

CANADA'S WOOD-WEALTH.

The Hon. H. G. Joly de Lotbinière's *Sommerville* lecture on "The Forestry of Canada" should be read with more than passing interest, and should be taken to heart by every Canadian.

Forestry, Mr. Joly said, was one of those subjects which did not awaken the interest it deserved in Canada. This was regarded in Europe as the land of forests, and we should feel proud of the natural advantages which Providence has bestowed upon us in this respect. Two hundred years ago, under the old French regime, the attention of the Governors was called to the fast disappearance of wood in the neighborhood of Quebec. He pointed to the comparative absence of trees in the North West of Canada, and strongly advocated the systematic cultivation of new ones by Government aid. The white pine the treasure of our forests, was fast disappearing and deteriorating in quality, while each year they had to go farther than ever to find it. He laid down as an admitted fact that the presence or absence of forest land influences very largely the water-courses.

There was a very unreasoning prejudice against forestry, Mr. Joly went on to say, even among lumbermen, who supposed that it meant the stoppage of the entire timber trade of the country. Whereas, just the contrary was the case. He held the true meaning of forestry to be the cutting down of trees on a judicious and systematic scale at a proper season, so as to promote the growth of their fellows, by which means they could continue to enjoy forever the advantages to be derived from forests, instead of precipitately exhausting their sources of supply. The forests of Quebec belong to the Crown, under an ancient deed of conveyance, and he felt that they must look to the Government to be careful in their preservation and maintenance of this responsible trust. They were certainly far from doing all that they ought to do; but, at the same time, there was some good and hopeful features about their administration.

He warmly approved the amended Dominion Act of 1883, by which the Governor-General was entrusted with large powers of maintenance of the forest slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and urged the more general application of the spirit and intention of this law to all the disafforested lands of Canada. He quoted the opinions of our neighbors across the border, who admitted that though our methods in this respect were crude and undisciplined they strongly upheld the fact of the title of ownership being wholly vested in the Crown instead of being sold outright to the purchasers of timber limits. This, he urged, should teach them that there was still time to profit by the hard-earned experience of the past.

Giving a number of practical suggestions for the guidance of those having authority over the forest lands of Canada, Mr. Joly strongly urged that there should first of all be a rigid classification of lands, or arable lands, showing the difference between agricultural and non-agricultural lands, or arable lands and those only fit for the growth of timber, and declared it to be a most refined species of cruelty to force the poor unfortunate settlers to take up land which was wholly unfit for agriculture. Next, he held it to be wrong to force the timber limits on the market, saying he never saw advertised the sale of these limits—over thousands and thousands of miles of country—without feeling sorry; then he urged the regulation of the size of timber, the discontinuance of the manufacture of square timber, and resistance to the strong effort being made to remove the export duty on logs. His final point was the preservation of our forests from fires, and he was glad that the Governments both of Quebec and Ontario were disposed to enforce this latter by calling on the limit-holders to contribute one half the cost of ensuring a thoroughly efficient means of protection. In Canada they, unfortunately, possessed no school of forestry, and he knew not when they would get one, but it was a healthy sign of the times that the era was now past when the settler regarded the lumber on his holding as his worst enemy. He was no longer obliged to sacrifice it to the flames, but now that the railway system carried the iron road to some of the remotest corners of the Dominion he was able to dispose of his incun-

ance to more pecuniary advantage.

As to the creation of new forests, it was principally in the North-West that we wanted them. Throwing out some valuable hints as to the means to be taken to re-afforest the country, Mr. Joly urged the cultivation of such trees as the ash-leaf maple which gave almost as large a percentage of sugar as sap-maple itself, and the black walnut, which was even more valuable than mahogany. This latter required a better quality of ground than ordinary timbers, but there were vast tracts of virgin soil, never broken by the plough, which could be utilized for this purpose. The Government, he urged, should make the most liberal experiments with the view of securing the very best results for the different localities of Canada and said this could be done at a very little expense. The whole machinery was practically at hand, as the Government had stations of mounted police at various points along the prairie which could be made into depots. If only now in the Province of Quebec, after all its neglect and spoilation, the vast areas of former forest land were to be properly kept from the ravages of the cattle, it would do much towards re-afforestation. In conclusion, he spoke strongly in favor of the advantages already derived from the institution of Arbor Day; and above all urged the duty of instituting a thorough system of education on this subject in all the schools of Canada in order that the young and rising generation might be drilled in a course of moral and mental gymnastics, teaching them all that was to be taught in connection with tree planting, and giving them practical lessons upon it, besides inculcating the great moral truth contained in the lesson of not living selfishly for themselves alone, but for the benefit of the generations that were to follow.

THE TIMBER INSPECTION BILL.

