

any interest in the fire protection work. It would pay the railways and be far more efficient to have special fire patrolmen under a separate department head. The reduction of damage claims would pay for the expense many times over. Just as volunteer fire-fighting is out of date, so is amateur forest fire protection. A maintenance-of-way department grudges every cent spent on fire protection and this attitude filters down to the section men.

Waiting for Rain.

All your work for conservation of our timber resources is wasted if we cannot conquer the fires. When I first went into the woods in Quebec, I was told one day that there were fires all along a river. "Why don't you put them out or prevent them," I asked. "Oh, you can't help having fires, it is impossible to put them out. We'll get rain pretty soon." But this attitude has changed and the outlook is very hopeful. The first real attempt at fire protection was made in 1908 and now after eight years we have 38.5% of the licensed area of the Province under efficient co-operative protection, and this protection is becoming more and more efficient each year. Co-operative fire protection is not only more efficient, but it is much cheaper than individual protection. It is costing the larger members of the association only two-thirds of what it cost them to protect their own limits and has wiped out the menace of the small limit-holder who never used to protect his territory. If a man owns fifty square miles, it would require two men for six months with their outfit of canoe and tent and provisions at a minimum of \$500, to patrol it, or 1.6 cents per acre, and he gets much more efficient service for $\frac{1}{4}$ of a cent per acre.

The Quebec Department of Lands and Forests, under Hon. Mr. Allard, Mr. Dechene and Mr. Hall, deserve the highest praise for the work they

have done in helping along this movement, showing thereby their board-mindedness and their sense of responsibility for this great provincial asset placed in their care. In every way they have helped, often at political inconvenience to themselves from members of Parliament trying to save their constituents from punishment for infraction of the fire laws and others who did not want to spend any money in protecting their limits. Mr. Allard is now at work on amendments to the Provincial fire laws which will bring them up to date and make them easier of enforcement and do away with some abuses. The settler and the woodsman living so in the wilderness has naturally become ignorant of the law and contemptuous of it, but this condition is rapidly changing for the better.

The Government Loses.

Of the 70,000 square miles of timber limits under license in Quebec about 10,000 square miles are burnt and have not yet commenced to reproduce themselves. At an average of 2,500 board feet per acre, this means a loss to the government of \$15,000,000 in stumpage dues and for the 8,500 square miles reproducing, but which will not be ready to cut for 50 years, a large loss of revenue due to the interest for this long period. When licensees awake to the fact that they are paying the Government \$5.00 per square mile per annum for lands from which they cannot get a cut, or at least not for fifty years, and release these limits to the Government, the loss of revenue will amount to \$90,000 a year.

The agitation for better fire protection has also resulted in closer utilization. Burnt timber never used to be cut but now the larger companies cut all the trees on burnt-over land and the Government encourages this by a reduction in the stumpage dues, thus saving a great waste.