DEVIL'S DICTIONARY: The Acadian Forest Edition

Norval Balch

-- With apologies to Ambrose Bierce, authour of *The Devil's Dictionary*, published in the US in 1911. Download available free at *www.gutenberg.org.ebooks/972*

-- And to W.C. Sellar & R. J. Yeatman, authors of *1066 and All That: A Memorable History of England, comprising all the parts you can remember, including 103 Good Things, 5 Bad Kings and 2 Genuine Dates*; published in Britain in 1930.

Note:

In common parlance the term *Irving* is frequently used in place of the less elegant term *forest industry*; so this convention is used here, mainly because of its brevity. Though some might construe it as but a way of calling a spade a spade. Readers who might not favour this use of such an historied New Brunswick family name need but employ the Find & Replace function on their computer, and all will be well.

An Inconvenient Truth, the widely viewed film by Al Gore that unexpectedly succeeded in helping to solidify the staunchly-held views on both sides of the climate change "debate." Closer to home, though on a different front, the New Brunswick Minister of Natural Resources has found that many letters received in response to his request for public input into development of a "new" provincial forest policy have also contained many an inconvenient truth. Though like any trusty Alward Minister this won't deter him from "going forward" nor even from "staying the course." (c.f. Bierce's definition of *Truth, n. An ingenious compound of desirability and appearance.)*

Assart Effect, the closest Irving comes to making clearcutting an art form. *Assart* is an old English law pertaining to, *The offense committed in the forest by the plucking up of deer coverts by the roots and utterly destroying them, so that they can never afterward grow.* In a contemporary clearcut the art comes from the resulting flush of nutrients which produces a short-lived burst of often colourful pioneer plant species. Though as forest ecologist J.P. (Hamish) Kimmins puts it, *this can be responsible for fooling foresters about the quality of a site after clearcutting. However, once the assart effect is over tree growth may actually decline drastically.* There is an art too in fooling the public in like manner.

Benign Neglect, a quite respectable even effective forest management process that for aeons, even without forest managers, served the Acadian Forest well, as it did all the planet's forests. Until a few hundred years ago when Europeans descended on them, from New Brunswick to New Zealand, spearheaded by those industrious and rapacious Englishmen, who had already stripped their own isle of its trees. Note: *benign* is derived from the Latin for *good and kind race*. Would that such a race actually existed, and would leave the forests to their own devices.

Chain Saw, quaint though still much-used device for cutting trees down, and up, by those who can't afford a harvester. However, caution is advised when chain sawing since it can be every bit as dangerous as chain smoking, but doesn't come with the sort of graphic warning photos found on cigarette packages. Similarly edifying images related to chain saws can nonetheless be found in the 1974 film, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre.*

Christmas Tree, Smart, a religious relic, recently re-engineered with the use of banana hormones to increase needle retention times. Research promises to lead to a fully Artificial Christmas Tree, the true apotheosis of Christmas.

Clearcut, a tree harvesting process that fells every tree as fast as possible and as far as the eye can see, because it's do-able and because in the final analysis it's an economic not an aesthetic or ecological issue. Though it does have the added operational benefit of allowing the operator of the harvester (see Harvester (forestry)) - once all the trees are out of the way - to take the wider view in order to decide - with a glint in his corporate eye - which area to tidy up the next day. The size of a clearcut can vary from *large* to *larger,* but most commonly is *too large*. The average size has been perhaps best captured by one country-bred New Brunswicker who had seen more than one tree fall in his life, when he said, arms spread out expressively, "Those clearcuts, they're so big that a rabbit would have to carry a lunch if he wanted to cross one." This from a man happily untutored in the new metric ways. A slightly more scientific version of the magnitude of a clearcut is offered by the well-known forest ecologist, Dr. J.P. Kimmins, in his book *Forest Ecology: A Foundation for Sustainable Forest Management and Environmental Ethics in Forestry*: "sufficiently large that the *forest influence* is removed from at least 50% of the harvest area. *Forest influence* refers to the microclimate; the soil climate; and the effect of the trees on soil organisms, soil processes, and hydrological

processes. It can also refer to habitat conditions for above-ground wildlife species." Clearly a definition that both a Doaktown housewife, or more especially a rabbit, could relate to.

