FOREST FIRES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA IN 1904.

Mr. J. R. Anderson, Deputy Minister of Agriculture for British Columbia, has kindly placed at the disposal of the Forestry Association, the reports received from the agents of that department, in regard to the forest fires throughout the Province generally during the year 1904. As has been made known through the medium of the press, the forest fires in British Columbia, during the past year, were of special severity owing to the dry season. Throughout most of the summer in some districts a pall of smoke hung over the country sufficient to obscure the view and prevent surveying operations. The direct loss to the Province was large, and the effect on the mining and other industries requiring wood supplies will soon make itself felt. The question of dealing with these fires is one of the most important ones which can be given consideration by the Province of British Columbia at the present time. The revenue derived by the Province from these forests during 1904 was $446,276, a substantial increase over the previous year's revenue, which amounted to $347,004. In regard to lumber supplies the future is in the hands of British Columbia, her forests of virgin timber are still great and valuable, the development of the western territories, and the industrial growth of the Dominion generally will make large and increasing demands upon them, and properly administered, they should make British Columbia the richest member of the confederation. At no distant day the public revenue from the forests may be expected to reach a million instead of half a million dollars, and will not then have reached the limit of the possibilities. Capitalize such a revenue and the Province might well spend a large sum in providing protection from fire without going beyond what would be a low rate of insurance. Experience has demonstrated that the forests can be protected and failure to take effective measures to do so can, in the light of present knowledge of the subject, be hardly less than criminal.

For the New Westminster District the report of the agent