

REPORT

IN CONNECTION WITH

FOREST FIRES AND FIRE RANGING.

TORONTO, March 30th, 1886

SIR,—I take the liberty of drawing your attention to the great destruction of the timber wealth of this Province, which is caused mainly by the careless setting out of fire at dangerous points in the forest during the heat of summer by settlers, lumbermen, hunters, explorers and others, which, though of apparently small moment when started, have often become vast conflagrations, laying waste miles of the forest and destroying untold millions worth of public property.

I am well aware that this matter has for some time been a cause of much anxious consideration to you, and it is not to dwell upon the necessity for taking some action—as that is universally admitted—that I now address you, but to submit for your consideration a plan or system under which much may be done to prevent such numerous and extensive fires as we have witnessed in the past, by exercising some supervision over the public domain, whereby, as far as possible, the starting of fires—except in cases of necessity—may be prevented, and fires which are assuming dangerous proportions may be controlled or extinguished, and generally taking such action as will, with a reasonable expenditure of money, reduce to a minimum the loss of timber by bush fires.

The period of the year during which this supervision would be required—which may be called the dangerous period—is included between the 1st day of May and the 1st day of October, as between these dates the bush, as a rule, is dry and inflammable, and fire runs with great celerity—while during the rest of the year, extending from October to May, the ground is covered with snow, or the moisture in the bush is such as to render any extensive fire impossible.