The act respecting the inspection of timber and lumber brought before the House of Commons by the Government is in many respects very distasteful to the manufacturers of sawn lumber. Under the meaning of the act the terms timber and lumber mean sawlogs, square timber, planks, boards, deals, scantlings, masts, spars, handspikes, oars, lath, lathwood, shingles and staves. Four inspection districts are established, the Maritime District, consisting of the Province of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island; each of the three provinces, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia constituting a district. Boards of examiners are to be appointed by the governor-in-council, who will also appoint a chief inspector for each district, who are to receive salaries not exceeding two thousand dollars per annum each; and the governor may appoint so many inspectors or measurers for each district as he may think necessary, but no one will be so appointed without a certificate from the board of examiners of his district representing his fitness in respect to the classes of lumber or timber he is appointed to inspect, excepting, however, certain officials now in the office of supervisor of cullers, at Quebec, or who are, at the passing of the act, surveyors, cullers or measurers of timber or lumber under the law then in force.

Neither the chief nor any inspector may traffic directly or indirectly in any timber or lumber they are appointed to inspect, under a penalty of not more than five hundred dollars or less than two hundred dollars, besides forfeiture of office.

All inspectors are sworn to perform their duties faithfully and impartially, and are to furnish bonds to the Queen, which shall avail to the Crown and to all persons who may be aggrieved by any malfeasance of office.

Every inspector is to hold himself in readiness to execute the duties of his office from daylight till dark on all days but Sundays or holidays, and for each neglect of duty shall forfeit eighty dollars to the person injured by such neglect.

The governor in council may establish regulations establishing a tariff of fees for inspection and reinspection. The board of examiners are to determine the classification of timber and lumber for each district.

The act does not oblige any person to cause any timber or lumber to be inspected. All inspection fees are to be paid to the inspector for his own use, and

their fees are a special lien on the timber or lumber inspected. When there is an inspection the party requiring it shall be entitled to reimbursement of the cost of inspection from the vender. In case of dispute between buyer or seller and the inspector, the aggrieved party may demand reinspection by three inspectors duly qualified, one each to be appointed by the parties to the dispute, and the third to be named by the two so appointed.

The party requiring the reinspection to pay cost of same in the first instance, and if first inspection is not confirmed he may recover the cost from the first inspector.

The act further defines the penalties for changing inspectors' brands or marks, counterfeiting brands or marks and for acting as inspector without legal authority.

It is further provided that every manufacturer of timber or lumber shall, on or before the first day of March, in each year, register his name in the office of the chief inspector for the district, paying a fee therefor of ten dollars excepting manufacturers whose annual output is less than a million feet B.M., or its equivalent, each of whom shall pay a registration fee of two dollars.

Every manufacturer of timber or lumber shall transmit to the chief inspector of the inspection district, before the 1st day of March in each year, a statement made up to the 31st of December preceding, and containing the following details: The quantity, in tons, of forty cubic feet of square timber; the number of saw logs produced, purchased and which reached the mill, stating the slides or other public works through which such square timber or saw logs passed; the number of logs sawn; the quantities of timber or lumber produced during the year, designating, as nearly as possible, the proportion of each class of timber or lumber produced. Such statements are to be verified under oath, and every manufacturer neglecting to furnish such statement within the time fixed incurs a penalty of one dollar a day till it is finished. At the time of making this statement each manufacturer shall pay to the chief inspector one-fifth of one cent for every thousand feet board measure, or its equivalent of timber or lumber manufactured by him, except square timber; and a sum of one-tenth of one cent for each ton of forty cubic feet of square timber manufactured by him. The revenue thus derived to form a fund, together with any moneys voted by Parliament, for defraying the expenses of carrying out this act. It is also provided that certain annuities are to be paid out of the fund. The act to take effect by proclamation of the Governor General.

The Ottawa correspondent of the *Lumber Trade Journal*, commenting on the bill, says:—It will be noticed that the inspection of lumber and consequent fees is not compulsory, and, in fact, would be impossible of fulfillment under existing circumstances if it were so, as nearly all our manufacturers have different methods of grading, very few of them agreeing as to what constitutes the several qualities of lumber, excepting, perhaps, the best grades. Therefore, there can be no objection on this score. The great trouble is in that part requiring manufacturers to register and pay a tax on their output. Consequently the bill will meet with determined opposition from the lumbermen, and unless they can prevail on the government to modify it in this regard, it is likely to become law, for the most of our legislators act as if they thought the lumber trade so prosperous and continuously profitable that it is unreasonable on the part of lumbermen to object to the ridiculously low tax of one-fifth of a cent per thousand feet, levied to meet the cost of providing an elaborate system of inspection. Doubtless many lumbermen will be pleased to see a staff of saw log inspectors established, composed of men who have proved their fitness as such by an unbiased board of examiners, who, being sworn to perform their duties without fear or favor, and who are, besides, liable to severe penalties for negligence or partiality in the performances of their duties, and who are appointed by the government, not as a reward for political services, but simply on their merits. For with such a staff in the woods the continual trouble between lumberers and contractors and with the provincial governments as to alleged shortages in returns would be at an end.