

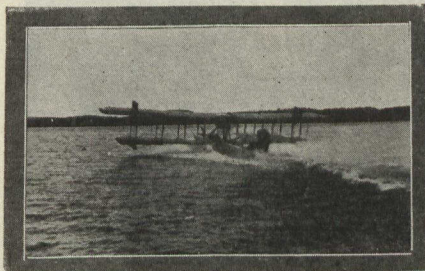
Improving Protection of Ontario's Forests

By A. Victor Gilbert

IN past years one was accustomed to hear much criticism of forest protection methods in Ontario. Such criticism was often voiced in forestry and lumbermen's conventions but perhaps more openly expressed in private views of foresters. Constructive criticism has its value since it is usually fruitful in bringing improvements but when the latter are manifested commendation should not be withheld, especially in our forestry literature. Modernized methods of forest protection now prevail in parts of Ontario and will, no doubt, be extended as rapidly as conditions permit over all the timbered districts of the province, since the administration at Toronto seems aggressive in pursuing a policy that is proving successful.

The writer on a recent visit to Algonquin Park, which lies in the

are proving to be. The planes for the Pembroke district operate from Whitney, just east of the Park, and those for the Parry Sound district from Parry Sound. The cost of air patrol is often raised as an objection to it but this objection probably belongs with all the others that have

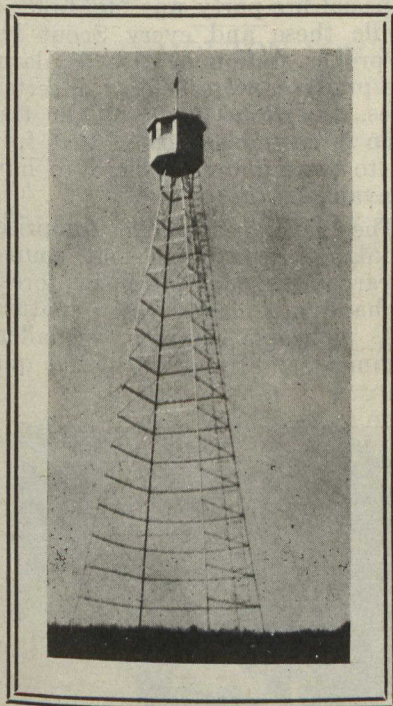


A flying boat used by the Ontario Forest Service in fire patrol

been advanced against forest protection, and which arise from the very blind viewpoint that would allow millions of dollars worth of timber to burn up rather than spend reasonable amounts to save such loss.

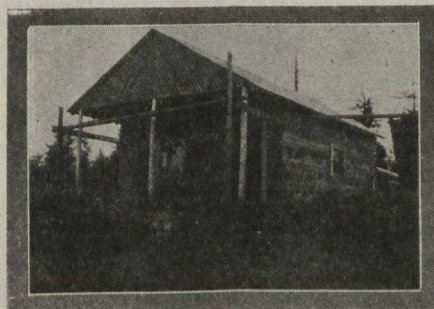
Lookout Towers

During the past season numerous lookout towers have been constructed in these districts and many more have been planned. These towers are of two distinct types, viz., steel, and timber. The former are about 80 feet high and have an enclosed cabin at the top, while the latter are the well known towers about 50 feet high made of timber and constructed by the rangers. Naturally



A steel lookout tower constructed on a high point of North Western Ontario to allow an effective supervision of the forest areas and rapid detection of fires.

Pembroke protection district, had an opportunity of noting these modern methods and the increased efficiency resulting therefrom. The most striking addition to old methods of protection is, of course, the regular air patrol by flying-boats or sea-planes. Since this subject has been so exhaustively discussed in articles in this Magazine it is hardly necessary to mention what a wonderful means of detecting and locating fires these

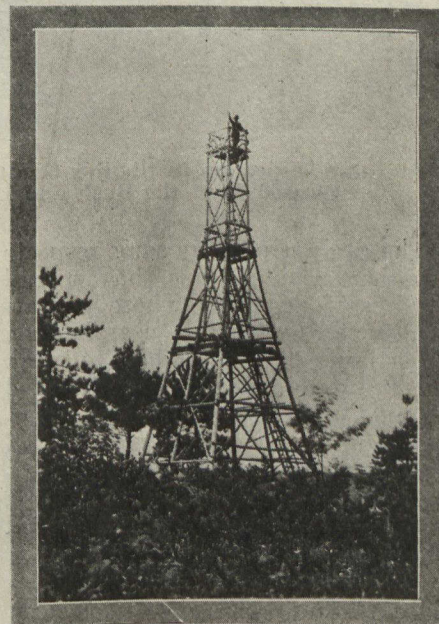


An Ontario ranger cabin built by fire rangers

the steel towers are much more expensive and the forest officers are not certain that the additional expenditure for steel towers is justified but this is probably a question which time will have to decide.

Trails and Telephones

Ranger cabins are being constructed at advantageous points and these add to the comfort and satisfaction of the rangers and will prove invaluable for emergencies. Much attention is also being given to clearing old trails and cutting new ones, an activity which has always been urged by all forest protection advocates. These are also a great advantage to the sport seeker on his canoe trips through the Park. Many miles of telephone line, linked up with rangers' headquarters, have been constructed and more are under construction. In this work the lumber companies lend willing aid and later they will secure benefits from these same lines.



A good type of wooden lookout tower constructed by rangers of the Ontario Forest Service.

Building towers, telephone lines and cabins and consistently clearing trails has been something of a departure for the average fire-ranger and a few have objected but the great majority are proving adaptable and as they see an active interest displayed by the district forester and chief ranger, as manifested in regular inspection trips, they themselves show a growing and commendable interest in their work, and a nucleus is available for a good personnel.