

Conservation in 1918

BY

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GENTLEMEN: Before presenting the Annual Review of the work of the Commission of Conservation during 1918, I desire to read a letter from Mr. Babcock, our Commissioner in British Columbia. We had hoped to have a paper by Mr. Babcock with respect to fishery conditions in British Columbia, particularly with reference to salmon. Mr. Babcock says:—

"I am just getting around after an attack of influenza, hence my failure to reply to your notes. I shall be unable to attend the Annual Meeting, and I take it it is now too late to supply you with data as to fishery conditions in this province."

"I may say that the pack of salmon is the largest on record, due entirely to the increase from, and the utilization of, the autumn grades of fish, which have only recently come into demand. The run to the Fraser was very much the smallest ever known. The river may be said to be fished out of sockeye, and the run of pink salmon, which was not used previous to the war, is fast disappearing."^{*}

Unfortunately, this is an exact fulfilment of the prediction that Mr. Babcock made when he addressed us at our last annual meeting.

You will learn with much regret that, owing to ill health, your confrère, Dr. Fernow, is unable to attend the meeting. He has written expressing his regret, and has requested that his letter be read to the meeting. It is as follows:

3 February, 1919

In answer to your announcement of the meeting of the Commission, I regret to say that my physical condition will forbid my attending the meeting.

As I wrote you some months ago, I intended to discuss in a summary way the difficulties, silvicultural, economic and political, in developing forestry methods in Canada, and I would have taken advantage of the opportunity to congratulate the Commission

^{*}The formation of an International Commission consisting of two members each representing Canada and the United States is provided for in the draft of a proposed treaty between the two countries, governing the sockeye fishing industry in the Fraser river in the Dominion, and the lower portion of the strait of Georgia and Juan de Fuca strait, in the state of Washington. The Commission it is proposed to establish would conduct an inquiry into the life history of the sockeye salmon hatchery methods, spawning grounds and other matters affecting the industry. The Commission will be empowered to recommend modifications of the existing regulations under the terms of the draft treaty. The treaty is aimed to prevent the depletion of the sockeye fishing industry. The limiting of the number of licenses is one of the measures suggested to prevent the extinction of the sockeye salmon in these waters. It is proposed to limit the licenses to resident Canadians in British Columbia or to companies licensed to do business in that Province. The same condition would be imposed in Washington by limiting licenses to American citizens or authorized companies.