

that the scale had visited us, although it had been bad in the United States for a number of years. It was first discovered in California in 1887, and thence it appears to have been transported to the State of New Jersey, whence it spread over a large portion

of the New England States. From the records of all the States and of the department at Washington they found that this is one of the most destructive insects that has ever visited this continent. Authorities of the State of Pennsylvania speak of it as causing a greater damage than any other agency in the known world, and they speak also of the difficulty of eradicating it. In fact some of these gentlemen say it is practically impossible to destroy it, that the only thing they can do is to prevent its spread, but as to actually destroying it, that seems to be impossible. The difficulty is that the insect is so very small that it cannot be discovered with the naked eye. The hon. gentleman at this stage handed around several sections of infected fruit trees for the inspection of the members of the House, and called attention to the fact that although they could not see anything except perhaps that the bark was not quite right, that an examination with the glass showed the sections to be literally covered with the scale. The reason why the pest is so much dreaded is because it multiplies so rapidly, one of the insects; it is said, producing from three to four hundred or more during the season, and as the new broods reach maturity at least within 30 days and at once reproduce in the same way during the entire season, it would readily be seen the danger which has to be met. The Director of the Agricultural Farm at Ottawa had expressed the opinion that the scale would not exist in this northern climate, but the fact that it has been found upon our trees was the best proof that it will live here, and that it will thrive was further shown by the fact that in one orchard in Ontario the area infested had increased eight times in one season. There is an erroneous though popular idea that the insect flies and that it migrates like locusts, but this is not so. It spreads in nurseries, where the limbs are interlaced, by crawling from one tree to another. It is chiefly spread by birds in flying from one tree to another; ants have also been known to carry it, and so simple an act as tying a horse to a clean tree with a strap that had been used for a similar purpose a short time previously on an infected tree has conveyed the contagion. We are face to face with the very worst enemy that has attacked the fruit trees of this Province; it is an enemy that cannot be reached by ordinary spraying, and it is a case where single individuals cannot cope with the pest. When the Department of Agriculture first learned of the existence of the scale in this Province an investigation was at once set on foot and it was found that it had been imported in nursery stock from New Jersey. A list of every importer of trees from the infected district was obtained and the trees traced. He was sorry to inform the House that the insect had spread much more extensively than they had any idea of at the beginning of the investigation. It was first traced to an orchard in the Niagara

district, and the department made arrangements to buy the infected trees at a certain price and burn them, but the owner for some reason backed out of the agreement, and as the department had no power to deal with the matter they are helpless. As the department went on making investigation it was found that the insect had spread to a very much greater extent than they had suspected. Mr. Dryden then went on to urge the absolute necessity of immediate action to entirely stamp out the pest; he advocated the prompt destruction of every tree infected by the insect. The department may be able by prompt measures to get rid of the pest, but if they allow its ravages to continue for a year or two it will be a most difficult task to eradicate it. The provisions of the bill were then explained by Mr. Dryden, and by way of preface he stated that he had carefully considered the question whether its enforcement should be left to the municipalities or be carried out by the department. Owing to the grave nature of the case and the desirability of prompt and uniform course of action it had been thought best to place the responsibility upon the Department of Agriculture. The bill as drawn prohibits the importation, sale or exchange of trees, plants or shrubs infested with the scale. Any person having suspicion that his trees are infested with scale must notify the Minister of Agriculture and give full information, and an inspection will be made of the suspected tree. Power is given for the immediate destruction by burning of such tree, and the inspector must report a fair estimate of the value of the tree, provision being also made for compensation to an extent not exceeding one-fourth the value. A penalty of fine and imprisonment in default is also provided for neglect to comply with the act.

In reply to questions by Mr. Whitney, the Minister of Agriculture further explained that fruit which had been sold in Toronto had been found to be infected with scale, which is so virulent that the parings of the fruit would convey the infection.

The bill was read a first time.

Inquiries.

By Mr. Marter—Has any option or license been granted to, or agreement entered into by the Government with, any company, person or persons to cut pulpwood on any lands situated on or near the River Nepigon or any of its tributaries in the District of Algoma? If so, what is the date of such option, license or agreement, and how long does it extend? To whom has such license or option been granted, or with whom has such agreement been entered into?

Hon. Mr. Gibson replied that by an agreement, dated 25th April, 1885 (approved of by the Legislature), George Clavel and James Whelan of Port Arthur and Thos. Lyle Bray of Woolsey, Assinibola, were given the right to cut pulpwood for manufacturing. A permit was also given to Messrs. Haglewood and Whelan to cut a certain number of cords of pulpwood in the Townships of Purdon and Booth, covering an area of 21 square miles, but he did not know whether any wood was cut or not.