

the farmer, without the forest nearby either on his own farm or within distance of reasonable railroad transportation, absolutely cannot prosecute his industry. (Applause.) We have reached the point where agriculture depends directly and immediately on the preservation of our forests. Just across the line, in Michigan, we have a most terrible example of the expense and loss and lack of productiveness the destruction of the forest on non-agricultural lands brings to pass. We may assume, then, that the fundamental industry of your great country and my great country is absolutely impossible in the absence of forest preservation. Now, the same thing is literally true of mining. We may say that when wood is gone as fuel we will burn coal. But it is obvious, on a moment's consideration, that we cannot get the coal in the absence of the forest, because mining is impossible without vast supplies of timber. Even steel, on which this age is said to be based, could not be won from the ground unless the forest gave the means to do it. Nor can steel replace the wood—in this sense, that the larger the amount of iron and steel used in construction the more iron and steel replace wood in steamboats, railroad cars and buildings, so much the larger is the total quantity of wood used in construction of that kind. The total consumption of wood keeps pace with the increase in the use of substitutes. We cannot build railroads, nor maintain them, without the forest. We figure that, if a tree were growing at the end of every railroad tie in every railroad in the United States, we should be able barely to keep these ties sound in the track, making no allowance for any increase in mileage, which increase is going on so rapidly. The annual consumption of ties on steam and electric railroads in the United States closely approaches 150,000,000 per annum, an enormous sum, the contribution of the forest to transportation and without which transportation would be impossible. The average citizen, the merchant, or call him by whatever name his profession requires depends in his daily life at every point on the timber supply. And I repeat it, for it stands to me in a vital place in the consideration of this whole matter, that wood is just as necessary to us in this day as a material base for our civilization as any other material; and if we are to preserve our prosperity, if we are to grow—and growth is the one thing that every citizen of Canada and of the United States looks forward to for his country—we must preserve our forests. That stands in the first place (applause).

Now, we on our side of the line have taken up this question, too late it is true—far too late, But we have been enabled by the greater number of our population for the time being to go ahead somewhat more rapidly than you have been able to do. Until a recent time you have been occupied with the actual subduing of the country, the vast heritage, that lies before you.