

Commission of Conservation CANADA

Hon. W. C. EDWARDS
Acting Chairman

JAMES WHITE
Assistant to Chairman and Deputy
Head

CONSERVATION is published monthly. Its object is the dissemination of information relative to the natural resources of Canada, their development and proper conservation, and the publication of timely articles on business and town planning.

The newspaper edition is printed on one side of the paper only, for convenience in clipping for reproduction.

OTTAWA, SEPTEMBER, 1920

Commission of Conservation an Intelligence Department

Mr. Leo Ward, President of the C.W.V.A. of Manitoba, at the Conference on Soil Fertility and Soil Fibre, held at Winnipeg by the Commission of Conservation in referring to the work of the Commission of Conservation as it affects the returned soldier, said: "We have an interest that closely parallels that of the Conservation Commission. We are going to have to extend the policy of our association, and we are getting considerable of our inspiration and guidance from the Conservation Commission. In Manitoba, we have returned men who are operating about three-quarters of a million acres of land and these men are in need of much information.

"I would just draw a parallel between the Conservation Commission and the soldier. As soldiers, we fought that the finer things in life might be preserved to this world, and, as Canadians, that meant to us that we fought to bring about a more livable future for Canadians in a greater and better Canada. In fighting for those principles we expected to receive interest on those principles in the form of greater opportunities. Those greater opportunities exist in our resources. We had in the army an intelligence force, and probably it is not understood by many that one of the factors of the great success of the Canadian army was the splendid service performed by its intelligence department. The purpose of that reconnaissance or survey was to bring forward information whereby we could anticipate eventualities and in anticipating those eventualities adapt our forces to combat and to meet successfully those eventualities. In the resources of our country, we look on the Conservation Commission here as the intelligence forces of Canada. You as experts are seeking to anticipate eventualities and the reconstruction or readjustment of our Dominion and of our province is dependent to a great extent on the information that you as intelligence officers will bring forward to the people of this country. The basic need of reconstruction is conservation. We realize that unless our resources are opened up, and, after they are

opened up, properly worked, we will not be able to hand this great natural wealth down,—that is, the principal of it,—in a better form than that in which we received it, and we look to your Conservation Commission to guide us.

"The returned soldier was privileged to be introduced to many new aspects of life in his experience as a soldier and he comes back with an accumulated growth, but that accumulated growth, if it is going to be effective and of benefit to our country, is dependent upon proper guidance; if we can guide that growth to the best interests of our country, the war will not have been so great a catastrophe as many people are led to believe. We will have gained something in our experience."

Fire Prevention Day Saturday, October 9

The Governor General has, by proclamation, set aside Saturday, October 9, as a day on which to particularly emphasize the great loss which Canadians, individually and collectively, are sustaining through destruction by fire of both natural and created resources.

At a time of high building costs and acute scarcity of material, we are burning buildings at a criminal rate. Our fire loss of last year, viz., \$23,500,000, or approximately \$2.90 per capita, was the highest per capita in the world.

Not only is this a complete loss of national wealth, but its replacement creates increased competition for available building supplies, thus enhancing prices for new building. How can we hope to overcome the housing shortage when, in Ontario alone, last year 5,804 dwellings were damaged or destroyed, causing a loss of \$1,753,337? There were also 744 farm barns destroyed, at a loss of \$1,189,009, of which \$557,736 was uninsured.

Lightning damaged or destroyed 1,102 buildings in Ontario, involving a loss of \$506,885, of which \$212,778 was not covered by insurance. None of these farm buildings was equipped with lightning rods, whereas but two buildings protected by lightning rods were damaged and these to the amount of \$22 only.

Matches were again responsible for the largest number of known fires, 1,148 in Ontario originating therefrom. Practically every fire due to matches is the result of carelessness.

Public education and a recognition of personal responsibility are essential to a reduction of the fire waste. It is particularly essential to interest the younger generation, through the Canadian teachers, in the efforts being made towards a reduction of the fire loss.

Fire Prevention Day will give a splendid opportunity for bringing this subject to the attention of pupils and should produce good results.

