

Forestry Operations When War Is Over

Europe and America Must Adopt Scientific Reforestation Principles

Canada alone has sent more than 10,000 men overseas in forestry battalions. Besides, many men already overseas have been formed into forestry companies. These facts alone show the importance of an adequate supply of timber for military operations.

These foresters are working in both England and France. While exploitation is the first consideration in the cutting operations to supply the timber so urgently needed in modern trench warfare, the interests of the future are being considered, so far as practicable.

The cutting in Great Britain is, however, so close that the satisfactory re-establishment of the forest can be expected only as a result of extensive planting operations. It is even now being urged that definite plans be formed at once for the systematic reforestation of the large areas of non-agricultural lands in Great Britain that will have been despoiled of their forest for war purposes. Undoubtedly, the present situation will greatly stimulate the adoption of a broad-gauged policy of governmental forestry in Great Britain after the war.

In France, heavy cutting of timber for war purposes has also taken place. France, however, unlike Great Britain, has for many years pursued a systematic policy of scientific forest management, including reforestation. Her forests have suffered severely as a result of war operations, both by the allies and the enemy, but it will be accepted as a matter of course that this damage will be repaired after the war, through systematic planting, as rapidly as circumstances will permit.

In Canada, the war has thrown a greatly increased burden upon our forests, particularly those suited for the manufacture of pulp and paper. The pulpwood supplies of the Eastern States are becoming rapidly depleted, and it becomes of the greatest importance to Canada that the productivity of her forest areas be retained, so that, for all time to come, successive crops of timber may be harvested from the vast areas of non-agricultural lands. This means increased efficiency in forest fire protection, toward which we have an excellent beginning, but with the goal still far in advance. It means also the adoption of stricter regulations governing cutting.

Only by the adoption of these measures can our forests be made to contribute their proper share toward the payment of the great war debt with which the country will be confronted, while at the same time playing their full part in the industrial and social development of the Dominion.—C.L.

IS YOUR CHIMNEY SAFE ?

Defective chimneys are the greatest single source of fires. The investigation being conducted by the Commission of Conservation discloses the fact that, for the year 1916, of the places reporting, no less than 640 fires were due to faulty chimneys. This is exclusive of fires resulting from dangerous stovepipes or chimney sparks.

Before winter weather necessitates pressure upon the heating apparatus, the householder should carefully inspect all chimneys, as well as stove and furnace pipes, and have them put in good condition. Rarely, if ever, does the occupant of a house make an examination of the chimney where it passes through the attic. Yet, this portion of the building is probably the source of the great majority of fires which start from defective chimneys. Changes in weather conditions and vibration have a deleterious effect upon the mortar in the brickwork, causing it to disintegrate and leaving openings through which sparks may readily pass.—J.D.

Our Vital Statistics

(Continued from page 37)

The Bertillon, or international, classification of deaths is wholly or partially adopted by seven provinces, but not by the eighth. Still more unsettling, each province has its own separate scheme for the collection, compilation and presentation of these statistics. Take the highly important matter of the form of the death certificate—one of the several that could be cited: of the twenty-four items which such a certificate should cover two of the provinces omit sixteen, another fifteen, and another thirteen, whilst the lowest number of omissions is three, and this does not include other items of the twenty-four which are incomplete in what they call for.

The Census and Statistics Office, of course, takes the decennial census, but it must look to the provinces to collect and compile annual vital statistics. Provincial information is of no value for comparative purposes if all the provinces do not have the same system of compiling and reporting. The efforts of the Census and Statistics Office are therefore directed towards getting all the provinces to adopt one system. It has drawn up a memorandum of vital statistical information and legislation gathered from all over the world and is discussing it with the provinces so that the subject may be viewed from every possible viewpoint. Then, negotiations will be formally opened with the provinces to secure ratification of a plan of compilation that will enable international comparisons as well as meet our own needs. According to this plan the Census Office will act as an inspecting agency and will compile the resulting statistics on a national basis.

THE VANISHING ELK

Next in importance to big-horn sheep, though least in numbers, among the Rocky Mountain big game, is the American elk or wapiti. It once ranged nearly the entire continent in millions, but is now reduced so greatly that it has become possible to take a reasonably accurate census of its numbers. Its habitat was originally from Mexico to the Peace river and from the Pacific to the Atlantic, between the St. Lawrence and the coast of South Carolina. To-day, a few scattered bands along the Rockies between Colorado and the Brazeau river and some isolated herds in the forests of northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan, comprise the entire wild elk left in North America. Probably the total does not exceed 60,000 head, less than 5,000 of which are found in Canada. In the Rockies there are probably from 175 to 365, of which the insignificant remnant in the valley of the Brazeau is the last of the original elk herds of Alberta. Those now found in the south are British Columbia elk that have migrated to the East slope since the inauguration of a closed season on elk in Alberta some five or six years ago.

Elk are grazing animals, but have been forced to become forest dwellers. They live principally on grass, weeds and low brush, such as small poplar, birch and willows. This dependence upon grass and weed range and the inability to subsist on browse alone introduces some important elements into the problem of their permanent protection which are not prominent in relation to the other big game of the Rockies.

They are the largest round-horned deer in the world, and, except in Yellowstone park, and, possibly in Alberta and British Columbia, where closed seasons have been established just in time, are rapidly following in the wake of the buffalo and antelope. Only very drastic measures taken at once will save them from total extermination in Canada. — Adapted from an Address by W. N. Miller, published in "Conservation of Fish, Birds and Game."

Get ready for the War Loan.

ADVANTAGES OF TREE PLANTING IN AUTUMN

Though undoubtedly spring is the safest time to set out trees in Canada, autumn planting in the eastern Canada and British Columbia is quite feasible. In the Prairie Provinces, spring planting is safer except where shelter is provided and a good covering of snow is assured. Spring brings with it a rush of work, both in town and country, and, as a consequence, tree planting is often neglected. Furthermore, the shortness of the period, between the time the frost leaves the ground and the leaf buds of the trees open, militates against spring planting.

It is not safe to move young trees until growth has ceased, and in the case of broad-leaved trees until the leaves have fallen. At that late date the roots do not become firmly attached to the earth, and frost may heave them from the ground. This is the greatest danger from autumn planting. On the other hand, autumn-planted trees get a better start in the spring, which is of special advantage on light, dry soils.

Cultivation of the soil in the autumn preparatory to spring planting is advantageous: it makes earlier planting possible, and leaves the soil in good condition for the roots of the young trees.—R.D.C.

FOR EXTERMINATING RATS

"I noticed how quickly I hastened from a room treated with 'formal,' writes L. M. England of Inkermann, Ont., to *Conservation*, "and thought I would try it on rats. I saturated some rags with it, put them in the rat holes and covered the latter with paper and earth to prevent the fumes returning. The rats, which had long outwitted me, did not return. In another place, I tried the same remedy with success."

TUESDAY THE NEW FISH DAY

Tuesday, October 31, has been selected as national fish day in Canada. It is hoped to establish Tuesday as a regular fish day, thus separating fish from Friday, to which it has been so long attached.

Idaho has adopted a close season for sage grouse until 1921.

PEOPLE cannot be forced to economize by government regulations. The human individual is not made that way. The average individual must, for himself, or herself, see the bottom of the flour barrel, or some equivalent indication, before there is economy. The pinch of high prices seems necessary to enforce economy in the consumption of food and the elimination of waste. Every Canadian must say "I WILL HELP."