

FORESTRY

"Rod and Gun" is the official organ of the Canadian Forestry Association.
The Editors will welcome contributions on topics relating to Forestry.

Edited by the Officers of the Canadian Forestry Association.

THE LATE HON. G. W. ALLAN.

It is with very deep regret that we have to chronicle the death of the Hon. G. W. Allan, who passed away at his residence in Toronto on the 24th of July last. Hon. Mr. Allan was born at York in the year 1822, and in that same place, now grown to the large and beautiful city of Toronto, he spent his last days. Through the many years of an active life he served in a large number of important official capacities, and his native city has especially felt the benefit of his breadth of culture and his liberality. But it is unnecessary for us to recall the high and well-merited praises which have been heaped upon his memory. It is our part rather to bring to mind the active interest taken by him in the work of the Canadian Forestry Association, of the Board of Directors of which he was a member from the date of its organization, having been one of the first to give the organization his support. Previous to the launching of the Association Hon. Mr. Allan had shown that the purposes for which it has been formed had his full sympathy and had taken the opportunity from his place in the Senate of calling the attention of our legislators to some of the questions in connection with our forest needs that he considered specially deserving of attention. His kindly assistance was ever ready in any way that could be of advantage to the Forestry Association, and his keen interest was shown by his attendance at the last meeting of the Board of Directors, though he was then but recovering from a severe illness. Those who had the pleasure of meeting him in connection with the business of the Association will feel very much the loss of his kindly and encouraging presence, and his advice and support, which it can ill afford to lose, will be very much missed by the Association.

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The Forest Fire at Temiscamingue.

And this most royal of all academies you have to open over all the land, purifying your heaths and hills, and waters, and keeping them full of every kind of lovely natural organism, in tree, herb, and living creature. All land that is waste and ugly, you must redeem into ordered fruitfulness; all ruin, desolation, imperfection, you must do away with.—John Ruskin.

We need not apologize for taking a text from Ruskin, in the words above quoted from his lecture on the "Future of England," when we wish to deal with a subject that has its esthetic as well as its practical side, though our purpose is to consider it mainly as a business question. But in this quotation a practical principle is laid down that we in Canada have evidently as yet failed to grasp, for instead of redeeming waste land, of which we have so much, to ordered fruitfulness, we are increasing its area with a light-heartedness and easy good nature that are hardly fitting qualifications for a country that aspires

to the dignity of nationhood and to make its influence felt in the councils of the world. Indeed our careless wasting of the great natural resources, for the production of which we were not in any way responsible, has led to a somewhat less favorable estimate of our intelligence and foresight by those who are watching the future of the world's timber supply than we are inclined to place upon them ourselves.

Our attitude on this question is to a very large extent based on two premises which we have assumed to be indisputable. The first was that in sending in settlers to clear the forest districts we were redeeming to fruitfulness lands that were otherwise practically a waste and that even if fire assisted this process it was more or less of a blessing in disguise. Did not our forefathers have to struggle sternly with the forest before they handed down to us the wealth-producing acres now bearing their golden harvests, and has not that potent result settled the question for us for all time? But we have based too large an assumption on past history. What are the facts? Look at the figures given by Mr. J. C. Langelier. There are lands in the timber districts which have been settled upon and made wealth-producing (?) at the average rate of production of \$7.40 per acre per annum, whereas under a properly managed timber crop the land would have produced at least \$12.50 per acre. Is our assumption correct, then, or is it not rather the case that we are condemning such settlers to a useless struggle for a bare existence after they have removed the wood which forms the only wealth of such land? If the latter is the true statement, is it not time that we reversed our policy and that steps were taken by the Government to see that settlers are only placed upon such lands as a fair examination shows to be fitted to support them properly when devoted to agricultural purposes, and that settlement should not be permitted on poor and rocky lands which are only suited for timber production? We have spoken of this question at some length, for the mind of the public does not appear to be at all clear upon it, and, as the fire which did the greatest damage at Temiscamingue came from the vicinity of the settlements, and the testimony of the lumbermen is that most of the destructive fires have had their origin in the same direction, there are the strongest possible reasons for the Government deciding definitely where the line between forest and settlement shall be drawn, and seeing that it is properly protected.

The second premise is that fires cannot be prevented. Well, if we assume that, they certainly will not be prevented. If we assume that, what is the use of talking to lumbermen or making regulations about cutting trees of only twelve or fourteen inches in diameter? If fires cannot be prevented, what is the use of talking about forestry at all? Protection from fire is the very foundation stone of a system of forestry, and if fires can be prevented in Europe, in India, why cannot they be prevented in Canada? But, people say, the expense would make it impracticable here.

Let us look at the question. We have not yet been able to get full information in regard to this fire, but about the 20th of June a fire started near Baie des Peres, on Lake Temiscamingue, and burned eastward over an area of about thirty by forty miles and was only extinguished by the rains that came towards the end of July.

This is one of the finest pine districts in Canada, being part of the great Ottawa Valley forest. It has already yielded large quantities of lumber and has still an immense area of virgin timber, the wealth of which can hardly be calculated. It is a fact that in estimating the timber in this district the