Community Forestry, a relatively new forest disturbance that has the potential to plague, not the forest itself, but Irving's monopoly control of it, especially that part purportedly owned by the public. Curiously the government too is plagued by the very idea of communities actually taking into their own hands the future of their local forests, along with the future of those who live in and around them, smacking as it does of Abraham Lincoln's, *Government of the people, by the people, for the people.* For who knows where that incendiary idea might lead. And there is no available spray for controlling it, at least not yet. Nor for that matter has the New Brunswick government approved any community forests to date.

Conservation Council of New Brunswick, thorn in the side of successive New Brunswick governments; an environmental NGO that has been around even longer than David Suzuki.

DBH [Diameter Breast Height], Wikipedia gives a description that could have come straight out of the original *Devil's Dictionary*, or perhaps Monty Python: *DBH is one of the most common dendrometric measurements.Tree trunks are measured at the height of an adult's breast, which is defined differently in different countries and situations. In continental Europe, Australia, the UK, and Canada the diameter is measured at 1.3 metres above ground. In The US, New Zealand, Burma, India, Malaysia, and South Africa, breast height diameter is measured at a height of 1.4 metres. Previously 4.5 ft (1.37 m) was used. In many cases the height makes little difference to the measured diameter.* Put more succinctly, DBH is the way of measuring the size of a tree that would have definitely been approved of by Mae West.

Dendrochronology, a technique for determining a tree's and thus a forest's past, before it is too late. It mainly involves counting annual growth rings, though just to be sure scientists integrate sun spots and radiocarbon dating. Fully anchored chronologies can then extend back more than 11,000 years, e.g. river oak trees from South Germany. However, with the prevalence of plantations in New Brunswick's contemporary forests, foresters need not count rings at all in order to determine tree ages, for they can more simply look them up in Irving's records. Note: For those who like precision the old term BC (Before Christ) has now been replaced by BP (Before the Present, defined as *Before 1950:01:01*). Though such precision may seem excessive, it does make a certain amount of sense, for example, to know whether our pre-hominid ancestors came down from the trees on a Wednesday or a Saturday; though about a more distant event such as the tectonic breaking away of what is now Newfoundland from what is now Europe, we are content with an accuracy within a million or so years; and as for an accuracy way out there at the edge of the time-space continum, when the Big Bang took place, an error of a billon or so years would seem acceptable. However, scientists must be allowed to make up the universe as they see it. To give some more graspable perspective on all this in the context of the Acadian Forest, it is worth remembering that though Christ was reputably born two thousand and twelve years ago, the Acadian Forest had its beginnings around ten thousand years ago, time enough, had it been the other way around, for several *second comings*.

Dendrology (Welsh), The First Law of, *All trees are oaks, except fir trees."* - from an early poem by the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas. That it would be so easy. Though apparently it is in Wales; but of course they have had a good thousand years to *simplify* (read *extirpate*) their forests – something we are just beginning to do properly here, though it won't take us a thousand years, since we now have the tools to do it, as well as the necessary government and industry complicity. For those interested in a glimpse of what a Welsh forest might have been 700 years ago, herewith a brief description from the book, *Wales by* Jan Morris: *Seated upon his throne at Harlech (c.A.D.1400), holding the scepter of his sovereignty, Owain Glyndwr contemplated a Wales that could be rich. Vast forests of timber covered its foothills then, oak for beams of houses and keels of ships, beeches for the charcoal pits, yews for the weapons.* It's worth noting that virtually none of those forests remain.

Eternal Forest, at least what it has seemed to those of us who have grown up here. Limitless too, from horizon to horizon. To glimpse what *eterna*l could mean, savour the following Oriental wisdom: *When the Himalayas have been ground to powder by allowing a gauze veil to float against them once in a thousand years, eternity shall have just begun.* (John Burroughs. American writer/naturalist in the early nineteen hundreds) In the meantime, at the other end of the time spectrum, we have to accept the utility of the more day-to-day concept of time: *That which keeps everything from happening at once*. Though overall that gauze does seem to have ground down the Acadian Forest more than one would wish, and all of a sudden.

