

The fifth National Conservation Congress is to be devoted largely to forest conservation, because of the national importance of the subject in its many phases. Public interest is involved, because upon the proper solution of the various problems depends the cost of the wood without which our civilization would decline; the perpetuation of the timber supply; the development of hydro-electric power; the utilization of non-agricultural lands; the availability of water for irrigation; the preservation of forest areas for health and recreation; and many other developments essential alike to every citizen from the lumberman to the man who owns neither a tree nor a foot of land.

The congress will endeavor to diffuse more information and develop better methods for the prevention of forest fires which cause such tremendous loss of life and of property valued at over fifty million dollars annually, and which also damage the soil, the water and the young timber growth. The study of forest insects is important, since they destroy enough timber every year "to finance the construction program of the navy." The relation of floods to forest denudation, which is in part responsible for the disasters of the current year, will be studied.

The need of knowing exact conditions so as to avoid the use each year of three times the annual timber growth is apparent, particularly when we realize that only forty to seventy per cent. of each cut tree is utilized, while fires are destroying annually the equivalent of this growth. The use of preservatives for the treatment of wood with the view of prolonging its life when used in constructive work is important because through it we have promise of reduction in forest consumption and the possibility of increasing supply by utilizing inferior species of woods at present not available. Another object of the congress is to meet the need on the part of the public for a safe national forest policy against which there seems to be strong opposition.

These details are cited, not because they

constitute Canada's most important national waste, but because it is the one which at this moment is receiving recognition and study by our neighbors.

The conservation of the soil elements, the utilization and preservation to the people of water powers, mineral wealth and above all, that chiefest national asset, the public health and human vitality, surely constitute a present-day responsibility, if the Canada of the future is not to curse the Canada of to-day.

Our land is full of opportunity. Our spaces are wide. Citizens of less fortunate countries, which have wasted their opportunities and shirked their responsibilities until too late have turned their eyes towards Canada.

Canada has a right to expect, both from her own and her foster children, that they shall use but not abuse their unrivaled chances for national and world betterment. We shall be wise if we see and provide in time the proper mechanisms for harmonizing rapid development with proper conservation of resources before we are fighting for the room and the right to breathe by reason of our overcrowding when we should be unable to think clearly and act intelligently and realize too late that in our short-sightedness we have made unwarranted overdrafts on nature's storehouse.

Facilities for rapid transit and free communication have enabled Canada to have at her command, while she yet has room, all the equipment evolved by the older and more crowded nations. Pioneering in the year 1913 is indeed "*pioneering de luxe*." This, whilst a matter of self-gratulation for increased opportunity, brings also added responsibility to our generation.

The necessity for the provision of national and provincial facilities for seeking out, accumulating, weighing, standardizing, adapting and diffusing knowledge require no argument: in fact, the newer provinces in the