

Dry Weather Causes Fires.

Severe Outbreaks in all Parts of the Country.

The extended drought which was felt throughout the length and breadth of the country this year was particularly severe in the eastern part of Canada, and worst of all in Ontario. The Metereological Bureau at Toronto has kindly supplied figures for the precipitation in the last few months.

Thirteen of the fourteen meteorological stations throughout Canada report a great decrease in precipitation in May, June, July and August, 1913, as compared with the amount recorded in the same months in 1912. By stations the figures are as follows:—

Station	De-		
	1912 Inches	1913 Inches	crease 1913
Vancouver, B.C.	12.03	10.90	1.13
Calgary, Alta.	13.68	11.49	2.19
Prince Albert, Sask. ...	12.62	8.42	4.20
Winnipeg, Man.	12.25	10.60	1.65
Port Arthur, Ont. ...	9.29	14.97	5.68*
Parry Sound, Ont. ...	11.78	9.34	2.44
Cochrane, Ont.	11.16	7.35	3.81
Stonecliffe, Nipissing Dist., Ont.	12.10	8.67	3.43
Toronto, Ont.	13.59	7.33	6.26
Ottawa, Ont.	15.90	9.24	6.66
Montreal, Que.	13.85	10.33	3.52
Quebec, Que.	21.53	14.14	7.39
St. John, N.B.	19.89	10.51	9.38
Halifax, N. S.	17.30	12.52	4.78

*Increase.

This is the worst drought in many years, not since 1885 has there been felt such tremendous need for moisture. Wells in all parts of the country were wholly dried up, springs ceased to flow, and practically everywhere the crops were retarded and the pasture of stock gravely injured. During the latter part of the month of June, all July and the great part of August, there was practically no rain to support the herds which supplied milk to the great urban centres.

Needless to say, this condition of dryness made the woods like tinder, and everywhere upon very slight cause fires sprang out which spread rapidly through the undergrowth and consumed vast quantities of young trees, mature timber and houses, lumber yards and mills. The worst fires of the month in Nova Scotia took place about the 21st of August. Fires fairly honeycombed the district round about Bedford and Sambro, Purcell's Cove and Bear Cove. Cinders rained down everywhere

and vast areas of timberland were destroyed, houses were abandoned by the score, and a company of militia was called out near Halifax to aid the settlers in their efforts against the fire demon. Between Hammond's Plains and Upper Sackville the forests of excellent timber were completely destroyed, at a loss to the limit holders of at least \$50,000. In Halifax County where there had been not the slightest drop of moisture, the fire was under way for two weeks, and communication was cut off between Lunenburg and Halifax through the burning down of the telephone and telegraph lines. Many small settlements were completely surrounded by fire, and there was no chance to secure any intercourse between them and the more thickly populated centres. Beachville, Clearland and East Dover were all gravely threatened at one time, but luckily escaped any serious loss. Chief Fire Ranger Penny, of the Government service estimated that 3,000 acres of land were burnt over at a loss of from \$70,000 to \$100,000.

In central Ontario hardly a district was without some loss through bush fires. Worst of all were those which swept through the central part of the country between Sudbury and Kingston. In Haliburton County the flames held sway well over a week. In Apsley Township the settlers were in a desperate way and were removing their effects and fleeing before the flames. Peterborough, Lindsay, Fencelon Falls and Bobcaygeon were all centres of great havoc. In Minden the Digby fire had not only reached the settlement at Moore's Falls, but was burning along the west side of the road near the summer cottages at Moore's Lake, creeping on its way to Norland. Another branch of this same fire, which was one of the most destructive in all the series of conflagrations, came out toward the neighborhood north of Deep Bay and Gull Lake. To head this off a settler set a back fire, but the result was more disastrous than the original flames would have been, as it got away and burned over a great area. Another fire running through the district near Longford not only destroyed great areas of forest land, but got into the farmers' hay and destroyed vast quantities. In Snowdon Township the fire swept the entire lumbering district from Lochlin and Gelert to Irondale and Gooderham. It burned its way to Furnace Falls, destroy-