Forest Biomass Energy / Full-tree Logging, an up-to-date equivalent of generation after generation of European grannies scouring the woods for every last twig and branch and cone for their cooking and heating fires. Except such is our insatiable desire for energy that it now only takes clearcutting followed by full-tree

logging (bole, bark, & branches) to attain the same end. The grannies' aim was a seemingly simple and innocent one, though over the centuries even that tended to impoverish the forests. Now however we have the means to do the job more thoroughly, the job of harvesting the forests and reaping the dividends today, before anyone notices that the resulting "forest" doesn't seem to be rebounding as fast as we might wish, as the normal ecosystem feedback mechanisms have been pushed beyond their limits. Some studies indicate that it can take up to a century for the soil to restore its nutrient supply after such treatment, if at all. It's the same urge as that driving the current oil sands development, coupled with speeding the bitumen off to China as fast as possible, so that the shareholders can benefit from their holdings now, and the devil take the hindmost.

Forest Protection Ltd., *deus ex machina* in New Brunswick's post-war forest. Led by Barney Flieger, FPL's fleet of spray planes has been responsible, in commensal association with the eastern Spruce Budworm, for shaping much of the modern Acadian Forest. Barney was also known for his axe throwing skill. Fear not however: though Barney has been called *to the great axe throwing fest in the sky*, even he couldn't take his planes with him, so they are still at the ready, as are the budworm. [Note: for atheists who may not be familiar with the Latin term *deus ex machina* The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as, "god out of the machine; power, event, that comes in the nick of time to solve difficulty."]

Gaia, the goddess or personification of Earth in ancient Greek religion; the great mother of all the heavenly gods. The current Gaia hypothesis, also known as Gaia theory or Gaia principle, proposes that all organisms and their inorganic surroundings on Earth are closely integrated to form a single and self-regulating complex system, maintaining the conditions for life on the planet. Current science has come to understand some of the details of this global self-regulation, though just as man's activities have begun to unravel it. Nonetheless, in the current Acadian Forest context, the idea of Gaia can serve to help us appreciate the complexity and interconnectedness of the forest's ecology, though it may well make us wish we were capable of exercising more respect for it. (see Benign Neglect) Hopefully the Gaia idea won't go to the heads of the forest industry and serve as further proof to them of their goddess-given right to do what they will with our public forests.

Gore Vidal, role model for Irving's public relations. An American writer, Vidal is famously remembered as having quipped, "I don't have anything to say, but a lot to add." Apparently K.C. only remembered the first part, but nonetheless took it to heart and was thus successfully tight-lipped for the rest of his life. He left it to his progeny to attend to the second part, a responsibility which they have come to accept, though with some reluctance and evident unease.

Greenwash, a form of spin widely used by government and the forest industry to promote the perception that their aims and policies are environmentally friendly, which they usually aren't. Only the forests know the full truth, though their eloquence goes mostly unheard.

Harriet Irving Library, a UNB library; also, though generally unrecognized as such, an effective paper-based carbon sink, serving as partial exculpation for Irving's past and continuing carbon-emitting sins. It is thus a sort of carbon tax, though one that K.C. himself didn't actually have to pay, except insofar as he did lend his family name to the library, though, rumor has it, somewhat unwillingly. In the library's role as carbon sink, the arrangement is quite simple: if you take books out but return them, no charge is levied. But if you take them out with the intention of, let us say, burning them – something that has been done before, to which recent news reports attest, as do news reels of Hitler's Germany - you pay a tax based on the amount of carbon emitted when burned. With the growth of digital books, the library's cultural function will no doubt continue to decline but its carbon sequestering function will endure.

Harvester (forestry), "a type of heavy single-operator forestry vehicle employed in cut-to-length logging operations for felling, delimbing and bucking trees. It allows *no feet on the forest floor* forestry." Now it takes but one man, without ever having to put his feet on the forest floor, to level in a day more than a crew of old-fashioned loggers could in a winter. Which is why all those feet previously employed on the forest floor are now, and more lucratively, on the tar sands. Some left-wing, foreign-financed radical luddites propose banning such machines, or at least not importing them from Sweden or Finland or Texas, but manufacturing them in Boiestown or Minto. The current government has not yet cottoned on to this idea, tied up as it is in trying to attract call centres there, no matter how "fly-by-night" they be.

