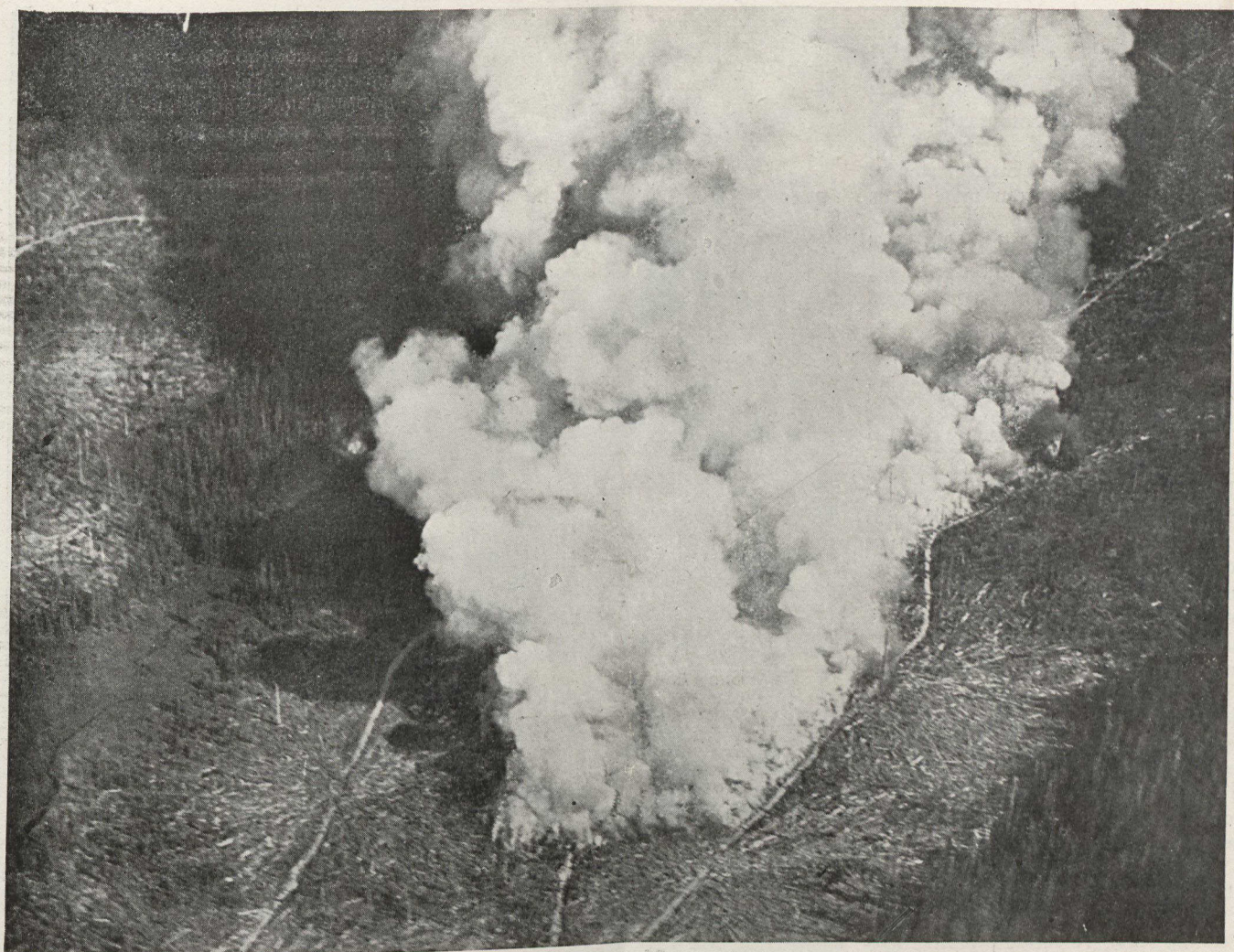




Gaining new power every minute! This Photograph well illustrates the power of the sea-plane scout to observe and report on the progress of a forest conflagration.

campers and travellers attracted by the good roads and fine climate, lightning and various other causes start from 300 to 1,000 fires each year resulting in an annual loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In efficiently handling the fire situation, quick detection, quick and reliable communication and quick transportation are essential. All fires are small at first. Every delay in getting to them increases the difficulties of control and directly increases the cost. To a large extent the solution of the problem therefore depends on the development of communication and transportation facilities, as well as a steady development and increase in the use of mechanical equipment, such as portable fire fighting pumps, cars, boats, tools and aeroplanes.

The supervision of this field staff also is a matter of serious concern. One-half the force on fire protection are temporary employees, and being spread over such a large territory, control is a difficult matter.

The use of Aeroplanes on this phase of the work was, therefore, considered to be of great importance.

Administration.

The general administration or carrying

on of daily business includes the supervision and inspection by the Field Staff of 250 small timber sales monthly, inspection of 800 to 1,000 logging operations quarterly and inspection of 900 to 1,000 pre-emptions yearly. In addition the cruising of 50,000 acres of timberland and the examination and classification of 20,000 acres of forest land is carried on annually. One hundred million feet of timber is scaled monthly. Supervision of export, building of improvements, are some of the other activities. The supervision of this work is a big task scattered over so much country which is difficult or slow of access and the use of aeroplanes was considered feasible, and was one of the big reasons for advocating their trial on this Coast.

What can be Seen from the Air.

To a trained observer the ground from any height is an open book as far as the general physical features of the country go. With his map on which the name of places, islands, inlets, etc. are marked, he can locate his position absolutely at any moment. If his map be accurate and of a reasonably large scale, he can read the ground in perspective, and roads, trails, railroads, towns, farms, blocks of

timber slashings, etc., take on a new meaning by reason of this. In the final analysis his map is just the accurate diagram of what he sees, and while survey lines may not be actually seen, their approximate location on the ground is apparent in relation to the configuration of the ground. For example, he can pick out a 40 acre plot with absolute accuracy by following a shore line, or the junction of two creeks or the intersection of railway lines, roads or trails or its proximity to a hill or pond or island, which stand out clear and plain as on a diagram.

With experience he is able to pick out small objects which may hardly register on the eye as evinced during the War, when the most careful camouflage of a gun pit or ammunition dump was spotted.

It is more a fact that the human mind is not able to retain a tithe of what is actually seen than that not enough can be seen. For this reason in order to justify the expense of flying for reconnaissance purposes, photography must be employed largely to record the information obtained.

The reading of aerial photographs is an exact science and requires a highly trained specialist.

How often did the poor Pilot in France come in with a set of pictures only to be