

Christmas Tree Trade Not a Wood Waste

A Legitimate Trade that Yields
Quick Returns to Farmers
and others

Each year, the question is raised as to whether it would be in the public interest to prohibit the exportation of Christmas trees from Canada to the United States.

In the first place, the great bulk of Christmas trees so exported are cut from privately owned lands. In many cases, they are cut from pasture lands upon which the farmers desire to check tree growth in order to maintain the pasture. In other cases, trees are cut from swamp areas or muskogs where the growth is very slow, but where growth in the open is favourable to the symmetrical development of the tree, thus rendering it particularly suitable for Christmas tree purposes. In neither of such cases would the prohibition of the export of Christmas trees have any noticeable effect in increasing the supplies of lumber-suitable for pulpwood or lumber.

It has not been seriously suggested that residents of Canada should be prohibited the use of Christmas trees. These trees are usually available locally. If, however, exportation to the United States were to be prohibited, there would be many farmers or other owners of private lands along the International boundary whose market for Christmas trees would be cut off entirely or greatly reduced. In such cases serious objection would be raised to the action suggested. The selling of Christmas trees affords farmers and others an opportunity for winter work and revenue. The systematic growing of trees for pulpwood or lumber involves a long-time element, which makes this usually a matter for governments or long-lived corporations. In either case, it is a business proposition. There is no reasonable doubt that the farmer can secure a larger revenue from the sale of Christmas trees than would be the case were he required to let the trees grow to sizes suitable for either pulpwood or lumber.

As a matter of fact, the waste in connection with pulpwood and saw timber operations in all our forest outwings, many thousand times over, any possible loss which can be figured in connection with the Christmas tree trade. The annual loss from preventable forest fires is in the same category. Before any government can take the matter of the Christmas tree trade so seriously as to contemplate prohibiting exports, it should provide really effective forest fire protection and take steps to eliminate unnecessary waste of merchantable material in connection with logging operations on Crown timber lands.

The agitation for the enforced discontinuance of the Christmas tree trade, in whole or in part, shows a very healthy anxiety for the public welfare. However, this

very commendable anxiety would much better be directed toward promoting increased efficiency in forest fire protection and a reduction of the truly staggering losses which take the place each year through unnecessary waste of merchantable material in connection with logging operations.—*Clyde Leavitt.*

Definiteness Needed in Forest Contracts

Use of Botanical Names Would Overcome
Difficulties in Interpreting
Conditions

The more general appreciation by governmental forestry branches of the advantage of administering our timber lands along lines of scientific forestry practice should be an incentive to foresters to promote the adoption of more specific terms than heretofore customary in descriptions of trees or timber. In the past, no little confusion has resulted in different interpretations being placed upon the nomenclature adopted in forest legislation; it would, therefore, be of advantage that a standard terminology be followed.

A matter under discussion at present is as to whether licenses issued but a few years ago, in which a condition appeared reserving "pine," included jack pine or only white and red pine. More recent forest legislation included a classification of "spruce and other soft woods." "Soft woods" is, of course, a very indefinite term, and may mean anything. With the high prices of all kinds of timber this broad classification has become a very live problem, one in which both the public and the timber trade are intensely interested.

The "pine" controversy has demonstrated that while a certain designation may seem sufficiently specific to define what is presently intended, with changing conditions the use later of a certain timber species for some industrial purpose may render the term ambiguous. For instance, with the increasing use of jack pine for pulpwood purposes, a pulpwood concession which contained a restriction reserving "pine" would very largely reduce the amount of pulpwood available, if the interpretation of "pine" were to include jack pine.

To overcome what may at any time become an acute situation, more definite names should be applied to timber species. Undoubtedly, the most satisfactory terminology to be used in legislation would be the recognized botanical names, since common names are too often varied by local conditions.

The Dominion Forestry Branch has published a pamphlet "Native Trees of Canada," the nomenclature adopted therein might with advantage be followed as a standard throughout Canada.—*A. V. Gilbert.*

New coal deposits are to be developed on an island near Nanaimo, B.C.

