

The Canadian Forests.

The United States Consul-General at Montreal, in a recent report to his government on the forests of Canada, estimates the timber area of the Dominion at 1,250,000 square miles. The proportion varies from nearly 75 per cent. in British Columbia to 40 per cent. in Manitoba, and 30 per cent. in the North West Territories. The growth of new wood is said not to be equal to the amount cut. Some of the best cedar areas are on the north shore of New Brunswick, but the rich pine forests of the Maritime Provinces have been impoverished, although a quantity of good spruce is left in Nova Scotia. The total exports of wood and its manufactures from the Dominion amount to over \$35,000,000 per annum.

In connection with the recent sale of crown lands in New Brunswick, a St. John paper says that Canadian spruce makes the best fibre for pulp, and that the result of this will be that the manufacture of deals will cease altogether and the timber will be converted into the more valuable pulp.

British Columbia possesses the largest compact timber resources in the world, and the coast is heavily wooded as far as Alaska.

Liability Insurance.

Among the most interesting papers read at the meetings of Insurance Commissioners at Detroit, last week, was one contributed by Captain Masters, of the London Guarantee and Accident Company. This gentleman is very popular with the profession. He is said to have been "enthusiastically received," and the hall was filled during his address. Captain Masters has a blunt, sailor-like way of putting things, as the following extract from his paper shows. We do not know if the American lawyers deserve the charges brought against them by the outspoken United States manager of the London Guarantee. If they do not, it must be settled between the gallant captain and those he has attacked. But there is a very bold charge against the legal fraternity embodied in the following extract from Captain Masters' address. He said:—

"Notices of accident and claims on the average pay roll have doubled within the past ten years. There are two explanations for this: First—Every accident of every description is notified to the insuring company to-day, whereas in 1890 only those accidents were sent where the results would seem to be serious or claims likely to be expected. Second—To-day every workman in the land knows of liability insurance, and probably knows whether his employer carries a policy or not. Trades unions are important factors in the working world, have their attorneys and make a business of backing up any members who have suffered injury or accident while at work. The damage suit lawyer searches the newspapers for accident notices and immediately hies himself to the home of the injured or to the hospital where some workingman has been carried, and quickly, if he can reach the bedside and the man is not unconscious, has signed a contract empowering him as attorney to settle and look after the injured man's interests in any way, the attorney to be paid a fee of 25 to 50 per cent. of the amount recovered."

Trams Across the Sea.

Some members of the Glasgow Corporation recently visited Dublin to inspect the working of the electric tramway system of the latter city. During the visit of the Scotchmen, a singular accident happened, and in consequence of this and a minor mishap in Cork, the Freeman's Journal says, "it is impossible to ignore the danger of the overhead system of electric traction," while another paper, "The Finance Union," points out "the great danger attending the introduction of electricity as a motive power for tram-cars."

The accident is reported to have been caused by a man named Manners, who, wishing to leave the car, was told by the conductor, who was collecting fares, to ring the bell. It is then stated that, by mistake, Manners pulled the trolley rope, with the result that the electrically-charged over-head wires snapped and fell among the passengers, three of whom received severe electric shocks, for which they were treated in hospital.

The story is a strange one, and sufficient to alarm all patrons of tramcars. That the overhead wires are not regarded favorably in cities across the sea may be gathered from the following comments in the "Freeman's Journal":—

"The moral, of course, is that no cost must be spared by the rich and prosperous company to secure the passengers against this imminent peril. Even on the most sordid grounds it is bad policy on the part of the company to sacrifice the public safety to the hope of big dividends. Juries are not likely to deal leniently with such a policy. Nor are the public likely to expose themselves to the danger when they come to realize its character. Everyone is afraid of lightning, though the actual danger is not great. But the traveller outside the tramcar has lightning without the warning thunder a yard from his head all the time. A hitch occurs and the lightning strikes. This is a matter which the citizens expect the Corporation to deal with promptly and effectively."

A Singular Salvage Suit.

A claim for salvage lodged by the fire brigade of Sydney, Australia, against the owners of a steamship which caught fire while moored to a wharf in Sydney harbour, has resulted in an extremely important decision being rendered by the Vice-Admiralty Court of New South Wales. The New York "Commercial Bulletin" thus reports the case:

"On October 19 last, the steamship "Buteshire" caught fire while lying alongside Dalgety & Co.'s wharf in Sydney harbor. The assistance of the Sydney fire brigade was invoked, and ultimately the flames were extinguished, the work being one of considerable difficulty in consequence of the absence of floating engines. Later on the Sydney fire brigade's board made a claim against the owners of the "Buteshire" for salvage. The facts were not disputed, but it was contended on behalf of the owners that the ship, being moored to the wharf, must practically be considered as forming part of it, and that, as there