

## Government Railways Fight Forest Fires

### Co-operative Effort on the Part of Government and Forest Service in Quebec

The management of the Government Railways is taking a much more active interest than ever before in forest fire protection along their lines, long a source of dissatisfaction to timber owners. Under a new arrangement between the management and the province of Quebec, protection will be furnished the forests along the Trans-continental railway, in the Abitibi district, between Parent and the Ontario boundary, hitherto afforded but little protection from fire. At the direction of the Minister of Lands and Forests, and with the co-operation of the Government Railways management, the Quebec Forest Service has arranged for the placing of five power speeders, with two men for each speeder, on the railway between Parent and the Ontario boundary.

This is a valuable pulp wood section, and the hazard is increased by the presence of many settlers, busily engaged in extending their clearings and marketing pulp wood, as well as in cultivating crops on lands already cleared. The danger from these settlers' clearing operations is minimized by the presence of some eleven fire rangers between Nottaway and La Reine, who patrol for fires and enforce the provisions of the law which prohibits the setting out of fires without a permit from a forest officer. Three portable fire pumps are to be purchased, with 1,500 feet of linen hose for each. Provision will be made at Amos for storage and maintenance of all this equipment.

The Government Railways management has also given the Quebec Forest Service the authority to inspect fire-protective appliances on their engines operating in forest sections in that province. The Forest Service has a special inspector for this and he will now divide his time among the Government Railways in Quebec, the lines of railway subject to the jurisdiction of the Railway Commission, and lines holding provincial charters. This outside inspection has been found by experience in Quebec and elsewhere to be of very great value in preventing the occurrence of fires due to railways.

The Government Railways management is also co-operating with the St. Maurice and Southern St. Lawrence Forest Protective Associations in maintaining a special fire patrol through forest sections between Parent and Quebec, and between Quebec and the New Brunswick boundary, respectively.

For right-of-way clearing to reduce the fire hazard, the Government Railways have employed an extra gang of 22 Indians to cut brush and dispose of inflammable debris between Parent and La Tuque. Labour is so scarce in that district that the hiring of the Indians was the only way to get the work done.

These developments, taken in connection with those of a similar char-

acter in New Brunswick and Ontario, show conclusively that the Government Railways management is taking a much more active interest in forest fire protection than was ever the case in previous years.—C. L.

## SAVING MILLIONS BY SPENDING THOUSANDS

As a result of thorough drilling and instruction in fire fighting methods, together with the use of modern extinguishing apparatus, employees of the Pennsylvania railway system in 1916 were enabled, by prompt action, to save more than \$14,000,000 worth of the company's property from destruction by the flames. Altogether, the employees extinguished 385 fires during the year before the arrival of the public fire companies. The total loss sustained in these fires was only \$16,437.42, while the value of property in danger was \$14,526,481.00. The average loss sustained was a little more than one-tenth of one per cent.

This illustrates what can be accomplished by proper organization in the prevention of fires. The expense of extinguishment was very small in proportion to the loss which was averted. It suggests furthermore that one of the most urgent needs on this continent is better organization for both private and public business as a means of lessening waste.

## BOOKLETS ON CANNING

There is an abundance of literature on canning for free distribution and even the most experienced housewives can get some pointers from it. Here are some useful bulletins which can be had for the asking:

*Can, Dry and Store for Victory*—Canada Food Board, Ottawa.

*Home Canning* (Bulletin 252)—Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.

*Home Canning of Fruits and Vegetables*—Macdonald College, Que.  
*Canning by the Cold Pack Method*—Manitoba Agricultural College, Winnipeg.

*Home Canning of Fruits and Vegetables* (Farmers Bulletin 853)—Div. of Publications, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington.

*Canning and Drying Book*—National War Gardens Commission, Washington, D. C. (Enclose 2c. for American stamp) for postage.)

The Canada Food Board, Ottawa, will also supply, for 5 cents each, the following booklets which are carefully compiled and attractively gotten up:

*Fruits and Vegetables—Canning, Drying and Storing.*  
*Vegetable Recipes.*  
*Bread Recipes.*  
*Fish Recipes.*

Winnipeg citizens are saving money by daylight saving. The city light department's receipts were \$12,484 less for May this year than last.

The city of Cincinnati has passed an ordinance making citizens personally liable for damages done to neighbours by fire caused by their neglect or carelessness.

