

tain a special power speeder patrol wholly at its own cost, permitting co-operative inspection of fire protection work by the Dominion Forestry Branch. On the Hudson Bay Railway, on the other hand, the necessary special patrol is maintained wholly at the expense of the Dominion Forestry Branch. This again exemplifies the inconsistency and unfairness of the existing fire protection situation on the Government Railways.

This whole matter, however, now bids fair to be straightened out in due course. At the 1917 session of Parliament, an amendment to the Government Railways Act passed the House, providing for placing the Government Railways under the jurisdiction of the Railway Commission with relation to matters in general, including fire protection. This bill, however, failed to receive consideration in the Senate, because it was contingent upon the enactment of the consolidation and revision of the General Railway Act (defining the jurisdiction of the Railway Commission as to privately-owned lines), which bill failed of consideration in the Senate at that session. During the 1918 session, the House and Senate failed to agree as to amendments to the consolidation and revision of the General Railway Act, and the question was not raised of amending the Government Railways Act to give the Board jurisdiction over the Government Railways. This matter has been strongly urged on grounds other than fire protection, and very likely will come up again.

More recently, the suggestion has been advanced that possibly the Government Railways might be amalgamated with the Canadian Northern and with other lines which the Government is considering taking over, including the Grand Trunk and the Grand Trunk Pacific; all to be managed as one system, on what would be practically a corporate basis, by a Board of Directors to be selected by the Government, presumably much along the lines already announced with reference to

the proposed management of the Canadian Northern System, the stock of which is now owned by the Dominion Government. Should this action be taken, and should the greatly enlarged Government Railways System be made subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Railway Commissioners, as the Canadian Northern, Grand Trunk and Grand Trunk Pacific are now subject, the question of fire protection would automatically become solved, through the application, to what now comprises the Government Railways System, of the same regulations which are now applicable to the other lines over which the Board now has jurisdiction.

Provincially Chartered Railways

Fire protection upon provincially chartered railways has very largely ceased to be a serious problem, except in the province of Alberta. Here we have the Alberta Great Waterways and the Canada Central railways, still in the construction stage and aggregating some 350 miles of track. The Dominion Government has no jurisdiction over such railways, except as to lines in forest reserves, and there is no provision in the provincial legislation for the enforced adoption of preventive measures. Consequently, the Dominion Forestry Branch is left to take what measures it sees fit, at its own expense, supplemented by whatever action the Companies may see fit to take voluntarily. The Commission of Conservation, the Canadian Forestry Association and the Department of the Interior have made urgent representations to the Alberta Government to have this condition corrected, on a basis consistent with what is being done elsewhere.

In British Columbia, the provincial Forest Service has practically the same authority as to fire protection on provincial railways that the Railway Commission has as to Dominion chartered lines. Only small and relatively unimportant lines come under this category. The Pacific Great Eastern has now been taken over by the province.