

prosperity and well-being of the American continent north of the Mexican border than in that of any other area on the face of the earth. (Applause.)

Timber and water in the east, water and timber in the west, are the great products of this great beneficent cloak of forest which has been spread over so much of our land on both sides of the line. We are apt to consider it as simply a truism, when we say that forestry is important. Well, so it may be, but it is one of those truisms that must be made widely known. But, unless we can specify what forestry will do for us in Canada and in the United States, we may very well consider that we have failed in the presentation of our case. I like to think of the forest as giving us not merely protection for our water supply, not merely the guarantee of the productiveness of our soils, not merely the assurance of continuity of desirable local climatic conditions, but also as doing what it actually does—supplying us from day to day with material which is, perhaps, on the whole, the most important material for the building up of our civilization. We call this an age of steel, and so it is; but it is not the less an age of wood (applause). And one of the things with which we are face to face all over this North American Continent is the coming scarcity, in no long time, of this chief ingredient in construction, the pinch of the lack of which is going to be felt widely and keenly when it comes. And we must remember that when this want does come, it will not be a question merely of reopening the source of supply as we re-opened the mines when we were threatened with a coal famine a few years ago;—(applause)—It will be a question of feeling that want for years, fifty years being the shortest possible time within which the material can be grown. This is a matter in which foresight is the primal duty. Signs are not lacking all over this continent that the approaching timber famine is not very far away. I am informed that the prices of pine in Ontario have doubled within the past ten years; and similar facts might be cited from the pine and other timber producing areas of the continent.

Now, let us pass briefly in review some of the ways in which the forest contributes to the national well-being. You all know these things, nevertheless it will do no harm for us to keep them in mind, as I think we should do throughout this Convention. Though it is true that, in the eastern part of Canada and the United States in the past, the farmer was obliged to clear away the forest before it was possible for him to build his house or support his family, it is also true that that time has almost wholly past. We have now reached the point where the forest, instead of being the enemy of the farmer in the east, is his most potent friend. And, so far as the west is concerned we have reached the point where