

# Calling Community Attention to Timber Values

Notes from Address Read on Behalf of Hon. T. D. Pattullo, Minister of Lands in Legislature of British Columbia to the Members of the "Hoo Hoo" Organization at Vancouver, B. C.

April 22nd, 1925

First let me congratulate those concerned in the "Hoo Hoo" movement on the signs of new life in British Columbia. All such organizations as yours help men in the industry to become better acquainted and make for unity of effort. They are also valuable both in influencing and creating public opinion. More and more business men realize the necessity of informing the public and acquiring and holding the sympathy of the public.

## Value of Education.

Education is one of the strongest forces in our social and economic life to-day. There are those who say that we are giving too much academic education; that we are weaning away too many people from manual labor to so-called "white collar" jobs. I do not find myself in sympathy with this viewpoint; rather do I think the truth of it is that we all have too little education, not too much. "A little learning is a dangerous thing." The great advantage of a University education is not the facts or information acquired by the student, but the training and disciplining of the student's whole personality, fitting him thereafter to continue the process of self-education along whatever lines he may select. The amount of actual knowledge and information which can be acquired by a student during a University Course is infinitesimal in comparison with the store of the world's knowledge and information; but the training which the student has gone through during the process of imbibing this knowledge and information is of inestimable value.

Contrary to the viewpoint that education is creating a disdain for menial work, education is gradually bringing about the viewpoint that there is no work that is menial and even the work that was formerly looked upon as menial and very disagreeable is now becoming so systematized through the application of scientific methods and modern machinery that labor generally is upon a higher plane than ever, all of which, I believe, is due to the higher general education of the people.

## Last Great Stand of Timber in Empire.

This week we find ourselves in the middle of "Save the Forest" week. As far as British Columbia is concerned, I know of no line of endeavour in which the education and understanding of the people of British Columbia, in respect of our forest resources, is more important.

British Columbia, with its 350 billion feet of commercial timber, possesses the last great stand of soft woods, not only in Canada, but in the British Empire. This increasingly valuable forest area is a heritage which we should strive to hand down unimpaired to future generations. Our forests are not only a means of general revenue to the Province; not only a means for furnishing employment to thousands of people, but they are a vital factor in tempering our climate; conserving our water supply; preserving our game, lending cover to our fur-bearing animals; shelter to our bird life and enhancement to the beauty and magnificence of our scenery.

From every standpoint then, it is clear that we must conserve our forests to the utmost of our capacity. It is an individual, Provincial and National duty from which there can be no shirking.

## Forest Protection.

The real protection of our forest wealth lies in the education, understanding and co-operation of the people of the Province.

We have in British Columbia a forest protection force recognized, I believe, as second to none on this continent. The most up-to-date methods of communication in fire fighting have been adopted, including motor trucks carrying motor pumps; seaplanes for reconnaissance work, and wireless telephone systems connecting our launches with headquarters and strategic points. It is 5 years since the forest service adopted the radio.

## Fire Prevention More Necessary Than Fire Fighting.

Last year the Forest Service had to deal with 2,174 fires, 1,549 of which were held to an area of less than 10 acres and 1,823 of which resulted in a loss of less than \$100.00 each, while 259 of the balance ranged from \$100.00 to \$1,000.00 loss each. Only 92 of the outbreaks showed a loss of over \$1,000.00 each.

From these figures you will gather that our fire fighting service is effective, but I want to emphasize the point that the future of our forests depends much more on fire prevention than on fire fighting. Once a fire gets a strong hold Providence alone can save the situation. In no case is the hackneyed phrase, "Prevention is better than cure" more true than in regard to forest protection.

Prevention of forest fires is largely in the hands of the public. Of the 2,174 fires in 1924, 307 were caused by lightning, the balance being traced to campers, travellers, smokers, brush burning, railway operation, etc. It is clear then that the great majority of fires are preventable if due precautions are taken.

Having in view these facts and figures, is it not imperative that the public shall come to a realization that the forests of British Columbia are their very life's blood.

## More Timber Burned Than Exported.

Such associations as yours can do much good work in educating our own people and the tourists who visit our Province in forest fire prevention. The Forest Service has carried on a strong educational campaign and has provided cleared camp sites for tourists, but we must carry on until we have saturated the public mind with the idea of protecting the forest until every man, woman and child is a potential forest fire prevention agent.

We must never forget that fire loss is a capital loss. We may collect insurance on a burned building but still the amount is a capital loss to the nation. Prevention is our only insurance against forest fires.

We hear much talk about the export of logs to the United States. I wonder if people realize that the quantity of timber exported in the log and paid for is but a fraction of that burned up every year.

During the last five years we exported 744,598,025 feet of logs, 564 million feet of which were from exportable areas, but during the same period we had burned up 1,213,849,000 feet of merchantable timber, or nearly twice the quantity exported in the log, while 400,000,000 feet of logs, poles and piling also went up

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