

MARCH 14, 1884.

The Committee met, Mr. GIGAULT in the Chair. MR. STEWART THAYNE, Ottawa, called and examined:—

By the Chairman:

Q. Have you paid much attention to timber culture?—Yes; I have devoted many years to the exclusive study of the question. I had a special interest in it for years, while holding the editorship of a paper exclusively devoted to timber products.

Q. Did you attend the American Forestry Congress, on behalf of the Province of Quebec?—I had the honor of doing so; the Congress included representatives from different parts of the continent.

Q. Are you acquainted with forest management outside of Canada?—Yes; I have visited most of the great forests of Europe, have studied their management, and have devoted considerable attention to their resources, with a view to ascertaining how long the supply would be likely to last. My reason for doing so was that the lumber trade of England amounts to from \$80,000,000 to \$100,000,000 per annum in foreign woods; it was consequently of the utmost importance that we should know how long foreign countries would be able to supply the demand, and what danger there was of the supply running short.

Q. Have you studied forestry in its relation to agriculture? How does the former affect the latter?—It is impossible to study forestry without touching upon its relation to agriculture. Both are intimately connected with each other. The failure of the one—that is the denudation of a country of its forest trees, means, if not the destruction, at least, the greatest possible injury that can be inflicted upon the agriculture of a country. It is not necessary for me, in order to prove this, to go over what has occurred in ancient times, when some of the most fertile regions in the world were reduced to barren wastes. We can see instances of this in modern times and within the memory of living man. There is an instance in the south of France where whole districts have been depopulated. This was owing to the fact that the shepherds on the slopes of the mountains cut, not only the large wood, but all the small wood for fuel. As a consequence, the soil was thoroughly exposed to the rain, and the torrents swept the whole surface soil down into the valleys beneath. Not only was the pasture land on the slopes swept off, but such enormous amounts of soil and such immense rocks and boulders were swept down, that devastation was carried into the fertile valleys below. It is found now that the injury done in those districts can only be repaired at an immense cost.

Q. Is the preservation of our woods a matter of importance to Canadian agriculturists?—In this country it is very important that the woods should be preserved, more important, I should imagine, than in the more moderate climates, where you do not meet with the extremes of heat and cold. If you destroy the vegetable barrier which you have to the north, and which breaks the force of the Arctic winds, you expose yourselves to severe storms of cold. Then it is known that when the forests are once removed the evaporation is much more rapid than it otherwise would be, and you rush from one extreme of weather to the other. The influence of forests upon the climate of a country is to equalize the temperature. Another point worthy of consideration is the fact that where you destroy the forests of a country, you also decrease the water supply. Now, for instance, the effect of disforestation the whole of the Ottawa district would be at once to dry up all those small lakes, rivulets and streams which flow into the main river. Of course, practical agriculturists can at once understand what effect that would have upon the whole region; it would be simply to render it comparatively worthless for farming purposes.

By Mr. Massue:

Q. Have you any suggestion to make in the direction of planting trees?—Do you mean on a large scale?

Q. Yes?—I think that in the lumbering section planting on a large scale is still unnecessary, as the young growth in the districts which are not settled would replace the old if allowed. I would not say, in its pristine vigor, but at any rate to an extent