

188. "The ownership of Canadian forests is for the most part vested in the Provincial Governments, including the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and British Columbia, which grant licenses to the lumbermen.

"In the Province of Manitoba, in the Territories and in the Railway Belt of British Columbia (40 miles wide by 500 miles long) the Dominion Government, filling the place of the provincial Governments, owns the Crown lands and their forests."

"In Nova Scotia there is no system of timber licenses, the trees being sold with the land and not much timbered Crown lands remaining. This is also the case with Prince Edward Island.

"In the settled portions of the provinces the woodlands are in the hands of private owners, but contain comparatively little that can be classed as forest, though the census returns indicate that about one-third of the occupied land is in woodland and pasture, possibly leaving one-fourth for woodland.

"In the United States, notwithstanding the length of time during which attention has been directed to forestry, an exact census of forest area in existence has never been made. The area covered with wood growth is less than 500,000,000 acres. If all the land area, not known to be treeless or in farms, were under forest, the acreage would not exceed 850,000,000, but the lower figure is probably more nearly correct.

"The same statement may be made respecting Canada. From some persons there are affirmations that there is not more than ten years' supply. From others there are declarations that the supply in our forests is sufficient to last 100 years, possibly 200 years.

"The Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands of Ontario points out that 'while the department could give the area of the unsold lands of the Crown, all of which are covered to a greater or less extent with various kinds of timber, as this is a wooded province, it is quite an impossibility to estimate the quantities of timber upon the ninety million acres representing that unsold area.'

"The data needed for a thorough examination of this subject are:—

"*1st.* A statement of the wooded area of the Dominion, divided into (a) that in the occupancy of private individuals, and (b) that in the control of the several governments.

"*2nd.* Reports on the condition of the forest growth of sold and unsold areas by experts such as the surveyors in the employ of the Provincial and Dominion Governments, forest rangers and other persons employed in that work by the various large lumber firms.

"In the absence of data of the kind mentioned, I have endeavoured to shape enquiries so as to answer in the best possible way four questions:—

"1. What have we, and what is it like as to size and varieties?

"2. How fast is it going?

"3. What means are used to replenish?

"4. How long will the supply last?

"This means, simply put, an examination into our forest area; into the destructive, the reproductive and the protective forces at work, and into the needs of the present time for the purpose of weakening the destructive and strengthening the protective and regenerating forces."