

Firmer Handling of Crown Forests

During the passage of the two Bills in the New Brunswick Legislature creating a Forest Service, the personnel of which will be under control of a non-political Board, Hon. E. A. Smith, Minister of Lands and Mines made some interesting explanations of the problems which the forest administration of the province has been called upon to solve.

"The tremendous rise in the price of pulpwood has given an impetus far beyond anything ever experienced before in this province, to the cutting of this wood. As a natural sequence trespassing is a common occurrence requiring great vigilance on the part of the scalers in reporting these trespassers, who are now required to pay a penalty stumpage of \$3.75 per cord or in superficial feet \$7.50 per thousand. One of the hard problems I found in taking over the administration of affairs in this office was to know how to deal fairly with the settler on Crown lands in disposing of the pulpwood he cuts in making his clearing.

"If it were a matter dealing with bona fide settlers, then the problem would be a simple one, but where the records of the department show that a very large proportion do not fulfill the requirements of the settling act, it will be seen at once the question of dealing out justice is approached with a great deal of difficulty. Accordingly I gave orders that all green pulpwood cut outside of the first ten acres be subject to a stumpage of \$3.75 per cord, burnt wood \$1 per cord and payment be exacted by the department. When it is shown that the settler has complied in every way in homesteading his lot, then 75 per cent. of the stumpage collected will be returned to him.

Get Clear of Politics

"My proposal for this new Crown land policy is to remove the administration of the forests to a very large extent, if not altogether, from the sphere of politics. It is proposed

to combine the following services, viz.: Protection of forests from fires; scaling of lumber cut on Crown lands, and protection of game, with one efficient staff the chief officer of which will be the director of forest surveys under a board consisting of the Minister, the Deputy Minister, the Director of the Forest Branch and two others, one representing the leaseholders and one representing the owners of Crown granted timber lands.

The board will have authority to appoint the necessary staff to carry out these duties and the men employed to possess the necessary qualification after examination.

A new up-to-date fire service to be inaugurated to include the organization of sufficient competent men to cope with forest fires in all parts of the province, whether on Crown or granted lands; building telephone lines in the forest; erection of lookout stations; cutting fire trails; necessary tools for fighting fires; gasoline engines for railway work; in short, everything that experience has taught is necessary in the prevention of the great fire evil.

More Money for Treasury

On the first of August, 1918, the licenses which were sold in the year 1893 and not renewed under the legislation passed in the year 1913 will expire. There was strong influence brought to bear that we shall allow the licensees to pay the bonus and interest, an amount that would equalize the payments made by those who renewed their licenses under the legislation referred to, but the government thought it would be more advantageous to the province to allow these lands to go up for sale.