

be maintained as forests and that our water-sheds must be kept in forest. All the hills, mountains and plateaus which are the sources of flowing streams or rivers should never be allowed for any consideration whatever to remain anything else than forest. No consideration whatever should allow these portions of the earth's surface to be denuded of their trees. We know the consequence and therefore it is needless for me to dwell upon that feature; it is a mere truism.

But, what I want to call your attention to is that if these portions of the earth's surface in our own country are to be maintained as forests it is essential, in my humble judgment at all events, that they should form part of the national domain, that they should belong to the state. In Canada by the State I mean the provincial governments, where the management of the public lands is left to the provincial governments, and the national government where the ownership of public lands is left to the national government. If it so happens, and I am afraid it has happened, that some portions of these watersheds have been alienated from the public domain and have been transferred to private ownership it should be the policy of the National Government, and it should be the policy of the provincial governments, to repurchase these lands and bring them back to the public domain.

The state of New York has inaugurated such a policy. The state of New York years ago made the mistake—I was going to say committed the folly, and perhaps that word would not be too strong—of alienating part of the watershed of the Adirondack mountains. We know the fatal consequences that have arisen from that policy in the droughts which have, more than once, been the bane of that beautiful state. And now, I understand, the legislature of the state of New York has passed laws authorizing the administration, as fast as possible, to re-acquire these lands and make them a part of the public domain. If, in any part of Canada, a similar mistake has been made, a policy such as that adopted by the state of New York should be adopted here, and the national or provincial governments whose business it is should make it their object to bring back to the public ownership the lands that have been alienated, and make these forests a part of the national domain, as is done in Germany, France and some other countries (Applause). On this point, I am sure, we all agree.

The next consideration for which I would ask the deliberation of this Convention is the reproduction of the forests. Our system of treating the forests is to lease them to the lumbermen for the purpose of taking off the merchantable timber. I do not know whether this policy is advisable or not. I believe that, on the whole, it is advisable. But no effort is