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### FORESTRY AND ARBORICULTURE.

BEING THE FOURTH CHAPTER OF THE REPORT OF THE ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION.

#### Economic Uses of Woods.

While pine has, in everybody's mind, a certain recognized market value, other woods are often regarded, or at all events treated, as though they were all but worthless, or, if marketed, handled and disposed of with little practical intelligence. Since the sittings for taking oral evidence closed, the Commissioners—impressed with the importance of the subject—have put themselves in communication with Messrs. John Oliver & Co., of Toronto, a firm referred to by Mr. Hay in his evidence as large dealers in hardwood lumber. Messrs. Oliver & Co. have been good enough to supply the Commissioners with a considerable amount of additional information, and their statement will be referred to in the Report.

The value of timber in an economical sense, must of course depend on the purposes to which its several varieties can be profitably adapted. The principal uses, in general terms, of Canadian forest woods, exclusive of pine, are as follows:—

**THE ELM.**—"Rock Elm," says Mr. Hay, "we don't use except for building purposes. Soft elm makes a better seat for chairs than basswood." Carriage making, heads of barrels, and hubs of waggons, and agricultural implements, are also mentioned as utilizing elm in considerable quantities. Other classes of elm are in limited demand, but chiefly used for the manufacture of common furniture.

**THE ASH.**—Of the white ash Mr. Hay says: "White ash is a very valuable wood, and makes excellent bedroom furniture. It may be used for house fittings. A good many offices are now fitted up with hardwood, and also railway carriages. Ash is used largely by carriage builders. There is no wood will stand like ash in that respect; it is next to mahogany. It is a shame to see our valuable wood cut down and wasted as it is and has been."

The ash is now being used to a very considerable extent in the construction of the interiors of railway passenger cars. Bent stuff for tools, agricultural implements, hay-forks, hoo and broom handles are also manufactured from ash. The use of ash, for the internal fittings of buildings, alluded to by Mr. Hay, as practicable, has according to some other reports been pretty extensively adopted. Mr. Beadle, referring to his own experience, says:—

"When building my own house I found I could obtain chestnut and ash wood as cheap as, or cheaper than first-class pine, and I used them. I think they are much more handsome than painted wood work."

Black Ash is more plentiful, but its uses are limited.

**THE MAPLE.**—Mr. Hay says of the use of

maple in his business (furniture manufacturing): "You can get any quantity of the hard maple, but it is the soft maple that is the most valuable. It is the more valuable for furniture as it stands better and does not warp. Soft maple is not so plentiful as hard."

In the United Counties, soft maple is sometimes used for house-floors; it is also in some demand by agricultural implement manufacturers.

Mr. W. C. Caldwell, M.P.P., of Lanark Village, says:—"Hard maple is used for wagon axletrees, as well as several other purposes. I had an order for some from Manitoba, but could not supply it in time." Maple has also, according to one report, been used for paper pulp making.

**THE OAK.**—Oak is used for a variety of purposes, the manufacture of barrel staves being one of the largest causes of demand for this wood. It is also used to a considerable extent in agricultural implement manufactories, and for ship-building. "Of oak" (say Messrs. Oliver & Co.) "there are considerable varieties—white, red, grey, and blue. The former is the most valuable. It is found in several parts of the Province, principally in the North and West. A large quantity of it is made into square timber for export." Mr. Dempsey mentions in his evidence that the Grand Trunk Company got a good deal of white oak from his section (Prince Edward County), for the purpose of making railway cars. Ties are also made of oak, where the wood is sufficiently plentiful. Mr. Hay objects to oak because it is hard to work, and "warps like the mischief," nevertheless it is not unfrequently used for furniture.

The firm of Bennett Bros., of London, manufacturers of church and school furniture, writes as follows with regard to the use of oak:—

"It was stated that oak is unfit for furniture. If white oak was meant this was correct; but white oak is valuable for many other purposes, namely staves, bent ware, and carriage work; but it is, and has been, so valuable, that it is nearly as scarce as walnut in this country, and will soon have to be imported in the same manner as walnut."

"There are, however, other varieties of oak, black or red, and yellow, of which there are large quantities in all parts of the country, both of which are well adapted for furniture, being straight in the grain and not liable to warp or change its shape, besides being easily wrought, and when finished, there is no wood to equal it in appearance except walnut, and perhaps some varieties of white ash."

"We might state that we use it entirely in church furniture and school work, and it is to be regretted that so much of what is destined to become a valuable wood is being destroyed through ignorance."