High-Grading, a common forest harvesting technique, especially in the good old days (see Royal Navy). It's a form of select cutting, but a *very* select cutting, often described as "cutting the best and leaving the rest," or the "hidden disaster." It's a simple process: all the most valuable trees are removed, leaving but the riff-raff. Repeated high-grading, over time, has greatly reduced the forest's genetic quality and diversity, putting

its future in jeopardy. However, prescient lumber barons don't have to worry about that for they have retired to their grand mansions, to count their money, and to decide whether they can afford to send their sons to Harvard or Yale, or only to UNB. All the while leaving the forests to the insidious arts of the budworm. (c.f. Bierce's definition of *Money, n. A blessing that is of no advantage to us excepting when we part with it. An evidence of culture and a passport to polite society.*)

Increment Borer, a person who bores, but only incrementally, so is usually quite bearable. (c.f. Bierce's definition of *Bore, n. A person who talks when you wish him to listen.*) Also any number of forest insects that tunnel into trees, but with infinite patience; as well as a cunning Swedish device for forcing trees to divulge their age without the indignity of being cut down.

International Paper, one of a gang of early forest industry players, including Fraser, Bowater and Abitibi, who have come to be known as *The Faint Of Heart*, for not having been able to stay the course, leaving all those Crown lands to the tender mercies of the black flies and Irving.

JDI Forester, hireling forester who by virtue of working for JDI (J.D. Irving, one of K.C's trinity of successors) is molded by a secret process into a non-forester, but still gets counted in JDI advertising extravaganzas, which can for example, in a recent newspaper spread, claim that they are PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN NEW BRUNSWICK FORESTS. But, though it is indeed true that JDI does "make a difference," they are reticent in disclosing exactly in what way and to what end.

Literary Forestry, a literary niche that many, including most politicians, consider not to be germane to the real world. Though when it comes to summing up two quite disparate outcomes of current forestry practices, both here and worldwide, we could do worse than ponder the words of two writers, William Shakespeare and T.S. Eliot: the title of Shakespeare's play, *All's Well That Ends Well,* and the most famous of Eliot's lines, *Not with a bang, but with a wimper.*

MacBeth: ***I will not be afraid of death and bane, Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane,*** but we all know what happened to MacBeth. And is there not an uncomfortable message for our time: that forests are in fact moveable? After all, scientists tell us that the tree species now populating the Acadian Forest originally migrated from the south as the polar icecap retreated north over 10,000 years ago, and that as global warming continues its march, many of those very trees will move on yet again. Not to Dunisinane, but at least to Chicoutimi and eventually Nunavik. The existing multi-specied Acadian Forest will be no more, overrun by oak and pine from our friendly neighbour to the south, mindless of such barriers as border guards or the Softwood Lumber Agreement. And the unique and signature tree of the Acadian Forest, the Red Spruce, will have to resign itself to leaving a bilingual province and moving to a unilingual one, where it will have to learn to answer to *Épinette rouge.* All in all this movement is yet another problem to bring sleepless nights to forest managers and muddle the minds of environmental activists as they ponder whether or not there is any point in striving for a sustainable forest here if it can just get up and move north.

Mycotrophy, a form of ecological politics; a fundamental mutualistic nutritional relationship between trees and soil fungi, whereby the fungi enhance the ability of tree roots to obtain nutrients from the soil, while in return the fungi obtain high-energy organic molecules from the trees.This fungal network, in essence an extension of a tree's root system, also allows adjacent trees to transfer nutrients between one another, from those with an excess of nutrients to those in need of them. Who knew that trees live by the Marxist maxim, *From each according to his ability, to each according to his need,* and that for a change it actually works.

NAFTA, a slick even legal way for US companies to get our resources on the cheap (e.g. and of special current interest: shale gas & forest products), leaving us with no recourse to litigation, nor even to using them for ourselves, though we probably still do have the legal option, should it please us, in a dog-in-the-manger sort of way, of burning all the resources here, before they notice, before they litigate.

Natural Disturbances, of two sorts: large and small. Large disturbances are things like extensive fires, insect infestations, or wind storms/hurricanes, generally considered to be bad things, and for that reason we like to associate them with the Boreal rather than the Acadian Forest. Though in fact, over the millennia they have been the true creators of the Boreal Forest, and continue to be. They are usually considered to be Acts of God. To set the record straight, in the Acadian Forest there are also other types of major disturbances, usefully referred to as Acts of Irving, now so prevalent on the forest landscape that they are considered to be right up there with Acts of God, something we can't do anything about. The other general class of natural disturbances, small disturbances, refers to small-scale events like a single tree or a small group of trees falling in the forest, opening a small gap that new trees can prosper in. These small-scale disturbances have

been instrumental in directing the trajectory of the Acadian Forest since the last ice age, though have now been basically overwhelmed by Acts of Irving.

