

Has British Columbia an Inexhaustible Forest?

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(An Excerpt from an Address before the Canadian Forestry Association's Convention.)

Probably all of us will agree that there will be found as much as 350 billion feet of timber in British Columbia. I fear, however, that the impression has gone forth into the public mind that we have 350 billion feet of timber of the **kind** and **quality** and **availability**, such as characterizes the timber which is being logged to-day, and will be logged in the next decade.

A careful study of the Commission of Conservation report will reveal that the estimated increment from natural growth **depends on complete protection of the young growth from fire.** It will also be noted that no attempt is made in this report, to determine the amount of timber in the Province which would interest a logger on the basis of the lumber prices prevailing for the past five or ten years. Failure to present the picture complete and in all its details leads to misunderstanding. Anyone with a knowledge of timber and logging, and the lumber business, who stops to think, will realize, of course, that a very large part of this 350 billion feet is timber quite different from that which is being logged to-day; is, in fact, timber of lower grade and more remotely situated, and more difficult and expensive to log. Most people, however, do not stop to think this far, and for them, the idea of this truly large supply of timber, when coupled with the statement which has been made from authoritative sources, that there is a growth and replacement of 5 to 7 billion feet per year, and the knowledge that the annual cut in the Province has never very far exceeded two billion feet. This idea, I repeat, is more than likely to dispel any thought in the public mind for conservation and reforestation; for what is the need of avoiding waste, and for replacing the forest if the supply is not only inexhaustible, but **increasing** faster than it is being used, or likely to be used for the next decade?

I bring this matter up, not through a desire to enter into a controversy, but in order to stimulate fuller discussion and explanation of the **facts**, so that no one may labor under misapprehensions of any sort.

And do not forget these three things:

(1) The Pacific Coast has barely en-

tered upon its career as a great timber and lumbering region.

(2) British Columbia, especially the coast districts, will be called upon to develop her natural forest resources in the next 10 or 15 years to a degree scarcely

appreciated by most of us, and hardly at all by the general public.

(3) There is a very real need for taking thought to avoid waste, and for that important function of the Government of a great forest Province,—Re-forestation.



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