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WHAT WE WANT.

BY DR. B. E. FERNOW, DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF FORESTRY, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO.

More than half a century ago a few farseeing men warned the Canadian people that their timber wealth was not inexhaustible. Among them was James Little, a lumberman, a man who knew the woods and knew what he was talking about.

More than a quarter century ago the first public meeting was held in Canada for the distinct purpose of arousing the Canadian people to a realization of this fact, and to stimulate a reform looking toward better treatment of their forest resources. I refer to the meeting at Montreal of the American Forestry Congress in 1882, when I had the honour for the first time of addressing a Canadian audience. What with that meeting and with the subsequent propaganda work the names of William Little, the son of the venerable James, then still living, of A. T. Drummond, of Dr. Saunders and many others, but above all, of our lately deceased beloved friend, Joly de Lotbiniere, are intimately connected. For two decades these men worked under the aegis of the Continental American Forestry Association.

Almost a decade ago the Canadian Forestry Association was formed, to join together in a separate organization, in order to secure a more united effort and action for their own country, all Canadians who had been educated to consider the need of a conservative forest policy.

Two years ago a notable convention was called to the capital by the Premier of the Dominion, to discuss ways and means of inaugurating such a policy. Besides these specially organized agencies of propaganda, newspapers and magazines have abounded in perorations on the necessity of forest preservation, and lately a wave of enthusiasm in regard to the conservation of all resources—on paper—seems to have taken hold of public attention over the whole continent.

It would now be pertinent to ask, what results has all this long continued effort produced, and, should the answer fall out unsatisfactory, it would be still more pertinent to ask why the sought-for reform has lagged, and what means may be devised to advance it more effectively?

In making these inquiries I do not wish to appear as a critic, but merely as a dispassionate analyst, and I hope you will believe me most appreciative, not only of the achievements, but of the difficulties in the way of reform, being well aware that in popular government, progress in such reforms must always be slow. It took nearly a century and a bloody war in the end to secure the abolishment of slavery in the United States. It took 30 years of persistent propaganda to advance forestry interests in the United States so far as to secure for them at least a respectful hearing, and if it had not been for the accident of a wealthy, independent idealist, and a fearless, independent, idealistic President coming together to Washington, the remarkably rapid progress made there during the last ten years in governmental forest administration would very likely not have occurred.

Perhaps before discussing results, it may be desirable, first, once more to formulate, what precisely it is that forestry reformers in Canada want.