

Section 5.—Forest Administration.

Subsection 1.—Administration of Dominion and Provincial Timber Lands.

In Canada the general policy of both the Dominion Government and the provincial Governments has been to dispose of the timber by means of licenses to cut, rather than to sell timber-land outright. Under this system the State retains the ownership of the land and control of the cutting operations. Revenue is derived in the form of stumpage bonuses (either in lump sums or in payments made as the timber is cut), annual ground rent, and royalty dues collected as and when the wood is removed. Both ground rent and royalty dues may be adjusted at the discretion of the governments so that the public may share in any increase in stumpage values, or, as has happened, reductions may be made in the rates if conditions demand them.

The Maritime Provinces did not adopt this policy to the same extent as did the rest of Canada. In Prince Edward Island all the forest land has been alienated and is in small holdings, chiefly farmers' woodlots. In Nova Scotia 76 p.c. of the forest land is privately owned; nearly half of this is in holdings exceeding 1,000 acres. In New Brunswick nearly 50 p.c. has been sold, and 20 p.c. is in holdings exceeding 1,000 acres. The percentage of privately owned forest land in the other provinces is as follows:—Quebec, 7 p.c.; Ontario, 3.3 p.c.; Manitoba, 11.3 p.c.; Saskatchewan, 10.4 p.c.; Alberta, 15.7 p.c. and British Columbia, 13 p.c.

The Dominion Government administers Crown lands, including timber lands, in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, in the Railway belt and Peace River block of British Columbia and in the Yukon and Northwest Territories. In all other cases timber lands are administered by the provinces in which they occur. As new regions are explored, their lands are examined and the agricultural land disposed of. Absolute forest land is usually set aside for timber production, and the policy of disposing of the title to lands fit only for the production of timber has been virtually abandoned in every province in Canada. The ownership of forests by towns and communities, so common in Europe, is almost unknown in Canada, although efforts are being made to encourage the establishment and maintenance of forests of this nature.

Dominion Timber Lands.—Dominion timber lands are administered by four different branches of the Department of the Interior at Ottawa. The Forest Service administers the National Forests and provides fire protection on all Dominion forest lands except in the National Parks, the Timber and Grazing Branch deals with timber berths, and the Canadian National Parks Branch administers the Dominion parks, which are primarily national playgrounds and game preserves where the timber is withdrawn from commercial use. The Northwest Territories Branch administers forest land north of the provincial areas. The Department of Indian Affairs administers, in trust for the Indians, the timbered areas within Indian Reserves. The Board of Railway Commissioners for Canada has charge of fire protection along most of the railway lines in Canada.

Forest reserves are primarily intended to supply the surrounding settlements with timber for local use, and to protect the watersheds. The method of disposal of this timber and the conditions under which it can be removed are such that regeneration of the natural forest is as well provided for as possible. The policy of the Government is to extend these forest reserves so that eventually they shall include all non-agricultural lands capable of supporting tree growth, and to provide