PCT (Precommercial Thinning), a silvicultural element which can often confuse the average New Brunswicker, leaving him wondering what the term can possibly mean, since any thinning at all that precedes the turning of trees into money must surely be thought of as Precommercial. And in any case the only important fact to be understood about PCT is that the government pays for it, on both private and Crown land. Learning to use the term Precommercial Thinning with authority is rather like having the weight drop from ones shoulders when one ceases to worry about what for instance BMW actually means, or HTML or SEATO. But for the stickler, Precommercial Thinning can be simply defined as, "Cutting trees from a young stand so that the remaining trees will have more room to grow to marketable size. Trees cut in a Precommercial Thinning have no commercial value and normally none of the felled trees are removed for utilization. The primary intent is to improve growth potential for the trees left after thinning." Which, as all good definitions should, clears up the matter quite nicely, though doesn't at all answer the niggly questions of whether it's a good idea and whether the government should in fact pay for it.

Pork and Beans, for past generations of lumber jacks a staple lumber camp delicacy, left simmering all the day long at the back of the wood cook stove, along with the eternally-steeping pot of black tea. All alas gone, lumber jack, lumber camp and wood cook stove. Beans there still are, but increasingly difficult to find because the market for them has been corralled by bean counters. For nostalgia buffs both these delicacies can however still be enjoyed at the *Woodmen's Museum* in Boiestown or in the shade of *The Biggest Axe In The World* in Nackawic, though the black tea may turn out to be the more fashionable decaffeinated green tea.

Plantations, man's way of dragging the Acadian Forest out of its ten millennia of ecological groping into the regimented market-driven certainty of the modern world; leaving future generations to look with awe at such an ordered landscape; wondering how we managed it, and in so few years, and what gods we could possibly have been worshipping. Though a few would see beyond the order of it all and notice that there were no rabbits, or martens, or oven birds or lady slippers, and in the resulting silence, wonder, wistfully - why?

Private Woodlot, one actually owned by a private citizen, where he/she is more or less free to do whatever she/he pleases; and to make a living from it, or not, as is more commonly the case. This is in contradistinction to Crown Land which is owned by you and me, fancifully called *the public*, but controlled to an important extent by Irving, who seems, come what may, to make a decent enough wage from it.

Provincial Trees, Nova Scotia's is the Red Spruce, the Acadian Forest's unique *signature tree*; while New Brunswick's is the Balsam Fir, a hand-me-down species, the product of generations of unthinking forestry practices. One might well wonder how exalted were the committees that made those choices, and how they were actually made, by drawing straws? or by *one potato, two potato, three potato, four* ?

Pulp and Paper Mills, which in the good old days, before the dawn of paperless blogs and social media, produced mountains of paper, mainly high-quality newsprint for esteemed newspapers like *The New York Times* and *The Daily Gleaner*, but now roll out truckloads of *Majesta* toilet paper, found in all ecologically savvy homes, mainly because of its Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) logo, despite recent exposure of the logo by the CBC TV program *Market Place.* Nonetheless discriminating toilet paper shoppers, to whom the end does matter, especially if it has the *Majesta* royal touch, do find the logo useful to help them decide which in an aisleful of mind-numbing toilet paper options they should choose. These mills are an endangered species, though abandoned ones can be of unique scenic and historic interest, or turned into casinos, to continue taking their tithes from willing New Brunswickers who can ill afford it. (c.f. Bierce's definition of *Economy, n. Purchasing the barrel of whiskey that you do not need for the price of a cow that you cannot afford.*)

Research, the process, not always scientific, which looks for new ideas, to further the making of money, even though this is risky, since often it doesn't, though this can always be written off as a business expense. There was a time when Governments used to be involved in Research. But now they prefer to leave it to private enterprise, so that no one knows what they actually know nor what we don't.

