

ernment which has been subjected to so much criticism on the part of the malicious or ignorant than that which may, for purposes of brevity, be comprised under the general heading of lands, timber and irrigation. And the topography of British Columbia is such, and her area so vast, that the proper administration of all three of these involved in each case a heavy expenditure of money—the very thing which the Government had least of at the commencement of its career. The basis of a suitable and a comprehensive policy to deal with the three subjects required, firstly, a thorough investigation of facts and conditions, secondly, an extensive system of surveys, and thirdly, roads and trails. All three of these preliminary requisites, to be effectual, required to be undertaken on a big scale at a large expenditure of money. Of necessity, then, the financial condition of the Province being as hereinbefore depicted at the commencement of the present Government's administration, it was absolutely necessary to delay the putting into execution of a comprehensive policy, dealing with lands, timber and irrigation, until such time as the Provincial finances should have been brought into a condition of strength capable of carrying it out.

This course has been followed, and the Government, once it found itself supplied adequately with the sinews of war, commenced on a carefully thought-out plan of operations. In the matter of irrigation, an exhaustive report was first obtained from a specially appointed commission on the question, and legislation was then brought down and passed through the House during the last two sessions, vesting complete control of all the waters of the Province in the Crown, and providing all necessary legal and statutory machinery for its equitable regulation and distribution.

A similar step in the direction of the conservation of the timber wealth of the Province has been taken during the present summer in the appointment and thorough investigation on the part of a Timber and Forestry Commission, whose enquiries have been of the most far-reaching and comprehensive description and upon whose report will be based the forming of a policy which will in all respects and for all time meet the requirements of the timber situation.

In the matter of surveys, the Land Department has entered upon a very active campaign, being able to appropriate for the present season a sufficient sum, in the neighborhood of \$200,000, to place twenty-two surveying parties in the field. With the steady increase of revenue this policy will be carefully followed out to its logical conclusion, when all the arable lands of the province will be located and allotted and the fullest and most definite information will be available as to every tract.