

ADMINISTRATION

carried on. Reports and bulletins have been widely distributed, and an active propaganda for better farming has been conducted at numerous meetings of farmers' clubs, societies, etc., throughout Canada.

Forests.—The Committee on Forests has promoted, through both federal and provincial executive departments, a national forestry policy calculated to remedy past and avoid future errors with regard to Canada's forest wealth and production.

The initial problem has been to check the enormous annual waste from forest fires. The most serious waste—the severe loss caused by fires spreading from railway rights-of-way—has been very greatly reduced as a result of amendments to the Railway Act, proposed by the Committee, whereby the railways subject to the Act have been made liable for the property damage entailed by such fires. Further efforts are being made to effect a similar reduction in the loss from fires caused by government-owned and other railways not under the jurisdiction of the Board of Railway Commissioners, as well as by carelessness in the woods, particularly in connection with settlers' slash-burning operations. The Committee's recommendations have also resulted in important additions to the areas set aside as perpetual forest reserves, notably an area of approximately 17,900 square miles on the eastern slope of the Rocky mountains. The task of making an inventory of the forest resources of the Dominion is well under way, and valuable studies of the possibilities of reforestation burnt over and logged areas, such as the Trent Watershed, have been made. The satisfactory solution of forestry problems of national importance—the further reduction of fire waste, the creation of adequate forest reserves, the proper classification of lands, the development of reforestation enterprises and other questions—demand and are receiving attention.

Water Powers.—The Committee on Waters and Water Powers was first confronted with the necessity of securing the administration of water-powers as a public utility to conserve for the public the increment in value which will inevitably accrue to water-powers of large capacity and favourable situation. At its inaugural meeting in 1910, the Commission strongly urged that, in future, water-power rights should be alienated solely under conditional and limited leases, granted only after thorough investigation of the property involved and providing amply for development within a stated period, for public control of rates and for the payment of an adequate rental to be revised at regular intervals. Parliament subsequently enacted water-rights legislation embodying the principles set forth in the Commission's recommendations. Respecting the engineering, as distinct from the legal problems in conserving waters and water-powers, the primary undertaking has been the thorough study of the actual extent of Canada's water-power resources. The survey has progressed steadily, the results forming a series of comprehensive reports. The prevention of the pollution of streams to safeguard the purity of domestic water supplies, the preservation of forest growth on important watersheds and the solution of various difficulties arising in connection with international waters, especially with regard to the diversion of water for power, navigation and sanitary purposes, have engaged and will continue to require the Committee's study.