Conservation of Cascara Bark

Commission of Conservation Takes
Action to Secure Measures Necessary to Maintain Supply

The attention of the Commission of Conservation has been called to the increasing difficulty of securing sufficient cascara, or barberry, bark to meet the demand for medicinal purposes. Until recently, practically all of the cascara used on this continent came from the Pacific States, but, as a result of waste and ruthless exploitation, this region has been practically exhausted and attention is being turned to British Columbia as a possible source of supply.

Though this species of tree, or shrub, is confined to the valleys in the southern coastal portion of the province, there is a considerable amount available and, if thoroughly and properly harvested, it could be made the basis of a permanently profitable industry. Though there is a ready market for cascara bark, through lack of knowledge of its value, large quantities of cascara are destroyed in logging and clearing operations. At present, the Japanese seem to monopolize the industry in British Columbia.

One large Canadian drug company alone uses about twenty tons annually for its own use in addition to a large foreign trade.

The cascara tree reproduces prolifically by seeds or by sprouts from the stump, if the trunk is cut. But the prevailing method of stripping the bark from the standing tree results in the death of the whole tree. The berries are carried by birds and, if protected patches of trees were established, they would serve as distributing centres for natural reproduction. Attempts to grow the tree under cultural conditions have not met with much success.

In order that this industry may be developed on a permanently productive basis, the Commission of Conservation has secured the services of Prof. John Davidson of the University of British Columbia, in preparing a bulletin on the subject, which will give a full description of the tree and its habits, method of collecting the bark, and measures necessary for maintaining the supply.

Conservation His Main Proposal

New Premier of Quebec Stands Firmly
for Efficient and Economic Development
of Natural Resources

Hon. L. A. Taschereau, Premier of Quebec, in making his initial address as Premier, outlined his policy in regard to the natural resources of the province. He said, in part:

"The first article of my programme . . . will be a zealous care and vigorous conservation of our natural resources. We have 80,000,000 acres of unleased forests which need fire protection. Hydroplanes have begun their patrol to locate fires at the outset. They will

be supplemented by observation posts with wireless telegraphy.

"The time has come, it appears to me, to regulate the cutting of limits by fixing a maximum of the annual cut to prevent the destruction of the forests and a minimum to stop speculation and a reasonable revenue from the cutting rights. Reforestation should be immediately undertaken and encouraged with energy."

"Relative to this important question of our natural resources, my programme may be briefly summarized as follows: To draw from our immense natural resources all that they should and can give, open wide our doors to capitalists, discuss their plans in a business-like manner, and, when our answer is in the negative, to tell them right away, and when their projects are good, to accept them without any delay."

Tree Planting on the Prairies

Despite the extensive publicity which has been given to the advantages of planting shelter-belts on the prairies, and to the assistance offered by the Dominion Forestry Branch to farmers who wish to establish them, there is still misapprehension in regard to the methods to be followed.

The Forestry Branch distributes annually, free of charge, about 5,000,000 trees and cuttings. Each applicant is given sufficient trees to plant about half an acre annually if he follows the methods which experience has shown to be necessary for success.

When planting a shelter-belt, care should be taken to so locate it that it will protect the home and stock from prevailing winds. Sufficient space should be left between the shelter-belt and the buildings to keep the snow from drifting around the buildings and to give room for a lawn and garden.

Many failures have resulted from planting on soil not properly prepared, and, to insure as far as possible the success of the trees sent out, the Forestry Branch stipulates that the land be summer-fallowed the year previous to planting. In order that the planters may have the benefit of personal instruction, inspectors of the Forestry Branch visit each applicant before the trees are furnished.

To secure trees for planting in the spring of 1921 it is necessary that application be made before March 1 1921, to the Forest Nursery Station, Indian Head, Sask.

A very instructive bulletin entitled "Tree Planting on the Prairies" is issued by the Forestry Branch.

Provincial police reports to the Game Board of British Columbia are to the effect that the numbers of beaver are very low in districts investigated in that province, and that a closed season is extremely advisable.