

here is where the people's indifference so often shows itself. A sense of the beauties of nature and the capabilities of making those beauties add to the comfort of the home and the protection of crops, does not occur to them, or if it occurs, there is the thought that it will entail a little extra work for which the dollar may not be immediately forthcoming. They may not want certain trees burnt; 'but there—the land has to be cleared, let it run.' 'Destroys the humus, what is that? Nothing better for the land than wood ashes.' Fire has run into A's land, 'Well, A wants his land cleared up also.' Fire reaches B's and burns a few cord of wood. B rather resents this; but as it has cleared a few acres for him, 'does not want to be unneighborly.' Reaches unsettled land, 'well, that will not hurt anybody.' If Crown officials should ask questions—nobody knows anything. If these people want to be free of trees, why in all conscience do they not go to the prairie? Why should the welfare of those who are seeking to make their farms what every farm in the country is capable of being made, a place of beauty, a home, a centre of associations, be constantly threatened? Why should these be perpetually confronted with the dread of having all on which their hopes are fixed swept away?

The vast amount of liberty enjoyed in this Dominion as compared with that of the country of origin of many settlers, has developed into license. The future is nothing to men with this idea—there is no love of the land; they live for self. That these are in a minority, I do not doubt; but is the country to suffer because of them? However we may incidentally occupy ourselves, we are a nation of farmers, yet we cannot confine ourselves to farm subjects. A greater spirit of patriotism must prevade us and thought for others.

If those who are causing this annual loss to the Dominion will not realize their duties and obligations, those who are in the majority and can make them, must enforce the observation of greater care in respect of fires. Instead of fire rangers we want an efficient gendarmerie the personnel of which should, besides their other duties, take cognisance of every fire possible and report every case where the same be not under proper control. The mere knowledge amongst settlers that they are under observation, would cause greater care to be taken. A force of this kind should be permanent, formed of picked men, and no party matter. Recruited from the right sources a body of this kind would form a valuable nucleus for defensive organization and would be more highly thought of than some militia units, officered by men leading a town or village life instead of by yeomen. I doubt if such a corps would cost more than the present rangers; but if it did, the results obtained would, in my humble opinion, justify the expenditure.

It will take many a day yet before the fertile farms of this northern district can be thoroughly safeguarded from fire. How many of those men buoyed up with hopes for the future, will ever attain their object unless the powers-that-be put their foot down and not only say that this wanton destruction must cease; but see that it does cease. The political support of those who would thwart the honest endeavors of a party determined to enforce the very moderate demands of those who say that the fire danger has got to stop, is not worth relying on. The system also of giving appointments to party heelers (one side is as bad as the other) instead of selecting the best men, militates against the proper enforcement of the law. Few can count on holding a berth beyond the life of a Parliament, that appointment is coveted by half a dozen other village Solomons of the same party, so the holder rests and is thankful and is careful to look the other way when there is much smoke about.

The Canadian Forestry Association will have the hearty backing of all true Canadians in any scheme it may undertake for the conservation of the forest areas.

There is one point that must not be overlooked in this question and that is the birds. These constant fires often at breeding time, destroy quantities of them.

The balance of nature is so upset in this district, (Dryden, Ont.) that where there should be thousands of grouse, there are only dozens. The natural increase is barely sufficient to keep pace with their destruction by their various four-footed foes, without counting the pot-hunters.

Give me the trees with hoary frost in  
winter-time  
And I will call this country mine.  
Give me the trees in budding spring  
And I will all their beauties sing.  
Bid me to stay where fire has swept and all  
must die,  
And I will spread my wings and fly.

#### EFFICIENCY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

Civil service reform, in Canada, has usually been taken to be synonymous with the problem of eliminating party patronage . . . It is well to put an end to the filling of government offices by irresponsible patronage committees, but this is only a negative reform. It will not of itself ensure an efficient service, and an efficient service is urgently required. In a country like Canada where the tasks assigned the central government in the development of our resources are so great, it is of the first importance to attract men who can measure up to their work, to reward them fairly with kudos or with cash, and to organize them to secure the best results.—*Queen's Quarterly*.