

day may not unnaturally ask, "Are we not as worthy objects of the care of the Government as the Hemlock trees? Are we not entitled to protection as well as the timber? The benefits to us of this trade in Hemlock bark are present and positive. The benefit to our descendants of preventing the consumption of this commodity is all in the future, and to say the least of it, uncertain. The prosperity of our descendants can hardly be promoted by any legislation which operates to retard the material improvement of the present occupiers of the soil." England has lately been threatened by her men of science with the exhaustion of her coal fields, yet she does not legislate to discourage the exportation of coal!

LETTER from R. W. Heneker, Esq., Commissioner of the British American Land Company at Sherbrooke, in relation to the question under consideration by the Committee.

BRITISH AMERICAN LAND COMPANY,
Sherbrooke, P.Q., 11th May, 1868.

Alfred Todd, Esq.,
Chief Clerk of Committees, Ottawa.

SIR,—I beg leave, if not too late, to offer a few suggestions on the subject, now before the House of Commons, of taxing the export of Hemlock bark, and the extract made from it for tanning purposes.

I represent what may be termed the "Proprietor's view of the Question," as distinct from the Tannery's on the one hand, and the Manufacturers of Extract and Bark Extracts on the other.

The British American Land Company hold a considerable quantity of land in the Township of Roxton, Acton and Wickham, in which there is an extensive growth of Hemlock, capable of being turned to account for tanning purposes. They hold also large blocks of land in other Townships, where Hemlock grows, intermixed with other timber; but these cannot be classed as "Hemlock lands," in comparison with the townships I have named.

The points for consideration, as it appears to me, are, Firstly, whether the growth of Hemlock timber is so extensive in the Eastern Townships as to make the supply permanent, not only for the manufacture of leather by tanneries situated in the Hemlock districts, but so as to admit also of the export of bark in large quantities either in bulk or in the shape of extract?

To this question I have no hesitation in answering, that if the consumption of bark goes on as it has done for the past two years, the country will soon be denuded of its bark, and not only will the export of bark and bark extract cease, but the manufacture of leather in the Townships, on an extensive scale will be seriously diminished.

The area, where Hemlock timber grows, so as to give the district the name of "Hemlock Country," is limited in its extent. The seats of the large tanneries define it, and I know it is considered as an axiom with tanners, that the advantages of the establishment of tanneries in the Hemlock Country, are sufficient to over-ride all the other advantages of permanent water-power, and the cheap freight derived from localities (only partially supplied with bark) where the Railway system will bring hides and export leather without horse carriage.

I have sought for some time to get a large tannery started in this town, on the site of an old one contiguous to the railway, with every facility for loading and unloading, and with a permanent supply of water power. Sherbrooke, being at the junction of two rivers, down which bark could be brought with great facility; it seemed to me that nothing was wanting, and yet these advantages were said to be outweighed by the advantages of the "Hemlock Country," and I have mentioned this fact in particular, as it will enable the Committee to form some estimate of the real extent of this Hemlock Country.

Secondly, it is matter for consideration whether the large capital required for the manufacture of the extract and the employment given to poor settlers is not in itself of such great advantage to the country as to warrant some apparent degree of waste of the natural resources of the country?