Royal Navy, the root cause of Irving's rise to power in the Twentieth Century. It all started around 1700 when Royal Navy surveyors discovered vast forests of stately Eastern White Pine in what is now termed the Acadian Forest and realized that as masts for their ever-larger men-o'-war they would be the key to the future. And indeed they were, for without them the navy would not have been able to build the grand sailing

ships that conquered the world. Sans-navy the Empire would have faltered, Shakespeare's *sceptred isle* reduced to but a fiefdom of the Spanish King, yet another insignificant island like Fiji or Manhattan. However, as everyone – at least those of a certain age – could see from that world-circling expanse of British Empire red on world maps that as school children we used to admire during *God Save the King*, it was evident that Britain came to control virtually the entire world, with the exception of only a few scattered places like Outer Mongolia and Sicily and Idaho. For with a seemingly limitless supply of 100 ft tall Eastern White Pine for their masts, the British men-o'-war swept the seas. In time however, because there were no RPFs (see Registered Professional Forester) in New Brunswick to establish TACs (see Total Allowable Cut), more pines were cut than the forest could produce, year after year. Mast-sized trees became ever scarcer and toward the end of Victoria's reign her once great fleet was on the verge of losing its hegemony over the world's oceans. So much so that she realized something had to be done; so she did it, appointing the charismatic Admiral John Arbuthnot "Jacky" Fisher as First Sea Lord. Being a man of action and vision he quickly could see there was a problem: magnificent wooden hulls were still being built and launched, but they rested at anchor, mastless. Meanwhile, across the Channel the Germans were not just clicking their heels, they were launching ship after ever-larger ship, made not of wood but of steel. It was clear that if the Royal Navy didn't modernize, the German Hochseeflotte would soon rule the seas. So like the Admiral in Gilbert & Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Jacky got to work, "polished up the handle on the big front door" and along with Winston Churchill they dragged the tradition-bound Royal Navy into the new naval era. And just in the nick of time massive steel Dreadnoughts, the mightiest war machines ever seen, were sliding down slipways all around Britain. So when the inevitable Great War came, the British won. Thus, in a very real sense Britain had retained its sovereignty over the world, but mainly as the result of a labyrinthine forest management twist of fate. For if a TAC for pine had been established back in the mists of time there would have been a never-ending supply of pine to maintain a proud British sailing fleet well into the 20th century. And it's easy to imagine what would have happened had it, "battle-ready ships-of-the line shouldering through towering seas with bones in their teeth, reefs shaken out, topgallants and royals bravely set and wind filled" (this bit of naval poetry provided by Peter Trueman), sailed into the crucial World War I Battle of Jutland against the German steel juggernauts. As it was, the British lost more ships and men than the Germans, but still, in their inimitable British way, they declared it a victory. Meanwhile, back in Canada, though all the pine were gone there were still lots of Crown Land red and white spruce, and fir and maple, which the wise government of the time removed from the control of the Royal Navy and made available, in perpetuity, to Irving. Thus did Irving begin his rise, to become what was affectionately known as *King of Canada,* or simply *K.C.*, to distinguish him from his three sons, Greasy, Gassy & Oily.

RPF, Registered Professional Forester, a forester who knows everything worth knowing about trees (or at least a bit more than a Non-RPF), except *why?* and about the value of a good pay cheque, and *why not?* But the main reason an RPF manages to become an RPF is that, unlike the Non-RPF, s/he has figured out how to actually track down and fill out the requisite forms, a skill not normally taught at even the most reputable centres of higher learning, except for an additional fee.

Select Cutting, any form of tree harvesting – other than clearcutting - which in ecological terms is good for the forest though a *no-no* for those who care about really important things, like cost-benefit analyses and bottom lines, e.g. accountants and share holders. On the other hand it is a *good thing* for raccoons and ruffed grouse and woodpeckers and lichen and tree-huggers and mycorrhizal associations, as well as ants and enchytreid worms, especially since few of them normally have representation in Irving boardrooms.

Ships to Chips, the inevitable, though sad, regression from all those grand pines shipped off to England for Royal Navy masts hundreds of years ago, to today's tractor-trailers trundling down our highways loaded with wood chips. How the mighty have fallen.

Silviculture, a well-established forestry process which follows cutting what you want, when you want, how you want, and where you want. It subsequently involves either planting seedlings or ripping up the soil with scarifying machines in order to promote natural regeneration of a myriad of plant species most of which you then kill by thinning and spraying with herbicides. The aim of this grand and much applauded scheme is to leave standing only the meagre few species you want to have grow into trees, as fast as possible; for here again it's the end that counts, where fibre rules. It never benefits the forest itself, though it does benefit forest companies, purveyors of insecticides and herbicides, spraying contractors and builders of their planes, along with offshore manufacturers of gargantuan tree harvesters that have the ancilliary benefit of relieving forest workers of all that sweaty work so they can move to Alberta. It can take many forms, though always has the benefit to the government and Irving that the mere word *silviculture* never ceases to inspire an almost biblical confidence in the minds of the public that someone knows what they are doing; however misplaced this confidence may be.

