

Forest Demands Met.

The abnormal war demands for forest products, despite a shortage of woodsmen, have been met through the co-operation of the entire industry. Although the season for fire hazard is upon Ontario, British Columbia is assured, he said, of the use of part or all of the fire-fighting equipment which the Province loaned to the Japanese-threatened coastal area "so long as human lives are in jeopardy in any part of Canada."

Mineral production of an estimated aggregate value of \$270,000,000 reached an all-time high in 1942 and "will be surpassed for 1942." The geological program for 1942 places emphasis on the examination of deposits of possible war materials. In municipal affairs, the gross debenture debt was reduced by approximately \$12,001,000 to an amount of \$353,575,000. Part of the improvement, said the Premier, was due to the municipal subsidy paid by the Government to municipal authorities to be applied in the reduction of the general tax rate levied on real property.

In the period, 1934 to 1941, thirty-seven municipalities were subject to the supervision of the department. Twenty-five of these have now been removed from the defaulting class.

The Treasurer regarded as a "notable advance" in the field of public welfare the Government's recent action in providing for free medical services, including medicine, to all persons receiving old-age pensions, pensions for the blind and mothers' allowances.

He revealed that the department is taking measures to implement a rehabilitation scheme whereby relievees, who are partially unemployable, might again secure gainful occupation.

Answers Critics.

In his survey, which covered each department of government, the Premier answered—and warmly—those critics who scored the Province for lending the Bowmanville boys' school to the Dominion Government for the housing of war prisoners.

It was done, he said, at the urgent request of the Dominion Government, "backed by the assurance of the Swiss Government mediator, that the German Government, which resented strenuously the kind of accommodation provided for officer prisoners of war in the wilds of Northern Ontario, would be entirely satisfied with Bowmanville and would reciprocate by according like treatment and accommodation for our fellow-Canadians who are now confined in German prison camps.

"I will leave it to the mothers of our soldier boys to find a name which will adequately describe those critics, who, while enjoying all the comforts of Canadian home life, would retain those comforts at the expense of our gallant airmen who are now shut up in Hitler's prisons," he said.