

BOOK REVIEW

Indian Forest and Range. A History of the Administration and Conservation of the Redman's Heritage. By J. P. Kinney. (Washington, D.C. Forestry Enterprises, 1950. ix plus 357 pp. Illustrations, notes, map, roll of honor and index. \$4.50)

Written by the author of *A Continent Lost—A Civilization Won*, this book aims to present, in brief compass, the entire history of the use of forest and range on Indian lands. And this Mr. Kinney has succeeded in doing admirably in a penetrating yet unbiased, well-documented record, the first of its type ever to be compiled.

Since the author has served in the Indian forestry unit since 1910, for a number of years as its director, one expects to find an intimate recital of occurrences with which the writer has been identified. This lends color and authenticity to the narrative, which the closing statement of the Preface fittingly underscores: "Important as forest conservation is, there are other values to be considered, especially human values, and the author believes that in the chapters of this compilation, devoted largely to a discussion of sales of timber from Indian lands, will be found ample evidence that human values were conserved by the beneficial use of the forest resources on Indian reservations."

That Mr. Kinney's book is a monumental piece of work anyone closely identified with Indian affairs will readily admit. *Indian Forest and Range* is a record of the trial and error, the successes and failures, of an enterprise which few if any precedents established for its guidance, stressing as it does the ultimate development of sound conservation practices and, on the whole, judicious administration of the resources on Indian lands in the United States.

Moreover, it is worthy of note that Mr. Kinney's probing analysis spares no agency or group. Similarly he has given full credit to individuals who helped shape policies and procedures, including those indicated in the dedication (p. iii.) as well as the Roll of Honor (p. 336), the latter representing a partial list of those who have rendered "sincere and effective assistance . . . in the accomplishment of the purposes directed toward the conservation of Indian forest and range."

Before launching on a discussion of forest conditions on Indian lands prior to 1880, the author devotes Chapter I to a realistic account of economic pressures which brought marked changes in "the wilderness." To the would-be romantics, Mr. Kinney aptly says: "Many persons entertain a romantic view as to the ideal conditions under which the American Indians lived before the advent of the

white man and his alleged seizure of the means through which the aborigines had previously enjoyed a delightfully happy life. The fact is that the life of the native American before the arrival of the Europeans was, on the whole, a hard and unsatisfying existence" (p. 4). Moreover, "most of the early treaties . . . reflect the desire of the natives for goods and articles that they observed were essential to the comfort of the Caucasians; as soon as the means were available to them, the Indians adopted many of the customs of the whites as to food, clothing and habitation." (p. 5). In fact, Mr. Kinney points out again and again in his exposition of the development of timber sales that the principle purpose of such sales was to meet the needs of the Indians for subsistence.

The story of forest administration in the latter part of the 19th Century as well as the first half of the 20th Century, is replete with significant details of relationships between the various forestry units of the federal government, the field agents of the Indian Bureau as well as those most immediately concerned,—the Indians themselves. The phenomenal growth of timber sales from 1910-1933, including the results obtained by commercial logging and saw-milling, are high-lighted in special chapters which should furnish a reference work for students of forestry and government policies *par excellence*.

Of special interest to this reviewer is the discussion in Chapter XII on the "Conservation of the Indian Range" which emphasizes that *soil erosion and the results of over-grazing*, so vociferously voiced in recent years, were pointed out by Mr. Kinney's research projects long before the nineteen thirties. In fact, no study of this sort, as far as Indian lands are concerned, had been instituted prior to the author's report during the fiscal year of 1931. "It is my firm belief", he says, "that this survey constituted the most far-reaching study of the Indian problem and one of the most fruitful economic surveys undertaken by the Indian Service during the century of its existence. It was a pioneer work and it developed the facts out of which could be formulated plans of great significance to the Indians." (p. 265). One of the most immediate results was "a new emphasis on conservation" which during the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration blossomed out in the Emergency Conservation Act of 1933. It was largely through the painstaking efforts of Mr. Kinney that the provisions of this Act were extended to cover Indian reservations (p. 275). Nevertheless, when Mr. John Collier entered upon duty as Commissioner of Indian Affairs on April 21, 1933, one of his first official acts apparently was to depose Mr. Kinney from the position of Director of Forestry (p. 277).

Nonetheless, "through the use of the large allocations of funds that were made available for the Civilian Conservation Corps during

the eight years following April, 1922," observes the author, "the physical improvements for the conservation of forest, grass, soil, and water for Indian lands, for which I and my associates in the Forestry Branch of the Indian Service had hoped and planned through so many lean years were at last accomplished."

Mr. Kinney is a Fellow of the American Foresters, and a member of the Washington Academy of Sciences. He has written several books which are considered pioneers in the field of forest law and management. He is now with the United States Department of Justice.

—G. E. E. Lindquist

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