

A Forest Policy For Canada

By Edward Beck, of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association.

The Canadian forestry problem as I see it, resolves itself into two divisions, the one Federal the other provincial. The Federal Government, as the owner of thirty-nine forest reserves in Western Canada, covering an area of nearly 35,000 square miles in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, has a problem in forest administration all its own

to contend with. The fact that the Western provinces have not relinquished hope of being able to persuade the Dominion to surrender control of their natural resources and to place them in this respect on a par with Eastern Canada, raises a question about the permanency of any forest policy that may be applied from Ottawa to the Western provinces and until

that issue is settled there must necessarily be some uncertainty no matter how pressing may be the need for a fixed and determined line of action.

Furthermore, in addition to its responsibilities as a forest-owner, the Federal Government, through its control of all matters affecting Canada's external trade, is in a position to regulate, to some extent, the rate at which our forests in general are being consumed. It can do this through the application of the tariff laws to exports of timber if it so desires. There are thoughtful students of economic conditions in Canada who believe that it would be a wise and prudent course, and eventually a very beneficial one, if an export duty were to be applied to all our outgoing timber, particularly pulpwood. They argue that such a tariff would help to preserve our forest resources, stimulate the industries dependent upon them for existence and enhance the value both of the wood and its products in our foreign markets.

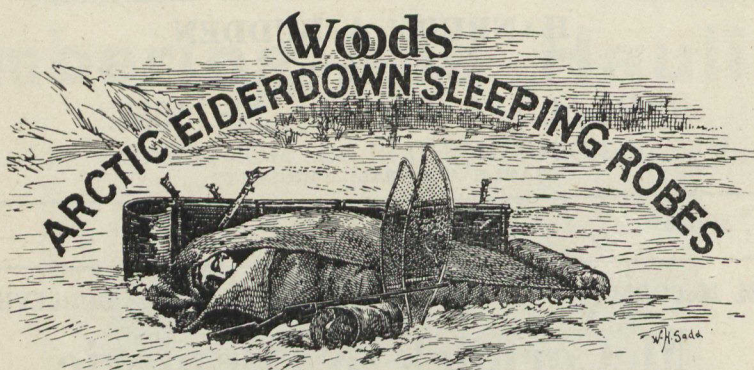
When it comes to the Eastern provinces, more particularly Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick, a logical forest policy would appear to be more easily definable. In these provinces the Crown lands are controlled by the local governments whether they are under license or not. These provinces are in a position to adopt and apply whatever progressive policies they please to their holdings. Some of them have already made a good beginning. The foundation of successful forestry, as of all successful enterprises, is knowledge. What is needed in all of our provinces is first of all, an accurate and complete survey of their forest possessions. There is too much guesswork and too much broad generalization at the present time and no real progress can be expected until this vitally necessary work is accomplished.

Next in line should come a strengthening of our forest personnel. Canada, in comparison with Scandinavia, is pitifully weak in this respect. Not so much in point of quality, but in point of numbers. We have, without question, some of the most capable foresters in the world, men whose names carry authority in Europe as well as in America, but their staffs are inadequately manned. They are given insufficient support and are not permitted to organize their work on the scale necessary to ensure the best results.

Co-related to the question of an adequate forest service and perhaps preceding it in importance is that of forest education. We haven't nearly enough nor capable enough institutions for the training of forest engineers, rangers and forest

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