Stream Driving of Hardwood Logs

Experiments Conducted to Enable
Utilization of Hardwoods for
Pulpwood

A live question to-day in both forestry and lumbering is that of the marketing of our hard-wood crop. The main problem in connection with the utilization of hard-woods is that of transportation from woods to mill.

In the Muskoka region many experiments in the driving of hardwoods have been conducted, and with gratifying results. All drives have been short, under 50 miles, but the operators are reaching out to acquire timber at still further distances, and they are confident of the feasibility of driving it. In the region where they wish to operate, there are considerable areas of first quality yellow birch, and it is good forestry practice to remove this mature timber to permit the growth of new timber.

The common usage in preparing the hard-wood logs to drive has been to fell the trees and, to dry the timber, they are left in the woods. The bark is peeled off the trunk, but the leaves are left on to assist in drying out the moisture. The bark is usually piled around the bole of the tree to keep the wood from checking badly. The following season, the trees "bucked" into logs which are hauled to the river bank, and there they are piled high and dry so that they do not lie in the water in the spring. When the drive commences they are "dumped" into the river and floated down with the soft-woods. The hard-woods, however, must not be allowed to remain in the storage booms, along with the soft-woods, as, otherwise, many would sink while waiting to be sawn. They must be sorted out and sawn first, though this sorting involves some extra trouble.

One lumberman informed an officer of the Commission of Conservation that he had been much pleased with his first experiment at driving birch logs. Out of 3,000 logs rolled into the river at a point which he had hitherto considered it impossible to successfully drive birch, all but 60 reached the mill. This sinkage loss of only 2 per cent is remarkably small.

Another method now being tried is to make the logs when the tree is felled and haul them immediately to the river bank. At the peeling season they are peeled, and, after being allowed to dry for a few weeks only, are sent on with the drive. They, of course, do not check so badly as logs that have been left in the woods for a season; they evidently dry out to some extent also, as operators are having a degree of success with this method.

These successful experiments should interest pulp-wood operators in Ontario and Quebec who desire to use the hard-woods for pulp and to, thus, secure more spruce and balsam reproduction on cut-over lands. The present method

of taking the spruce and balsam only and leaving the hard-woods, results in the conversion of the cut-over area into a forest of hardwoods, the latter smothering the pulpwood species. Pulpwood operators are consequently interested in the question, and have been themselves experimenting with the driving of hard-woods.—*A. V. Gilbert.*

Disposal of Lumbering Slash

Various Methods Adopted, with ob-
ject of Minimizing Fire
Danger

The Dominion Forestry Branch is the pioneer in systematic slash disposal in Canada. On all timber sales in the Dominion forest reserves, this is one of the terms of the contract. Slash disposal is now generally in effect in timber sales on unlicensed lands in the Dominion forest reserves. Operators find that, once their men become familiar with the work and recognize that it must be done, the cost is by no means prohibitive and competition with timber cut under other conditions is quite possible. The stumpage revenues to the Government are somewhat smaller by virtue of this requirement, but forest officers regard this as a good investment. On Dominion Crown lands under license, slash disposal is not effective, these lands not being under the jurisdiction of the Forestry Branch. In consequence, the fire hazard in forest reserve lands is greatly increased.

In British Columbia considerable progress has been made toward slash disposal in the Coast region, and a beginning has been made in the Interior. This is largely the result of co-operation between the B.C. Forest Branch and the operators, though there is now legislation under which slash disposal may be made compulsory, the cost for the most part to be divided between the operator and the forest protection fund. On the coast, broadcast burning is the rule, this involving comparatively little additional expense.

In the eastern provinces, however, broadcast burning is not feasible to any great extent, partly because of damage to the remaining undensified timber, and partly because, in many cases the soil itself is highly inflammable. As a rule, under such conditions, slash must be piled for burning, and this necessarily involves material expense, in addition to the cost of burning, which has to be done under careful supervision.

Trees on the Farm

Farm forestry makes farming pay better by—

1. Marketing timber profitably.
2. Supplying timber for farm needs.
3. Furnishing employment for men and teams in winter.
4. Making waste lands yield a profit.
5. Increasing the sale value of the farm.