

It is worth noting that the large sawmills on the Pacific slope of the United States have entered into an agreement to manufacture odd, as well as even, lengths in planing mill products.

Heretofore it has been customary to manufacture these products in even lengths only. From this out the waste in trimming will not be so great as under the old system. Considerable material was wasted in trimming and shaping. Anything that tends to lessen the waste will have the effect of lowering the cost and strengthening the supplies.

The latest official returns place the output of British Columbia for timber and lumber at 648,000 M. board feet at an average value of \$14 per M., making the total output of British Columbia of over nine million dollars.

This does not include the million and a half dollars' worth of shingles and almost a quarter of a million dollars' worth of lath.

It is very true that the value of the output of British Columbia is less than half of the value of the output from Ontario, but the Ontario output is consumed more in the smaller contracts, and do not enter so largely into bridges, etc.

During the year 1908 the railways of Canada purchased about fourteen million cross ties, for which they paid over \$5,000,000, at an average price of 40 cents per tie.

With such large consumption the reduction of waste is an important item, and it is hoped that the agreement now entered into by the large mills of the United States will be taken up by the mills of British Columbia, that the waste from British Columbia mills may be as small as possible.

BRITISH OUTPUT OF PIG IRON IN 1909.

The output of pig iron, being the basis of the iron and steel industry, is an indication of trade conditions. The secretary of the British Iron Trade Association has just published the figures for the pig iron output for 1909.

The total production of pig iron in the United Kingdom in the year 1909 was 9,664,287 tons, which compares with 9,289,840 tons in 1908, 9,923,856 tons in 1907, 10,149,388 tons in 1906, and 9,592,737 tons in 1905. In the year under review, therefore, the output was 374,447 tons more than in 1908, though still less by 259,569 tons than in 1907, and by 485,101 tons than the record production of 1906.

It will be noticed that the output of 1909 is not up to the output of 1906, but the output for the last half of 1909 was 232,000 tons greater than for the first half of the year.

The production of forge and foundry pig has remained about the same during the last two years.

QUESTION OF SALARIES.

We have noticed with considerable satisfaction the marked improvement in salaries being paid recently to newly-appointed city engineers. We have also noticed that rather than lose the men they have, a number of municipalities have increased the salary of their city engineers from twenty to thirty per cent.

There is no more room for improvement in the scheme of wages paid engineers engaged in municipal work.

Recently one of the large Canadian cities engaged a corporation counsel at an initial salary of ten thousand dollars per year. That this gentleman was well qualified and in every way suitable for the position has been granted on every side. Strange that the same city should limit the salary of their city engineer to about half that amount. The large questions that the corporation counsel will have to face are the very questions that the city engineer has been working on from year to year. The city engineer has in his hands very largely the making or the undoing of the case. If it is good policy to pay a man who has to get you out of trouble a large salary, surely it is a much better policy to pay a man who can keep you out of trouble a large salary. It is usually said that prevention is better than cure, and we think it would be a very wise policy on the part of municipalities to pay well the men who carry on the public works and local improvements of the city, expecting to secure the best men available, and to retain their services.

The city engineer is expected to know more about conditions in the municipality than the city council. From year to year he follows the trend of affairs, and he is familiar with details, which the city council, changing every few months, cannot grasp. He is a man who should be in a position to approach various problems with no preconceived ideas and without sectional prejudices, such as the ward alderman is very apt to have. If a man with the faculty of grasping and dealing with large problems, who can secure from private corporations remuneration far in advance to those which he may now receive from municipalities.

Recently in a report on the conditions of the city of Edmonton, Mr. Walter J. Francis, C.E., Montreal, recommended that they pay their city commissioner a salary of ten thousand dollars. Mr. Francis knows the salaries paid to men in large corporations who handle a volume of work and business similar to that which would be undertaken by the commissioner for a city like Edmonton. Taking that as a basis, he makes the suggestion that the municipality pay for the conducting of their work, salaries similar to those paid by men in private business. When consulting engineers throughout Canada take a similar stand in reports for municipalities, the salary of the engineers in municipal undertakings will shortly come up to the level of those paid the engineer in other branches of the profession, and the city engineer will be as well paid a body of men as the corporation counsels.

PRECIPITATION FOR APRIL.

The precipitation was below the usual quantity in many localities in British Columbia; very light in Alberta and Northern Saskatchewan, in most places less than half the average amount, but rather above the normal in Southern Saskatchewan and over Manitoba; less than the average in the Lake Superior District, and locally in a few other portions of Ontario; and above the average elsewhere in the Dominion. In the environs of Lake Ontario, including some little distance to the northward, also northwestward to the Georgian Bay, the rainfall was very heavy. Orangeville recorded 6 inches, Toronto 5.1 inches, and Grantham 5.8 inches. Lambton, Kent and Essex Counties also had much rain, Cottam receiving 4.9 inches. In Quebec the positive departure varied from half an inch in the western portion to a larger quantity in the Gaspé Peninsula; and in the Maritime Provinces from one-half to nearly five inches, the excessive de-