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## FORESTRY AND THE LUMBER INDUSTRY.

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THERE appears to be an impression among many of the men engaged in the lumbering business in this country that the methods and aims of the advocates of a rational system of forestry are not only impracticable in Ontario, but would, if a serious attempt were made to carry them out, prove inimical to the interests of the lumbermen. This attitude of many of our lumbermen towards the forestry movement is based on a misapprehension of the methods and aims of forestry advocates, excusable, perhaps, but a misapprehension nevertheless.

On the other hand, it is only fair to state that many forestry advocates have been apt to look upon the lumbermen simply as ruthless despoilers of the forest, and failed to fairly take into account the surroundings of an industry attended with so much risk. Foreseeing the disastrous consequences that must inevitably follow upon the reckless and complete destruction of our forests by axe and fire, these men endeavored to arouse public opinion to the realization of the impending danger. They saw many of the older settled counties in the province being rapidly stripped of trees in some the percentage of woodland being as low as five per cent.; they found streams that once afforded considerable water powers drying up; they noticed that a period of dry weather has a greater effect on grain crops now than in former years; in fact they saw deterioration in the climate and resources of Ontario, and perceiving the cause they called for a cessation in the work of forest destruction. In their alarm it is, perhaps, not to be wondered at if some forestry advocates should seek first to stop the cutting of trees, overlooking the fact that forest trees are a crop to be harvested, and one that could and should be harvested in such a way as to secure successive crops of the same kind, where for various reasons it is desirable that a forest cover should be maintained, and a constant supply of timber for industrial purposes provided.

Forestry advocates do not now ask that lumbermen should cease their operations. They know they are engaged in harvesting a valuable crop that would go to waste except for them; they know the lumber industry is a very extensive one, employing a large capital and many men an industry absolutely essential to our economic welfare.

What they contend is that the present wasteful method of exploiting our forest wealth, in which only a small part of the timber is taken out and the rest burned up, is unwise and unnecessary. They believe that certain areas of this province, areas that are unfitted for general agriculture and are the sources of streams, should be kept tree-covered, and suggest that some more rational system, some application of scientific forestry, be adopted by the government and by the lumbermen, to the greater profit of the lumbermen, and with increased and continual revenues of the province. Lumbermen do not pose as philanthropists, neither are they in the business merely for their health. They know it would pay them better as a rule to take out only the trees of large growth, leaving the small ones

The saving effected in the past few years, both to the provincial revenue and to the limit owners who have employed fire rangers, has been very great, and there is reason to hope that not only will the government endeavor to protect the revenue by more advanced regulations and restrictions in future sales of limits, but that the present owners of pine limits will, with the added safety from fire, adopt more economical methods and prolong indefinitely the period of profitable working of their forest areas. This can only be accomplished with greater immunity from fire, and with a more thorough knowledge of the habit of growth and other sylvicultural conditions surrounding Canadian forest trees. Some other qualifications than knowing how to fell a tree quickly and saw it into logs will be required on

the part of foremen in the woods, just as some knowledge of scientific agriculture has been found advantageous in successful farming.

Where there has been so much naphazard and waste in our lumbering operations, it is interesting to know that there have been exceptions to the rule; that some, at least, of our lumbermen have pursued a different course, and, despite the added danger from the careless methods of neighboring limit holders, with considerable success. Among these may be classed The Rathbun Company, of Deseronto. Having secured timber limits on the streams tributary to Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinte, this firm proceeded to



RATHBUN LIMITS—SHOWING BLOW-DOWN, AUGUST, 1896.

to grow to maturity, but their experience teaches them that what young trees are left are apt to be a total loss from fire, so the practice is to cut anything that will make fence posts, despite the greater waste in trees of small diameter. It is generally conceded that more timber has been destroyed by fire than has been cut by lumbermen, and it had come to be regarded as useless to save the young growth where the highly inflammable tops and branches of the coniferous trees were left by the loggers to spread the fire.

The first important step towards a rational forestry system was the adoption of the fire ranging system proposed by Mr. Aubrey White, Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands. This attempt to check the ravages of forest fires was not at first very heartily approved of by the lumbermen, who were very doubtful of its success. The results have, however, been so beneficial that now few limit holders fail to take advantage of it, though it is optional with them to do so or not.

erect mills of a substantial character and at an expense that would scarcely have been warranted had they not considered it possible to protract their operations in these limits over a much longer period of time than has ordinarily been found practicable in this country. Having this idea of permanency constantly in view, their limits have been worked in a manner that would have been disastrous if the usual fire had followed the winter's cutting. Instead of taking out all the pine, large and small, the foremen were instructed to cut selected trees throughout the area to be cut over, and particular stress was laid on the necessity of taking out and utilizing everything that was down. No trees were to be left on the ground to decay or burn because of being partially defective. As their license included other trees than pine, they were able to drive to their mills all the floatable timber, and, after the introduction of railways, some that could not be floated was also utilized in various