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DEVASTATION OF FOREST FIRES.

Only by seeing a forest fire can one realize its horrors. A terrible sight is the progress of flame through a mass of dry trees. The danger to human life and farm property is not readily conceived by those who do not live on the verge of forest lands.

Serious accounts come from New Brunswick and Quebec as to the havoc made by forest fires there. The counties of King and Charlotte, in the south of the former province, where no rain fell for many weeks, have suffered from fires in the forest, which was dry as tinder. One about Spruce Lake, quite close to St. John, has covered seven square miles of territory and threatened the city. In the north, along the Intercolonial Railway, a lumberman has lost one of his camps besides great quantities of trees and timber.

In the Province of Quebec, too, forest fires have made havoc this month. A village in the Lake St. John region has been destroyed by one. Two of the Intercolonial Railway stations, not far from Quebec city, have been burned, and \$50,000 worth of freight cars destroyed. It is fortunate that none of the bridges or culverts of the road were burned. Different estimates place the loss of the I.C.R. this month from fires in the bush along its route at \$75,000 and \$100,000 respectively. The efforts of the usual fire wardens have not sufficed at this unusual time to contend with the flames; and fire-fighters have been engaged at various points to divert the advancing fire from hamlets and towns in these Eastern provinces.

That such losses as these may be lessened, in addition to other benefits gained for the country, is proved by the results of recent systematic forestry. If, says a recent writer,

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the forest service had done no more than keep down the fire losses in the United States their work would not have been in vain. In 1901 the total area burned over in the government forests equalled two and three quarter acres in every thousand, while in 1907 the burned area was only nine-tenths of an acre in every thousand.

With an area of forest almost twice as great to protect and control, the service is able to show in 1907 a reduction of loss by forest fire by two thirds in three years. While no record is published of the money value of forests burned over in earlier years, the estimate is made that such losses reached many millions.

Mr. M. Chevalier, general manager of the Credit Foncier, interviewed by the Monetary Times recently at Montreal regarding the financial outlook, said: "There is lots of money available here at the moment, but how long this condition may last is difficult to say. At the present time, the situation on the other side of the Atlantic is not altogether satisfactory. Financiers there are looking for short loans only, thus showing a certain lack of confidence in the situation. They are averse from making investments or long term loans, and I should not wonder if this tendency would be reflected sooner or later upon corporations and municipalities and others on this side who are desirous of raising loans or of selling stocks or bonds in order to obtain money. The outlook in Canada seems favorable, and should the weather continue as seasonable as it has done so far, a splendid harvest should be reaped in the West. The business of the country should thus be thereby greatly benefited."