

There has been issued 15,164 timber licences covering an area of about ten million acres.

I think it is regrettable that such a large proportion of the timber wealth of the Province should have been thus alienated.

Under the present time-limited licence, the licence holder is a mere tenant, and by the very nature of his tenure has no special interest in conservation; he only desires to skim off the best timber when the opportunity is presented, and then return the despoiled remnant to the Government.

The question of extending the time limit of timber licences has been ably discussed before the "Board of Forestry Commissioners." It appears to be the consensus of opinion that the only rational solution of the situation, "as we find it today," is to make the timber licence perpetual with the necessary safeguards in the interest of the country.

A more stringent supervision over logging methods is desirable.

In the past, the logger has been allowed free latitude to go into the forest and act like a bull in a china shop. He has frequently picked out a few choice trees in a choice belt of timber, and made a sort of bonfire of the whole country around him. It is often appalling to see the desolate country the logger has left behind him.

I have not time to fully cover the fire question. I may briefly note that fire not only destroys the timber, but in many cases ruins and destroys the soil also. This is especially noticeable where fire has swept over the more elevated regions, with a slight covering of soil. On many hills the forest tree has gained a foothold by a slow process of preparation which has taken centuries to mature.

Fire cleans off everything to the bare rock again, and the process has to commence *de novo*.

This applies with special force to the conditions on many of our uplands, and we have already some of our evergreen hills converted into bare, parched, rocky elevations, desolate and forbidding. I have in mind several localities, namely: the