

The West Asks for Its Forests

Possession of the natural resources in the three prairie provinces remains for a while longer vested in the name of the Dominion Government. A meeting of the Provincial premiers at Ottawa in November brought this interesting question again into the realm of discussion, with the net result that the House of Commons will have to adjudicate the claims not only of the West but the counter claims of the East for Federal aid.

The Canadian Forestry Journal has frequently pointed out that entirely apart from the merits of their case, any expectation by the Western provinces of reaping an income from their forest possessions is a gross misapprehension of facts.

The Dominion Forestry Branch spends \$100,000 annually on forest protection in Manitoba. The total revenues do not exceed \$12,000.

On the Forests of Saskatchewan \$145,000 is spent by the Branch and \$9,000 is received.

On the forests of Alberta \$200,000 is spent and \$18,000 is received.

Even counting in the receipts of the Timber and Grazing Branch, the Dominion Government spends about \$200,000 a year on the prairie forests that is not covered by income.

The real and costly job.

Not all the premiers of East and West can alter the situation that actually exists. Some one will have to find \$200,000 and more every year to pay the cash deficit in the honest handling of the prairie province forests. The devastation of forest fires has been so tremendous that the business of any custodian, Dominion or Provincial, is to nurse back the timber growing lands into a self-supporting state.

If the West is willing to meet this outlay from provincial taxation, if it is willing to better the conservation methods at present in vogue, then who could quarrel with the transfer of the control from present hands?

These points were discussed by the conference at great length. It is understood that the Dominion Government interposed no objections to provincial management of lands, mines, etc. Protest came mainly from British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritime Provinces.

The Eastern and Pacific provinces did not object to the Prairie Governments getting their lands, but they claimed that, as it is a domain in which all the provinces have a common interest, they are entitled to extra subsidy in consideration of the transfer. Five millions is what was asked. Ontario and Quebec would get about \$2,800,000, and the lower provinces \$2,200,000.

The West at once entered a demurrer. It would not concede that the East had any proprietary interest in its domain upon which additional subsidy should be based. It did not object to extra subsidies for the Maritime Provinces, but held that Ontario and Quebec were wealthy states and could afford to let well enough alone. At this impasse the matter rests. The Federal Government may consider the whole problem during the next session of a Parliament.

WHITE PINE SKY-ROCKETING

Readers of the Forestry Journal will be interested in a recent sale of white pine by Gustave Boswick, of Berthierville P.Q., at \$17 per thousand board feet, standing. Such a price for standing white pine timber has seldom been equalled. Nothing below 16 inches diameter was allowed to be cut on Mr. Boswick's property.

ERNEST POOLE MARRIED

At Cochrane, Ont., the marriage is announced of Miss May Gertrude Bryerton, daughter of Mrs. Theresa Bryerton to Ernest J. Poole, Fire Superintendent of the Ontario Forest Service.