

Should be
subject to
modification
to suit great
districts, by
Order in
Council.

The law enacted on this subject should clothe the Lieutenant-Governor with power to fix the periods in different localities or rather great fire districts by Order in Council.

It seems probable that before very long that a reservation of all commercial timber (or of the ordinary dues thereon) in the same manner as on pine will be necessary to preserve the public forests and revenue, though it is not of immediate importance.

Dr. Hough's encomium on the system now in force in the province of Quebec for the management of the public forests is so well grounded on facts, now that it has been so far completed by the wise legislation of last spring, that there is now little or no grounds left for suggesting any alteration or suggestion of addition beyond such as may appear advantageous in minor practical details, as the working of the system in future may indicate.

Ottawa, 16th January 1883.

Respectfully submitted,
(Signed) A. J. RUSSELL.

SIR,

Ottawa, January 20, 1883.

In addition to what I said of the highly important and beneficial character and tendency of the action of the Government and Legislature last spring in the matter, woods and forests, I might, in my report on the subject of the meeting of the Forestry Congress, have with great justice adduced the very high prices now obtained by private individuals in selling timber berths, and the rates they exact from each other as compensation for damages in cases of trespass, as unquestionably justifying the increased rate of dues on timber from Crown lands now in force. See sale of 145 square miles of limits on Black River for \$208,000²⁰/₁₀₀, equal to \$2²⁴/₁₀₀ an acre, in the above-mentioned report.

It is worthy of remark that though the increase of price of the timber caused by the increase of the rates of dues would not be wholly at the expense of the foreign consumer, it would be so in proportion to the quantity of the article he was necessarily obliged to take from Canada, owing to his not being able to get it on better terms, or rather on the same terms elsewhere, and the portion of the public revenue arising from the increase of duties paid by foreign consumers would be so much gain obtained, which was not a tax on the people of Canada.

This, to a certain extent, adds to the advantage of selling lands, subject for ever to the ordinary duties in force at the time being levied on timber of all kinds cut on them, going to market and reducing the price of all lands sold to settlers.

As the rates of ordinary dues were increased in future, the reserved revenue from such timber as came from sold lots would increase, and would, being dealt with along with other and greater quantities of timber, at the same time be incomparably easier to collect, and that at much less cost than in the form of the small instalments annually on purchased lots, which, when not exceeding \$4.00, do not cover the cost of office labour they occasion.

The reservation of duty on all timber from sold lands would be a source of revenue—of increasing revenue for ever to the province—especially to be valued as obviating the necessity of so much direct taxation, which otherwise would have to be imposed on our population to whom it would be objectionable. The revenue from other timber than pine may not exceed \$100,000 annually at present, and the time, though distant, will come when it will exceed that from pine greatly.

The system adopted by Governments in the late regulations with respect to pine, in authorising it to be cut by the purchaser of a lot by giving him a license, is good in maintaining the power of control and exacting returns under penalty for evasion, as in case of trespass; and the levying of the duty will prove an important source of revenue, besides terminating the temptation to purchase the best timbered lots with the view of obtaining a right to the timber for from a quarter to a tenth part of the dues on it that would otherwise be payable.

As we had a system formerly, when it was necessary, of confiscating limits falsely stated to be duly occupied, I once proposed to the then Commissioner applying the same system to lots of land, of transferring the title and lot to the informer proving the non-performance of conditions of actual settlement, &c., as we did in the case of non-occupied licenses; but in the case of the non-occupied lot, what he had paid to be returned to him after deducting expenses of proving the case.