## PROTECTION AGAINST FIRE ON THE FARM

In the past, fire-prevention work has been almost entirely confined to cities and the larger towns. The time has come when the campaign must be carried to rural communities and the farms. The demands of war have made the protection of food products from fire an essential undertaking. The Canadian farm is the focal point upon which the future of civilization largely depends.

Special fire protection for elevators, flour mills, packing houses and stock yards, desirable as it may be, cannot save the \$4,000,000 worth of grain, fruits and live stock which are annually destroyed by fire in rural districts in Canada. Up to the present, little attention has been given to fire protection in the village and practically none to fire protection on the farm. As a result nearly every rural fire is a total loss.

The common causes of fires in country districts are lightning, spontaneous combustion in barns, accumulations of rubbish, carelessness with matches, lanterns, kerosene and gasoline, sparks on shingle roofs and prairie and bush fires. In the cities, 95 per cent of fires is reached by fire departments in time to extinguish them while incipient and thus serious damage is averted. When the farmer discovers fire, all he can do is to carry a few pails of water from a well or cistern and throw it on the flames. In the majority of instances, such efforts prove unavailing and the fruits of industry are carried away in smoke and flames. Every farmer in Canada owes it both to his country and to himself to preserve his food products by preventing fire.—J. G. S.

## SLASH DISPOSAL LIKELY TO BE MADE COMPULSORY

"One state in the Union now requires slash disposal," says the Kennebec Valley Forest Protective Association in its Sixth Annual Report, "it is practised in all the Federal reserves and in most state reserves, and will probably be required of all lumbermen in a few years. Private protective associations everywhere are discussing complete slash disposal and endeavouring to interest their members in this greatest of all protective measures. It has been shown that the great heaps and windrows of slash left after the close cutting of the present day methods tends to prevent reproduction of the more valuable species of softwoods on a great part of the area it covers. Also, such great quantities of decaying matter has a marked tendency to breed tree diseases and helps produce abnormal quantities of insect pests injurious to tree life. Lastly, if we could eliminate throughout the Kennebec district all the slash left from lumbering during the next ten years, what a tremendous improvement would be noted in the fire hazard. More than three-fourths of our forest fires start in old cuttings."

## Good Roads Increase Value of Property

### Add From \$5 to \$20 to the Value of Farm Land, as well as Im- proving Social Conditions

In the state of Indiana, the average selling price of land has been increased about \$6.48 per acre by improved roads. The Indiana farmers estimate that improvement of roads would increase average land values \$9 per acre. They estimate also, the average annual loss due to poor roads at 76 cents per acre, which capitalized at 6 per cent, represents a depreciation of \$12.67 per acre. Another inquiry, carried on by the Office of Road Inquiry at Washington, shows that the increase in land values due to good roads ranges from \$5 to \$20 per acre. Nothing can show better than these figures how valuable an asset good roads are.

One of the first things the prospective purchaser of a farm wants to know about a district is the distance from the railway station and the character of the road from the station to the farm. Some branches of agriculture are much more dependent upon good highways than others. The man who is engaged exclusively in the raising of cattle which can be driven for long distances to a shipping station, is, in a measure, independent of the condition of the roads. The grower of corn and any other crop which can be stored for a time without deterioration, can manage to get along, even though the road to the shipping point be impassable at times. He is greatly hampered, however, by the necessity of doing his hauling in good weather regardless of market conditions and of whether or not farm operations are seriously retarded by the absence of himself as his team. For the dairy farmer, the fruit and vegetable grower, and the producer of perishable commodities of all kinds, ability to get his products to market at all seasons of the year and in all kinds of weather is undoubtedly indispensable to success. For all kinds of general farming, therefore, a good country highway is essential to the most profitable operation of the farm and to any considerable development of agriculture at a distance from a market town or shipping station. Other advantages it confers are better school facilities for the children, better rural free delivery service, greater attractions for pleasure seekers and touring clubs, better attendance at country churches and an improved social life on the farm and in the villages.

Primarily, the benefits of good country highways go to the farmer, but less directly they go to the merchants and manufacturers by giving them wider markets for their goods and by decreasing the cost of distribution. In road improvement one of the greatest opportunities for general advancement, and Farmers Associations, Good Roads Committees, Automobile Associations and other can do much to further this work.

—W. J. D.