

THE RESOURCES OF QUEBEC.

THE report of progress of the exploration of the country between Lake St. John and James Bay, which has been prepared by Mr. Henry O'Sullivan, C.E., has been issued by the Quebec Government. Mr. O'Sullivan has been all over the ground and studied the topography and resources of the country for the Department of Colonization and Mines of the Province of Quebec. The route traveled by Mr. O'Sullivan was slightly northward of a line drawn due east from Lake St. John.

The country between Lake Chamouchonan and the height of Land he found to be well wooded with black and grey spruce, tamarac, bonleau, etc. from 8 to 16 inches in diameter. That piece of country may be described as the highest of the plateaux rising towards the summit, Lake Chamouchonan being not far from the crest of the height of land. The timber on that belt, as described above, is far superior, the explorer says, to that covering the surveyed townships of the Lake St. John basin, which is mostly all of second growth, having sprung up since the great bush fires of 1870.

Beyond the height of land and on the slope towards Hudson Bay the party followed a nameless river, on which were several lakes. Along one of these lakes, unknown to geography—a lake, by the way, with a shore line exceeding 200 miles—there was found to be an abundance of fine timber, black and white spruce preponderating. "Some of the spruce here," writes Mr. O'Sullivan, "is over two feet in diameter, and from 75 to 90 feet in height." The following is his summing up of the timber resources in the country north of the height of land :

"In the virgin forest, spruce, fir, tamarac and cypress, or Banksian pine are the chief conifers, while the deciduous trees are limited to poplar of different varieties, white birch, willow, alder, hazel, pembina and similar undergrowth, with occasionally black ash along the river and lake shores. I saw no white pine, and, although the cypress or Banksian pine is decidedly a native of that region, it is only in the dry burned districts, and on the poorer heights in the neighborhood of Lake Nemiskau, on the Rupert river, that it was seen in abundance; in fact, pine of any kind seldom flourishes on such rich clay soil as is found in the basin of the Nattaway. There is an abundance of spruce and tamarac wherever the country has not been burned, but the larch fly is rapidly destroying the latter timber, and more so towards the height of land than in the vicinity of James Bay.

"Here and there areas more or less extensive have been swept by fire from 25 to 50 years ago, and are now well grown up with poplar, white birch, spruce, tamarac, and cypress of fair size, according to age, insuring an abundance of pulp wood for ages to come; and to bring down pulp is the industry of the coming age. Black spruce is the king of woods for pulp-making, and this country is the home of black spruce."

Numerous waterfalls were met with at convenient intervals, several of which are illustrated in the printed report. These falls, Mr. O'Sullivan is persuaded, would soon become sites of industry and centres of colonization, were the railway opened which it is proposed to run along the line of his exploration between Lake St. John and James Bay.

Lake St. John is already connected by rail with Quebec city, and on that Quebec and Lake St. John Railway, according to the itinerary company's annual report, which has recently been issued, more than half of the lumber exported from Quebec was carried from the interior. Over 60,000,000 feet were shipped to

tidewater over the road last year. Several new mills were built in 1897. It is noted in the report that the new pulp mill at Chicoutimi is shipping its product daily over the company's line. It is further noted that a pulp mill is about to be erected at Rolermaal, the northern terminus on the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway, and situated on the shore of Lake St. John.

At Lake Bouchette also, the report, adds, slightly south of Lake St. John, a chemical pulp mill is to be built, and the extensive water-power at the Jacques Cartier river will probably be utilized in the same way. Thus the railway company has a good pulp carrying and lumber carrying business to attend to. How much greater will that business become when the road is extended through the rich spruce district Mr. O'Sullivan and his fellow-explorers blazed their way across!

THE MARKET IN BRITAIN.

THE mechanical market (in London) is in rather a peculiar state at present. The Scandinavian makers evidently think that the war between America and Spain will stop the shipments from the former country, and thereby tend to stiffen the market, but, as the bulk of the mechanical comes from Maine, the pulp can easily be shipped via Canada, should there be any difficulty in shipping from Bangor or Portland, and, of course, shipments from Canada will be more affected if the United States traffic is diverted to that country. At any rate, the Scandinavians are holding out for higher prices, although they have not obtained them in this country yet, and there does not seem to be any prospect of their doing so. Authentic reports from Scandinavia state that, owing to the mildness of the earlier part of the winter, the mills were all able to work, and the increase in the average production is estimated at about 25 per cent. The stocks at the mills are reported to be large, and, as the ports opened later than usual this year, there has been no opportunity to ship the pulp. It is therefore difficult to see how higher prices can be expected. The present price for dry pine is about £3 15s. f.o.b.

There is, however, less doubt about the chemical market, which is certainly improving, and we understand there have been enquiries from America for Scandinavian pulp. The mills here are also busier, as the war has almost brought about a famine in the news market in America, and cousin Jonathan has ceased booking orders for news here. Moreover, as the sulphite mills in the United States are likely to be stopped for want of sulphur, there is some likelihood of Canadian and Scandinavian pulps being required to make up the deficiency. There is very little to report about soda as there has been no change in the market. Most of the larger mills are sold out for the year.—Wood Pulp.

CURRENT NET PRICES. C.I.F.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Sulphate and soda, bleached, per ton.....	10	0	0	12	10	0
" unbleached, first	8	0	0	8	10	0
" " second	7	15	0	8	0	0
Sulphite, bleached,	11	10	0	15	0	0
" unbleached, first	8	5	0	10	10	0
" " second	8	0	0	8	5	0
Pine, dry, in sheets	4	2	6	4	15	0
" 50 per cent. air dry	2	1	3	2	2	6
" extra fine	2	5	0	2	7	6
Brown, dry	4	5	0	4	10	0
" 50 per cent. air dry	2	2	6	2	7	6
Aspen, dry	6	10	0	7	10	0