

that the greatest asset in the material power of a nation in the twentieth century is the forest. Moreover, a survey of history shows that the decline and impoverishment of some of the greatest nations of ancient and modern times can be traced to the destruction of their forests. Mesopotamia among ancient and Spain among modern nations being striking examples. Prof. W. K. Prentice of Princeton University who recently explored a part of Northern Syria says that in the district he traversed, he found the ruins of 150 ancient towns which flourished from the fourth to the sixth century, many of them having from 3,000 to 30,000 inhabitants, and one of them—the famous city of Antioch—having half a million. The hills of this region belong to the chain which produced the celebrated cedars of Lebanon. Many of these towns are now entirely deserted, others occupied by two or three families in squalid dwellings, while Antioch itself has a population of only 30,000 souls. The professor gives the most complete evidence that the ruin of this once wealthy region was brought about by the destruction of its forests, and he points to it as a solemn warning to the people of North America.

The steps best designed to secure to our Dominion the great national inheritances of its forests and fertility are—first, the prohibition of the export of all woods which leave the country in an unmanufactured state; second, the lumbermen must be permitted to cut only trees of certain determined dimensions, and moreover they should be compelled to employ such precautionary methods with the brush which is always strewn over the scene of a winter's operations, that danger from forest fires might be reduced to a minimum; third, stringent laws should be enacted governing the placing of fire in the woods by prospectors and others who have occasion to do so, that they might exercise the greatest caution; and fourth, the creation of forest reserves on lands which form the chief watersheds of the rivers and the gradual re-establishment of forests on those lands which investigation would show to be better suited for growing timber than for agriculture.

In conclusion, I feel justified in asserting that anyone who gives the history of forests in other lands an impartial study cannot but realize that this question is one of life and death to this future Dominion; and moreover, there is not a Canadian worthy of the name who would bequeath a barren waste to his children in order to secure for himself, whilst living out his own little lease of life, a few extra dollars.

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