"As you are probably aware, fashions change

in wood like in everything else. Twenty-five years ago it was all mahogany and oak, then walnut; at the present it is imitation of ebony, mahogany coming in, with a prospect of oak to follow, in which case oak will become a valuable wood."

**THE CHESTNUT.**—Of this wood Messrs. Oliver & Co. say:—

"This wood is now almost extinct, and what remains is confined to the same limits in the Province as is walnut. Its principal use is in the finishing of churches, also public and private offices."

**THE POPLAR.** A considerable demand has sprung up for poplar, the wood of which is used for making paper pulp. In the Niagara district, and in Prince Edward County, as well as elsewhere, it has been eagerly secured at from \$3 to \$4 per cord for that purpose. The demand for poplar for this branch of industry is likely to increase rather than diminish. Poplar is also used to manufacture charcoal for smelting purposes.

**THE BIRCH.**—In view of the rapid disappearance of the walnut, the black birch will be the alternative with furniture-makers. Mr. Hay says with regard to this wood:—

"Black birch will be the only wood you can fall back on in a few years. In the north there is a great deal of it. It is an excellent wood. At present it is not dear because it is not scarce."

"You can get any quantity of it north, and it can be purchased at the mill readily at from \$15 to \$16 a thousand. Black birch is to be found in all the northern regions. There is a great deal in the Manitoulin Islands, and in the Peterborough and Haliburton district. It is to be found also in Muskoka. They have been shipping birch from Lower Canada these many years back. It is quite an article of export there. Black birch is mixed with the different woods of the country in large quantities. It is very easily detected among other trees. I don't use so very much of it now, but it is on birch we shall have to fall back after the walnut is gone. It is from birch that these perforated chair-bottoms are made. I think there is such a thing as bird's-eye birch, but it is very scarce. I wouldn't give more for that kind of birch than plain wood."

Messrs. Oliver & Co. say of the birch:—

"This wood is found in nearly every part of the Province. It is a very fine wood, and although the demand for it is yet very small, there is little doubt but that, in a few years, it will be largely in request for the uses to which cherry, butternut and walnut are now put. It should be husbanded with the greatest care."

**THE BEECH.**—Beech has no standing in the market except for fire-wood.

**THE BASSWOOD.**—Basswood, like poplar, is in good demand for paper-making purposes. Mr. Caldwell, M.P.P., also refers to it as used

for furniture, and for boxes in starch factories. All that can be got is shipped to Oswego. Mr. Hay uses it for furniture. It can be used in some cases in place of pine, and is cheaper than clear pine. Mr. Beall says:—

"Basswood, until lately, has been largely used for buggy making, but it is not so much used since the introduction of bent wood for the bodies of buggies."

**THE WHITEWOOD OR TULIP TREE.**—The whitewood or tulip, which grows exclusively in the warmer sections of the Province, is used largely by carriage-makers in constructing the bodies of carriages. Messrs. Oliver & Co. say, about the whitewood:—

"A few years ago there was a large quantity of this wood growing in the western part of the Province, but owing to the great demand for it, it is being rapidly consumed, and is now very scarce. It meets a ready sale at good prices. Its principal uses are for car and carriage building, and in the manufacture of furniture."

**THE WILD CHERRY.**—A large demand for this wood has sprung up, chiefly in the United States. Mr. Hay says of it:—

"In supplying the place of walnut, cherry is a very valuable wood. They are using it very extensively in the United States, making ebonyized furniture from it. It has a very close grain, and it is very fast disappearing. I am speaking of wild cherry. That tree grows to a fair size. We get some lumber twenty and twenty-two inches broad from it. I never saw a cherry tree growing, so that I can't say how much lumber there would be in one. I can't say whether they are high or not, but some of them grow to nearly the same girth as walnut."

"The wild cherry forms a resource to fall back upon in the absence of walnut, but it, too, is fast disappearing. We are exporting wild cherry largely to the United States, where black furniture is very fashionable, and cherry lumber takes the best stain. I think it is as enduring as walnut."

Cherry wood is also being used largely in the internal fittings of cars and public buildings.

**THE WALNUT.**—The Black Walnut, so far as it exists, is the staple article in demand for cabinet work of all kinds. Mr. Hay thus refers to this wood:—

"When I first came to this country there was very little walnut used, but one or two years afterwards it came to be used more extensively. I think it was Sir Peregrine Maitland who first introduced walnut here, and who was the first to make it fashionable. Previous to that, they had used cherry, or any of the common woods. Since its first introduction, walnut has been the staple fashionable wood for making furniture."

"When we first commenced making walnut furniture we got the wood from Canada West. A great deal came from about Port Stanley and the banks of the Thames, in Kent, Essex.