

the southern and larger portion of this area, and here the country is very rough and rugged, broken up as it is into many short mountain ranges and deep narrow valleys. The northern part of the area is flatter and contains many lakes and mountains with wide, rolling valleys between. The entire region is essentially a forest country. That the land is, for the most part, better suited to forest production than to agricultural use is evidenced by the thousands of acres of once cultivated land, which have now largely come up to dense forests of second growth spruce and pine. 900,000 acres of the tract are held by large lumber and pulp companies; 756,000 acres by small holders of forest lands, and 244,000 acres are in small agricultural holdings. These lands were sold by the State in years past. The best spruce land brings from \$20 to \$30 per acre. Second growth spruce land is rapidly increasing in value, and is being bought up by the large lumber and pulp companies. Of the virgin merchantable forest there are only 200,000 acres remaining, out of a total forest land area of 1,684,206 acres, the remainder being cut-over or waste land. The stand of softwoods is estimated at 4,764,000,000 board feet.

The conclusions reached by the investigation are as follows:—

(1) Unless the forests are effectively protected from fire, the value of Northern New Hampshire as a summer resort, now the source of an annual revenue of approximately \$8,000,000, and as a source of timber supply, will be seriously affected. The extension from year to year of the total area which has been burned, together with the facts that the great bulk of this land has failed to develop a valuable forest growth, that indeed much of it remains an absolute waste, and that the forest resources of the State are being rapidly depleted, has forced on all thoughtful persons interested, financially or otherwise, the recognition of the fire question, as the question of first importance to the forests of the State.

(2) Safety from forest fires is impossible without the organization of a fire service, and it is suggested that the State should organize such a service, raising the necessary revenue by a tax on the timber lands.

(3) Conservative lumbering under the supervision of trained foresters would pay the large lumber and pulp companies operating in Northern New Hampshire better than the present method. The principal sources of waste at present are in cutting high stumps, in leaving good lumber in the tops, in leaving logs and lodged trees in the woods, in the failure to utilize wind-thrown and dead timber which is still merchantable, in leaving standing merchantable trees which are sure to be wind-thrown,