

Conditions in the Peace River District.

Interesting Letter from a Vice-President of the Association.

For a good many years Mr. Francis D. Wilson has been the territorial Vice-President of the Canadian Forestry Association for the territory of Mackenzie. Mr. Wilson was the representative of the Hudson's Bay Co., at Fort Vermilion. In replying to the letter of the Secretary notifying him of his re-election and inquiring about forestry work in the district, Mr. Wilson writes tendering his resignation owing to the fact that he is being moved by the company to Moose Factory, James Bay District. This does not mean that Mr. Wilson has lost interest in forestry, and he promises to write for the Association an account of forest conditions near his new post. Accompanying his letter Mr. Wilson sent some notes of conditions in the Lower Peace River Valley, which are published below. It should be noted that postal facilities in that part of the Dominion are very poor. Mr. Wilson's letter is dated May 20, so that it was dispatched before the Dominion Forestry Branch began any work in that district this season. It should also be noted that Mr. Wilson's reason for thinking it will not be necessary to lay out forest reserves in that district, is that the land now covered by forests is wholly unfit for agriculture. However, with the advent of the inexperienced settler, and still more of the 'fake' settler, it will probably be just as well to have these marked out as forest reserves as early as possible.—Ed.

There is very little settlement going on in the lower part of the Peace River, the settlers at Fort Vermilion

are, with two or three exceptions, retired servants of the Hudson's Bay Co., or their descendants. Peace River Crossing, Grande Prairie and the upper Peace River are attracting all the incoming settlers at present, and any settlement going on here at present is not adversely affecting the forests. We have had a period of four or five very dry years, and last summer and the summer before there were a number of forest fires that destroyed a quantity of spruce timber. It is difficult to suggest an adequate system of fire protection, the distances are so great and the country wholly unsettled between Peace River Crossing and Chipewyan (a distance of 557 miles) with the exception of the Fort Vermilion settlement which is situated about halfway between these two points.

There is a Sergeant of the R. N. W. M. Police stationed here. If he had one or two Constables with him they could render effective service for at least six months of the year, which are the danger months, by a system of patrol on the Peace River. They could meet a patrol from Peace River Crossing the first part of the month and return to Vermilion and go down



Skidway of Logs on Peace River.