

is clear that when the pressure of competition shall, as it possibly may, reduce the price of electric power, these customers will share with other consumers in the decline.

The \$35 rate is, as we understand it, for measured power. The Commission's figure is for flat power; and we are informed that a \$35 measured rate is about equal to \$25 flat rate. So that, the comparison should be as follows:—

Price for sale in Toronto, flat rate, according to report of Commission....	\$16 53
Price to be charged flat rate to two Toronto companies	25 00

This is a more favorable showing for the Electrical Development Company than the \$35 they were execrated for charging; the latter being double, and more than double the price which the Commission's expert advisers have led them to believe power can be furnished for at Toronto.

It is well to remember that, when the Government of Mr. Whitney disallowed the second concession of power made by the Ross Government to the Electrical Development Company, as they had a perfect right to do, they also confirmed the agreement made in January, 1903, between the Queen Victoria Park Commissioners and the Pellatt-Nicholls Syndicate, and likewise confirmed the assignment by the latter to the Development Company. This was done in May of last year, as Chap. 12 of the Ontario Statutes shows. The present Government had not, evidently, at that time, the light on the question of electrical power which has since resulted in the threatening legislation of this year's session.

According to a paragraph in Toronto dailies of Tuesday, the Premier can see nothing injurious to the rights of the power companies in the recent enactment, and he purposes to take steps to make it clear to the bondholders that there is no danger to their interests. We are glad to hear it; for there can be no doubt that the English bondholders are very strongly possessed of the notion that their interests are jeopardized, and that the effect of the present Government's legislation as to Niagara power derogates from the force of a bargain made by these bond-purchasers on the strength of an Act of a previous Government of the Province. And it will be well for him to so explain the meaning of the Act as to reassure them.

THE WOOLEN MARKETS.

Prices for wool are very high indeed; but notwithstanding this, an advance in unwashed was deemed advisable a few days ago, and has now come into effect. The quotation now is 17c. to 18c. Washed wool retains its last week's value of 25c. in the Toronto market, and reject 19 to 20c. Pulled wools are also quoted higher, as follows:—Combing, 24 to 25c.; super, 24 to 25c.; extra, 26 to 28c. These are high prices, as we have said, and some believe they are likely to go even higher, a contingency which, of course, the farmers are only too willing to look forward to. But so far as we can judge from the attitude of large handlers of the staple, to wait for further enhancement of values at this stage would be dangerous. The feeling is that wool is already too high. Farmers and country dealers should not be misled by reports that buyers from the United States have

entered the Canadian market, and have been purchasers of Canadian wool. This is true to a certain small extent, but so far as we can gather, the wool transaction consisted of a carload of old wool bought here and there in small quantities. The purchase does not affect new clip at all. This latter is coming in now in fair quantities.

But while attempts to "boost" the price of wool still further are to be deprecated, it by no means follows that any great degree of weakening is to be looked for. The situation of all the wool markets in the world contradicts any such tendency. In both England and the United States the consumption of wool during the last year exceeded all records. A report from Philadelphia, however, refers to this point, so far as it affects the market for raw material, as follows:—

"Owing to the heavy imports which are keeping close up to those of the same period last year, there is no acute scarcity. Manufacturers still find an ample assortment at a time when the new domestic clip is beginning to arrive in the market, and hopes of the rising prices predicted by some as a result of exhaustion of supplies, have now faded out of sight."

And again:—

"Believing that wool had reached the top, manufacturers had no motive for buying ahead of their wants, and they have been either holding out of the market, or supplying themselves with foreign, which even with the high Dingley duties added, has proved to be relatively cheaper than domestic."

We hear also from United States wool centres that some manufacturers who are very large consumers, and who heretofore have used domestic wools, now report not having a single fleece of domestic in their mills. This is owing to the extraordinary high value of domestic wool at the points of production last year, and to the prices being higher for domestic than for the foreign plus duties and freight.

Another excerpt from the circular from the commission merchant's point of view, from which we quoted before, says that it is quite probable that dealers will be inclined to touch the coming clip lightly at first, and the services of commission houses may again come to be as great and as necessary factors to the western wool growers as in former years. During the past two seasons buyers were often found standing in rows at the shearing camps to buy the wool as soon as it was shorn, or even contracting for it on the sheep's back before shearing. The San Francisco calamity comes at a time to disturb the calculations of wool-growers for getting at least the closing prices of last summer.

Looking up references to conditions of the woolen trade, as they prevail abroad, we find the tone of the market in that great woolen centre, Bradford, to be extremely confident, all descriptions, both of home-grown and colonial wools being extremely firm in price. This is in keeping with the high values of finished goods (though often these are not high enough to be on a parity with the raw wool), and with the heavy and augmenting demand. And this accounts, too, for the keeping up of the prices on imported dress goods in Canada, which all dry goods merchants know so much about.