

But I am supposed to confine my remarks in some degree at least to the subject in hand, and permit me to say that utility of forest growth is too frequently regarded only for the monetary value of the product it produces, in other words the timber product. Valuable as this is, it is by no means the only, perhaps not the main or chief benefit it confers. Imagine what would be the condition of this Province if by some dreadful catastrophe the whole forest covering of those hills and valleys were swept out of existence.

The spring floods would then descend the mountain sides in such force as to carry away the gravel from above and deposit it over the now fertile valley land. Such floods as you have occasionally experienced on the Fraser and other streams, would become of annual occurrence. This prodigal waste of water would be followed shortly after by summer droughts rendering agriculture unprofitable if not impossible.

The miner would soon find it unprofitable to continue his operations, owing to the want of timber and water, both of which are necessary for his work. This is no fancy picture of what would be the result. It can be seen to-day in the lower Alps in eastern France as well as in certain parts of every country bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, and in other parts of the world.

Every one who has come over the mountains on the Canadian Pacific Railway, must have been struck with the great destruction that forest fires have caused along the route. The greater part of this was done during the construction of the road, but even since then, the annual loss during the dry summer months, continued until a few years ago, when a system of patrol was established along the railway belt by the Dominion Government. The result of having such a system speaks for itself, suffice to say that during the past five years since the present system was established, very little valuable timber has been destroyed. If we compare the loss before this work was begun with what little has taken place since, or with what has occurred on any similar area of unguarded territory, I believe it will be found that the cost involved has repaid itself a hundred fold, and I hope that the public of this Province will stand by the Provincial Government in any efforts it may make in the same direction. I am glad to know that a beginning has already been made by a small appropriation by the Provincial Legislature for such a service, but it should be increased at least ten fold to be at all effective over such a wide district. But the Government can only act so far as the public will permit as represented by the members of the Legislature.

The people of this Province should not only commend, but demand immediate action to lessen, as far as possible, the annual