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ROBSON BLACK, *Editor and Manager.*

## CALL IN THE POLICEMAN!

**H**AS not the time arrived when the "bite" of the forest protection laws throughout Canada should be supplied with a few front teeth?

It was inevitable, of course, that law-makers and law enforcers sharing the popular tradition of "inexhaustible forests" and "unscratched resources" should equip statutory penalties for timber destruction with semi-nullifying devices. Until very recently, a small percentage only of the Canadian people took any serious interest in forest conservation or believed for a moment that the nation's timber resources were in the slightest peril. Even today to tell the man on the street that Canada owns not more than one-third of the timber growing in the United States brings an incredulous stare. To tell him that Canada's problems in forestry are more imperative and economically vital than tariffs, good roads, votes for women, or the exchange rate, provokes a patronizing smile, albeit a willingness to hear more and be convinced. Is it much wonder, therefore, than the "bite" of our forest protection laws, as regards penalties for carelessness in causing fire, has reflected the indecision, the indifference and lack of conviction characteristic of public opinion. Magistrates are prone to inflict the maximum penalty on the "vandal" who burns down his neighbor's woodshed, because that is the measure of public indignation, and seem equally prone to treat with compassion the "unfortunate fellow" who destroys ten million feet of our small reserve of white pine.

In many parts of Canada, however, a change has come about. Penalties have been increased, loopholes have been blocked and, mainly through the good work of the Government Forest Services and the forest protective associations of Quebec the sympathy and co-operation of local magistrates in many places have been won. Probably the indifference of the local magistrate stands less in the way than the indifference and lack of punch in the local protection officers. Some districts in British Columbia, for example, have this year received such a vigorous demonstration of law enforcement that campers, farmers, and others likely to

start fires now look upon carelessness as costing so much an ounce. In fact, a good many of them, having been found guilty of damaging the forests by fire, are now paying their fines, as some people pay for a phonograph, with "five dollars down and five dollars a month." The instalment plan of paying fines looks like a new find in psychology, spreading the painful lesson over many months.

Educational propaganda is the finest possible fire preventive with the great majority of people, but it needs a stiff supplement in legal penalties for the stubborn residue.

## WHAT CANADIAN YOUTH IS FED ON.

**F**ROM a widely circulated set of books for children, the Canadian chapters of which were edited by a Principal of a Canadian university, since deceased, the Canadian Forestry Magazine culls a few amazing blunders concerning the forest wealth of the Dominion. Considering that the book claims to represent the tested wisdom of all the best authorities, it is difficult to overestimate the mischief wrought in the child mind by such "information":

"Canada today is the richest country in the world in wood resources and forest areas."

(The fact is Canada has about one-third the wood resources of the United States).

"It has been stated that if the United States did not cut another stick of pulpwood for two hundred years and the Canadian trees should stop growing and remain in their present condition there would be enough pulpwood to keep the two countries going for more than two hundred years."

(Lop off 175 from the 200 years and the statement would be more nearly correct for Canada East of the Rockies. As regards West of the Rockies, the pulpwood would not "keep the two countries going" at all unless the mills, the towns, and hundreds of thousands of our eastern population moved across country to the Pacific Coast. Pulp and Paper industries must live "on top of" their forests. There's no such thing as shipping bulky raw material such as pulpwood from Vancouver Island to Bathurst, New Brunswick. Well, hardly!)

"The Georgian Bay district contains the largest area of white pine in the world, and sufficient to supply the trade for a number of years."

The foregoing quotations are quite sufficient to indicate the stuff fed to Canadian children these many years.

With such spread-eagle teaching of "unscratched resources," what incentive to conserve can be developed in the mind

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of young Canada? We save only what we value. We worry only in face of an expected misfortune.

If, as these ill-written children's encyclopedias teach, Canada is packed so full of timber that human comprehension stands aghast, what attitude can we expect from the next generation except that the present policies of forest devastation (being Canadian) are the greatest and wisest in the world?

## DON'T SPEND FROM CAPITAL!

**A**NY one acquainted with life insurance policies or the Canadian Government Old Age Annuities knows the arrangement by which the policy holder at 60 or 65 years of age obtains ten per cent or more on his investment but only by the gradual extinction of the capital sum. In other words he may enjoy a guaranteed life income until 85, far higher than the interest return, if he is content to leave no estate when he passes away.

How does this apply to the methods now in vogue by our provincial governments in forest financing? The provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and British Columbia own their forest lands. The limit holders are lessees of the timber growing thereon. They follow state-made regulations. Their title in the timber, not automatically renewable, is subject to forestry regulations, increases in dues, and whatever other provisions the state may impose. In other words the Governments are the bosses of the timber resources and are the legal and moral trustees in forest perpetuation. When a government "sells" a timber berth it does not sell its responsibility for keeping that berth in productive condition as a legacy to the next generation.

For many years past, the annual pillage of forest fires, insect depredations, etc., and the general lack of an effective scheme of forest management has kept our forest resources in a state of progressive deterioration. The United States Government considers that annual growth or increment of timber does not equal one-fourth of the annual timber cut. Applying even half that ratio to Canada we see at once that with the added inroads of forest fires and insects our forest possessions (certainly east of the Rockies) cannot stand the strain very much longer.

Is it wise or prudent that with a property travelling the road to eventual insolvency, any government should take millions of annual revenue out of the capital account of public-owned timber,