

CANADIAN CONTRACT RECORD

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY

BY
HUGH C. MACLEAN, LIMITED
TORONTO, CANADA.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE:

Canada and Great Britain, \$2.00 per annum,
payable in advance.

United States and all foreign countries embraced
in the General Postal Union, \$3.00.

HEAD OFFICE, Confederation Life Bldg., TORONTO
Telephone Main 2362.

Branch Offices:

MONTREAL Tel. Main 2599 B34 Board of Trade
D. BURNSIDE, Representative.
WINNIPEG Telephone 224 330 Smith Street
ROLAND F. HILL, Representative
VANCOUVER Telephone 2248 615 Hastings Street
GEORGE A. GALL, Representative.

Subscribers who may change their address should
give prompt notice of same. In doing so give both old
and new address. Notify the publishers of any irregu-
larity in delivery of papers.

MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT.

Even the most casual observer cannot but be struck by the vast improvement in municipal conditions that has been made during the past decade. Good roads, good residences and improved sanitation are rapidly taking the place of the sloughs and unsanitary dwellings that were characteristic of our forefathers. In rural districts that twenty-five years ago were swamp and bush there are now to be seen brick dwellings, bank barns, furnace-heated schools and a telephone system. The township and town councils are composed of men of broad outlook in the majority of cases. They have traveled and made themselves acquainted with conditions lying beyond their own immediate neighborhood, and a wholesome rivalry has in many instances sprung up between neighboring districts in the carrying out of improvements.

After all, neither more drastic legislation nor the rigid enforcement of existing laws is calculated to produce permanent good results. Citizens of a community must be educated into the right conception of government as a benefit to be equally enjoyed by all. That this is being recognized more and more is shown by the fact that from small hamlet to great city there is experienced an increasing difficulty in inducing the best men to undertake municipal office. The transition from the desire for personal aggrandizement to the desire of the greatest

good for the greatest number is slow but sure. The ideals of civic purity and excellence are higher than ever before, and the population as a whole is exerting itself to bring about in matters private and public higher standards of living. Even greater in the future will be the effect of this silent influence, when hundreds of intelligent and aggressive men and women in centralized communities occupy themselves in making a consistent and intelligent study of improved conditions.

U. S. FORESTRY SERVICE MAKES TESTS.

It is doubtful if any of the laboratories maintained by the government for scientific research are more unique in character, and yet bear promise of more important results, than one which has just been established in Washington by the United States Forest Service for investigating the structure of commercially important woods.

Laymen will not understand the significance of the proposed investigations carried on in this laboratory so quickly as architects, builders and other wood users, who in these days of growing scarcity of the more valuable woods are seriously perplexed in identifying substitutes. Mistakes of this kind in identification have, in the last few years, in several instances, meant the loss of thousands of dollars, and many embarrassing law suits.

Nearly any user of lumber can recognize, and name off-hand, all the usual trees of the forest when he sees them growing, and not much difficulty is encountered in identifying the common kind of lumber in a mill yard because he knows the few trees from which the yard lumber comes. But common kinds are growing scarce, and woods not often cut heretofore are appearing in the markets. The most experienced men are sometimes puzzled when they try to identify them, and persons with less experience have still more trouble. Is a certain wood gum or elm? Is another cucumber, linn, or poplar? Is a stick sugar maple or red maple? Doubts may arise whether a piece is hemlock

or spruce, or whether it is lodgepole pine or fir, or whether a shingle is cypress or cedar. A dealer may buy red oak and suspect that he is getting something else. There are thirty or more important species of oak. The best lumber dealer might not know which is which in the lumber pile, or if he knows he might not know how to prove it.

Many of these woods look alike, even to the trained eye of the millman or the builder, and yet they are widely different in value for certain purposes, and it is of the greatest importance to be able to distinguish them quickly and certainly. Again, a new wood may come to a man's notice for the first time, and it may be necessary for him to decide what it is and what it is worth.

The government has been helping individual lumber users for some time, but the facilities have not been nearly so complete as they are now. It is to meet such needs and answer such questions that the Forest Service has established the laboratory, and placed it in charge of a trained dendrologist. Architects, lumbermen, manufacturers and makers of woodware are already sending in samples of wood for identification, and asking if there are not some structural characters by means of which such woods may be conveniently separated for relative species having greater or less value for some specific purpose.

The laboratory will investigate in a practical way. The structure of the woods, sections lengthwise and crosswise, will be studied so as to separate by structure alone the various species of a genus. Analytical keys to the trees of each group will be worked out. These will be based on the arrangement and character of the pores discernible to the naked eye, or by a hand lens.

The results will be published from time to time with good illustrations and placed at the disposal of lumber users. After all the important groups of wood, such as oaks, pines and firs, have been studied and the results published separately, the several monographs will be collected and published in one volume with the photographs of cross