vast expenditure for reforestation has been the result. We are rapidly approaching this stage; in some districts we have already passed it.

We must have forest products; we cannot live without them. How are we to obtain them? Shall we buy them from abroad or grow them at home? Let us ask first, can we buy them from abroad? The world's timber supplies are being used up far faster than they are produced. Already a majority of countries are importing; the others are growing anxious about the future, and are considering their own supplies. What will be our chance in a few more years? If, on the other hand, we grow them here—and Victoria can produce the bulk at least of her own requirements—we shall keep our money at home, and shall create a deal of employment, thus encouraging immigration and population.

It is a vital question. It touches us to-day; it affects our lives and our pockets. It is not sentiment, but plain business. Are we prepared to face it?

BIG PAYROLL IN B. C. LUMBERING INDUSTRY

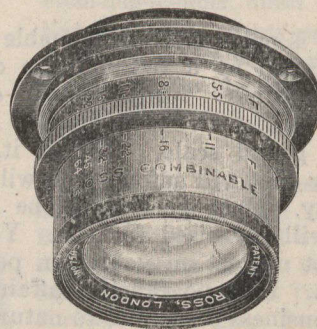
BRITISH COLUMBIA'S payroll for the lumber industry in 1922 will run over \$20,000,000, according to officials of the provincial government who have based their calculations on returns from 532 firms, whose statistics show that in 1921 the payroll amounted to \$18,180,962, with an average number of wage earners of 14,500.

The general resumption of building operations followed by an increasing demand for lumber, has had the result this year of speeding up the industry. Many plants that were idle have resumed operations, and even those which kept going all the time through 1921 have increased their staffs.

It is confidently expected that this year will show a big increase over 1921, and the \$20,000,000 mark is said to be on the conservative side.

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