Spruce Budworm, a misleadingly named forest insect worker, *misleading* because though it will eat spruce needles it much prefers balsam fir needles, indeed kills balsam trees but only slows the growth of spruce, allowing it to eventually re-establish its predominance. And *worker* because in this simple way its labours have defined the entire cyclical trajectory of the multi-species development of the Acadian Forest. Each infestation, running to its natural conclusion, would kill off virtually all the balsam fir, allowing slower-growing red spruce to have its day in the sun. Interfere with this natural cycle, with massive insecticide spray programs, and the natural succession of species is interupted. The balsam fir will be kept alive for a few more years and thus suppress the population of slower growing, longer-lived red spruce. But we are slow learners about subtle interactions such as these. It took the use of fleets of airplanes spraying millions of gallons of pesticides for us to realize this. Though while we have been in the process of learning, the forest itself has been changed forever. Better to have listened to Rachael Carson and left the forest to work out its own future. After all, it's had ten thousand years to learn how, and was doing pretty well until we came along.

Spruce Tree, a non-existent conifer. In the Acadian Forest there are either Red Spruce or White Spruce or Black Spruce, but never just Spruce. True, those who must attach Latin names to things in the forest have given to the putative term Spruce the Latin name *Picea*. But if you actually go looking for one you will find only *P. rubens* or *P. glauca* or *P. mariana*. And ecologically speaking they are as different as apples and oranges, and pomegranates; from an olfactory perspective too – ask any dog. What is more, Al Gordon is known across Canada as *Mr.Red Spruce*, not just *Mr.Spruce*.

Sustainable Forestry, where the ends justify the means, though the priority is to fudge things for as many harvest cycles as possible, so as to put off those ends until the bitter end, when the forest is simply no longer capable of going on any more. At which point the experienced forester reverts to *plantations*, a phrase designed to make the public believe that foresters know how to predict the future, whereas only politicians and ponzi artists can do that. The phrase does nonetheless have a very useful greenish connotation, despite evidence to the contrary, for do not those impressive Irving billboards gracing our highways attest to the fact that plantations purify the very air we breathe? In brief: though a sustainable forest may be a possible even laudable management goal, it can turn out that the forest doesn't actually manage to live that long.

Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), an industry initiative designed to boost sales in this green era by allowing buyers to think it means no clearcutting, which it doesn't. Companies who use this logo are quite happy with this misunderstanding.

Synergy, that which allows the government and Irving to work so well in concert in framing forest policies that the results are much greater than the sum of the parts. Though much less than the public might wish, or the forest deserve.

Value Added Forest Products, preferably big-ticket items like: toothpicks, matches, wooden spools, maple butter, eyeglass frames, chess sets, Adirondack chairs, salad bowls, butter churns; and in the future perhaps (see Research), nuclear reactor cooling tubes, ironwood car parts, maybe even iPods (that float and are biodegradable); all manufactured here from local wood by local artisans in local sweat shops, instead of in China, thus making us rich and them poor, the way it used to be.

Wildlife, life forms found in disparate places around the globe like Harlem and Chicago and the Acadian Forest, though in the latter case they tend to have more feathers and fur. However they all share the same form of population control, the gun.

Windfall, that which befalls Irving in its role as custodian of our public forests. (Note: the term *windfall* usually denotes an infrequent event, whereas with Irving they occur with comforting regularity; but in the interest of harmony, we'll let that lexicographical discrepancy pass.) It is also the term for what is commonly called a *blowdown*, the result of a tree falling in the forest, best known in the philosophical conundrum, *If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound*? - the sort of issue which has exercised the minds and comforted the pockets of more than one philosophy professor through the ages. Forestry professors however, being more down to earth, have taken a different tack on this issue, astutely noting that if a tree falls in the forest, what it actually does is make an opening, a *gap*, which in turn makes way for new growth, nature's way of mimicking what Irving does in a clearcut, only less so, and with far less noise, and whether or not anybody is there to hear it. *Gap dynamics* has recently become a fashionable term in the lexicon of forest ecologists because they realize that opinion polls conclusively show (plus or minus 5%,19 times out of 20) that the public much prefers gaps to clearcuts, as does the forest itself. *Gap* is not to be confused with GAP, nor indeed with Banana Republic or Old Navy.