

the front row of townships came another, and, so on, into the interior, as far as the need of the day demanded. The people saw the first and second rows of townships cleared and filled with farmers, and reasoning from these totally insufficient data, they imagined that the timber administration would settle itself. They thought that all that was necessary was to give the lumberman the right to take off the timber and that the farmer, ever on his heels, would press him further into the interior where it was believed more and better timber existed. In fact this idea of getting the lumberman to take off the timber without delay was so strong in the minds of early legislators that a clause was inserted in all contracts in Upper Canada and Lower Canada (Ontario and Quebec) that they must cut at least one thousand feet per acre per year. This was later reduced to five hundred feet per year, but the underlying idea remained as the spirit of the regulations. In the public mind the real and natural occupier of the land was the farmer and the lumberman was viewed as a necessary evil, who must be tolerated because he paved the way for the farmer. When anything like lack of markets or transportation interfered with the operations of the lumberman the settlers did not hesitate, even long after the timber trade was established, to cut and burn the most magnificent timber in huge piles containing thousands of feet.

LANDS LEASED, NOT SOLD TO LUMBERMEN.

This being the state of affairs, the system of leasing tracts of land to lumbermen for sufficient time to enable them to take off the timber was the natural outcome. When a settlement was begun, say at the mouth of a river, a lumberman would be given in the spring the lease of a block of land technically known as a "limit" (1), either back of the settlement or farther up the river, with the understanding that he would take off the timber during the following autumn and winter, so that farmers might enter upon the land the next spring. Thus in a great part of Eastern Canada to-day the timber is cut by lumbermen who lease the ground upon which the timber grows from the government, under an annual lease which terminates on the first day of May. Since the lumberman was viewed as a bird of passage, always being pushed farther back into the unknown interior where in the public mind the timber was always "illimitable and inexhaustible", he did not gain possession outright of the land on which the timber grew. While in the province of Nova Scotia the great proportion of the timber land is held by purchase or grant in fee simple yet, viewing the whole of Canada, the proportion of timberland held in fee simple is so small that practically the leasing system may be said to be the rule. Probably less than 5 per cent. of the timberlands of Canada are owned in fee simple, the remainder being owned by the different provincial governments or by the Dominion Govern-

(1) So called because the lessee must not cut timber outside certain stated limits or boundaries.