

Dr. J. L. GIBSON: We people who live in Utah appreciate this paper very much. I believe that you are on the

track of something very valuable. This is the first thing of its kind that we have had in the State of Utah.

### The Unseasonable Fire Weather in October, 1932, in Western Oregon

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The fire weather season in the Pacific Northwest ordinarily closes in the month of September. The weather in September, from the standpoint of fire weather, is treacherous, and becomes more so as the season is prolonged into October as it was in 1932. Weather elements in September and October are in a state of transition from those of summer that are more or less inactive and make slow daily changes to those of winter that are quite active and make rapid daily changes. Thus when a critical low relative humidity period with high easterly winds occurs during this transition time and precipitation has been deficient, fire weather conditions are likely to become quite acute because of more active weather elements and their wider sphere of action. It is also the time when logging operators and farmers who have slashings to be burned as required by state law are anxious to get them out of the way when they may be safely burned before the heavy fall rains set in. The forest protective organizations are even more anxious to get them out of the way to eliminate their hazard in future seasons. And they all look to the Weather Bureau for forecasts of weather for favorable burning or when it is necessary to keep fires out of the forests altogether. Thus it is a trying time for all those who are interested in protecting the forests from the ravages of fire.

September, 1932, was an exceptionally dry month which dryness was prolonged through the first decade of

October. All hazardous weather elements that contribute to the rapid spread of fire seemed to be combined in all their fury in this first decade of October, particularly in the vicinity of the Columbia River and over northwestern Oregon. A serious fire weather situation was developed such as had never been previously experienced in the month of October, and forest protective organizations over these sections of the state were taxed to the greatest degree in their efforts in attempting to bring going fires under control. At the same time, the whole situation was aggravated by the blanket of smoke that lay over the whole country, putting lookouts out of commission so that many fires had burned several days before being found by patrolmen or were reported by individuals outside the protective organizations.

Several fire wardens, logging operators and others, who have spent many years working in the forests of the Pacific Northwest, have stated that the wind and burning conditions on October 3rd-4th were the worst they had ever experienced. One fire warden stated he had never seen the ground so cleanly burned as during this period. A timber owner and logging operator in Columbia County said he never knew before a county could be so near all afire and yet not burn up entirely.

—*Excerpts.*

(Other papers and discussions at Salt Lake meeting will be published in the October BULLETIN.)