

THE GUARDIANSHIP OF THE PUBLIC FORESTS OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIA.

HON. W. R. ROSS, MINISTER OF LANDS FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA

*(Address at the Fifteenth Convention of the Canadian Forestry Association,  
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Perhaps the title of my address this morning might be taken as a narrowing of the scope of the convention by dealing with something of a local nature, but I think it will be a matter of considerable interest to members of the convention to know what we are doing in connection with our forests in the Province of British Columbia.

THE FORESTRY COMMISSION.

The forward movement for the systematic organization of forest work in this Province began with the appointment by the present Government of a Forestry Commission, consisting of Mr. Fulton, the Minister then in charge of the Lands Department, Mr. A. S. Goodeve, who has recently been appointed a member of the Dominion Railway Commission, and Mr. A. C. Flumerfelt, who I am glad to say is present with us today.

This Commission conducted a thorough enquiry into local conditions, ascertained what was being done in other parts of the continent, and submitted its recommendations as to the way in which our British Columbia forests should be managed in a report with which you are doubtless familiar. This report reached the Government somewhat over eighteen months ago, shortly after I had been invited to join the Cabinet as Minister of Lands, and the consideration of it was one of my first official duties. The session of 1911 followed immediately afterwards, and it was not until the spring that constructive work could be begun.

AN EMERGENCY MET.

The two main questions to be dealt with were the preparation of new legislation and the organization of a Forest Service, for both of which considerable time and thought were required. There was however a matter of immediate urgency—namely, the enlargement of the fire warden service for the dry season then approaching. The year 1910 had been disastrous throughout the west and though the greater part of our Province had suffered less from fire than many of the Western States, the appalling destruction in southern B. C. had opened our eyes to the need for vigorous action. For the season of 1911 the force of wardens was therefore doubled, the 110 fire districts were grouped into 10 divisions in charge of inspectors and these inspectors were supervised through offices established at Nelson, Vancouver, and Victoria. Money can be wasted more quickly through poor judgment in the fighting of a forest fire than in any other form of public work, and the only way to eliminate such waste is by frequent and active inspection. It was to the

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