

I have made some enquiries in regard to the possibilities of using it for paper, and it has not been convenient or possible for me to obtain definite and direct information on the subject. I, therefore, make the suggestion that the commission take up this matter, and consider how far the white poplar can be used for the purposes of making paper, and under what conditions it can be properly worked up. The area of country affected is very great, and, with the pressure of settlement, the poplar will disappear without having been of use to any one. As a matter of fact, at the present time it has no value. It is a detriment and impediment to the settlement of the country, and the settler does not use any means to protect it; in fact, it may be suggested that sometimes, in the dry years, he drops a pipe of tobacco by accident and great damage results.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Some time ago I called the attention of my right hon. friend (Sir George Foster) to a question which I think should receive the immediate attention of the conservation commission. I do not rise to advocate at the present moment the closing of all distilleries in the country, but the point to which I wish to call attention is in connection with the distilleries. It has been discovered in Germany and Sweden—but the invention is of Swedish origin—that alcohol was distilled with the residue of a liquor which comes out of every sulphite manufacture. Tests were made some years ago in Sweden and in Norway by an inventor, and this large quantity of liquor, which was allowed to waste by being run into the sea—where it had the effect of destroying fish—was found to be the means of producing alcohol through another process. In Sweden and in Germany this liquor of sulphite is used for alcoholic purposes. Four years ago the invention was taken hold of by an American sulphite paper manufacturer, who has established a distillery which produces alcohol of the purest kind from that liquor. There are in this country large sulphite mills. If that liquor, which now goes to waste, were utilized for the purpose of manufacturing alcohol, large quantities of grain would be saved for use as food and a supply of alcohol could be secured for use in the munition plants. The case is abundantly clear; within twenty-four hours the establishment can be visited and full information obtained. I do not now remember the name of the city where this plant is established, but one of the officers of the Imperial Munitions Board

visited the place this last winter and reported on the whole question.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: The matter was brought to my attention by several persons, my hon. friend (Mr. Lemieux) amongst them. I had a conversation with a gentleman who knew a great deal about it, and I asked him to give me a complete report on the subject. As soon as I get that report I shall be very glad to look into the matter.

Mr. GRAHAM: Is it true that large quantities of goods upon which the duty has not been paid or which have not been called for are every year destroyed by the Customs Department at various large centres throughout Canada? I heard of one case where valuable liquors were destroyed; these might well have been sent to the hospitals. Other articles might have been disposed of by sale and the proceeds given to the Treasury. At this time we are all being asked to economize in our own homes, and I think that this practice of destroying goods should not continue when there is need for the articles which are so disposed of.

Mr. REID: Some time ago it was brought to my attention that goods that had not been claimed, or upon which the duty had not been paid, were being destroyed. I took the matter up with the Commissioner of Customs. The provision in the Customs Act which deals with that matter does not give us power to dispose of such goods, if they are not sold, other than by destroying them. When they are sold by auction, they do not bring anything like their value. It did seem too bad that goods that could be used for some practical purpose should be destroyed, and I took it upon myself to distribute some of these goods as the hon. member has suggested. Some liquor which had been seized, and which would otherwise have been destroyed; I handed over to the hospitals at the nominal price of one dollar. I gave instructions to the commissioner that goods of any value that had collected at these places, and that might be used in hospitals or charitable institutions, should be sent to Ottawa. When they get to Ottawa they are handed out to some charitable institution at the nominal price of one dollar, and a record is kept to show that they have been so distributed.

Mr. GRAHAM: I know that there is such a provision in the Act as my hon. friend has suggested.