

80,000 Persons Reached in B.C. by the Exhibit Car.

The "Forest Protection School on Wheels" did Valuable Educational Service on Western Tour---14,000 at Lectures.

By G. GERALD BLYTH.

THE tour of the Canadian Forestry Association's Exhibit Car in British Columbia commenced at Victoria on Wednesday, April 12th, and ended at Malakwa, a small village in the "railway belt" on Thursday June 8th. During this period the car was visited by 80,000 people, a goodly percentage being school children between the ages of ten and eighteen. Forty-one towns and cities were visited and forty-one public meetings held, at which addresses were delivered on forest fire protection illustrated by moving pictures. The total mileage covered by our Exhibit Car during the 74 days was 7,645.7 miles or a daily average run of 103 miles.

The Exhibit Car formerly was a passenger coach which has been converted into a "Forest Protection School on Wheels." The car was specially equipped at Ottawa for the tour through the province of British Columbia and contained exhibits representing the various wood-using industries together with statistics concerning same. Terse and pointed appeals to sportsmen, campers, hunters, and the general public to protect British Columbia's greatest natural resource, the timber, were everywhere in evidence throughout the car. An electrically operated Fire Illusion Model attracted considerable attention and consisted of two scenes "Before" and "After" a forest fire. The contrast was so marked as to leave a definite impression.

Among the many other models and exhibits perhaps the Erosion Model and the exhibit of wood fibresilk wear drew forth the greatest amount of comment. The former demonstrated the advisability of preserving water-shed forests to regulate stream flow, prevent evaporation and especially to prevent the washing away of the soil. On the right-hand side of this model a heavy watershed forest has been preserved with consequent regulation of the water supply for the district. A prosperous farming community lies adjacent to the timbered area. On the left-hand side a picture of desolation appears with no signs of habitation. Erosion has set in and the fertility of the surrounding districts has gone.

Advance advertising of the coming of the car to each community was sent out and, on arrival, the officer

in charge arranged for the school children to visit it by classes, a timetable being drawn up with the school authorities so that there would be no congestion at the car. It was aimed to hold at least one public meeting in each town together with moving pictures. As a rule the local theatre was obtained for this purpose which was in almost every case donated free of charge by the management. Short addresses on the urgency of greater care with fire in the woods were delivered both by the local forest officers of the Provincial and Dominion Governments together with a brief talk on the aims and objects of the Canadian Forestry Association.

The diary of the car contains the following items:

Mission, B. C.: Attendance at car, 400 school children, 300 adults.

Ashcroft: 700 at car.

Kamloops: May 5th, 300 people; May 6th, 2,800 people.

Chase: 500 people present.

Salmon Arm: 650 present, secured theatre which was crowded to fullest capacity. Mayor acted as chairman.

Enderby: 800 visited car, 400 at evening lecture in theatre. Mayor acted as chairman.

Armstrong: 1,100 visited car, 450 at forest protection lecture, 600 school children at car in morning.

Vernon: 2,100 visited car, 600 at motion picture demonstration in evening. Mayor acted as chairman. Speakers: Mayor Cowan and Mr. Clyde Leavitt.

Vernon: May 19th, 900 visited car during second day.

Kelowna: Attendance 900, also big meeting at Entrance theatre; Speakers: President, Board of Trade; Colonel Allan and G. G. Blyth. More than 3,500 people visited Exhibits Car on second day at Kelowna.

Penticton: Arrived with exhibit car on barge, 300 school children at wharf to meet us; 1,100 persons went through car in evening. Following day at Penticton over 4,000 persons visited Exhibits Car. Mass meeting at theatre attended by 450 school children.

Grand Forks: Total attendance at car 2,000; 300 persons at motion picture demonstration.

Castlegar: 900 persons visited car and 475 at motion picture lecture in evening.

On several occasions two, and sometimes three, meetings had to be held to accommodate the crowds. The total attendance for the province at these meetings was 14,650 persons, or an average of 357 persons for the 41 meetings held. A remarkably enthusiastic reception was accorded the car at every town it visited and the interest displayed both in the car and at the meetings, on the part of the school children especially, was most encouraging and indicative of the importance of the subject of Forest Fire Protection and an appreciation of the efforts of the Canadian Forestry Association. The car made a hurried tour of Vancouver Island being transported across to Nanaimo by barge. The tour on the mainland was a combination rail and water trip and included Chilliwack, points in the railway belt, the Okanagan and Kootenay Districts and Crows Nest Pass country. Through the courtesy of the following railway companies the car was hauled free over their lines:—Canadian Pacific Railway, Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway, Kettle Valley Railway, British Columbia Electric Railway, Great Northern Railway.

About twenty thousand small, yellow tags bearing a "snappy" fire warning notice on one side and the words "Junior Forest Guard" on the other were distributed to school children in addition to large quantities of fire protection literature, rulers and whet-stones, both of the latter bearing a Fire Protection slogan.

The excellent reception accorded the car at all points visited, together with the unmistakable interest displayed by young and old in the utilization and protection of British Columbia's forest resources, not overlooking a full appreciation of the forest administration, leads the writer to believe that the tour was decidedly successful and it is hoped that the campaign started with this, the initial visit of the Association's Exhibit Car to British Columbia, may be productive of much good and become an annual event.

The British Columbia visit of the Forest Exhibits Car outranks in daily attendance anything within the experience of the Canadian Forestry Association. The Exhibits Car will move shortly to Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.