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THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CANADIAN COMMISSION ON CONSERVATION.

We have just received the first annual report of the Commission on Conservation, Canada. The establishing of this Commission was a departure from the regular routine of Government affairs that will be much appreciated by the Canadian people.

Under our system of government, with matters of State responsibility divided between Provincial and Dominion authorities, it is but natural to expect that frequently different sections of Canada would be working against each other in the development and preservation and conservation of her natural resources.

The establishing of the Commission forms the central body, which will be able to secure the co-operation of the different Provincial bodies in matters that affect more than one Province, and in matters that the several Provinces have an interest, but only the Dominion has the control.

The tenth clause of the Act establishing this Commission says:—

It shall be the duty of the Commission to take into consideration all questions which may be brought to its notice relating to the conservation and better utilization of the natural resources of Canada; to make such inventories, collect and disseminate such information, conduct such investigations inside and outside of Canada, and frame such recommendations as seem conducive to the accomplishments to that end.

Although the work of the Commission will be largely educational, yet their direct influence on legislation has been already very marked. At the sessions of both Provincial and Dominion Parliaments, recently closed, the influence of the Commission has been in evidence in several discussions, and more than one measure has been either dropped or largely modified because of the information, evidence and pressure brought to bear upon the members of the House by the Commission.

This first annual report contains the speeches of an eminent scientist, who addressed the Commission at the convention held in Ottawa last January, and also embodies the programme of work which each of the committees of the Commission have laid out for themselves. It will be found to be a valuable addition to the library of those interested in scientific matters, in the present development of Canada, and in the possibilities of the country.

Now that the Government has undertaken this work, we look to the growth of the work and the Commission, and shortly to the enlargements of its powers and functions, with increased grants, making possible the investigation along lines similar to those carried out by the Government Testing Laboratories of the Smithsonian Institute at Washington.

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