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BRITISH COLUMBIA TIMBER WEALTH.

TO thousands who have no particular interest in lumbering British Columbia has become famed for the size and beauty of its forest products. The illustration that we give on this page is a familiar one to those who have made themselves acquainted with the natural resources of the province. Where to the traveller, and student of Canadian history, however, the giant cedars of the Pacific Coast are a thing of beauty and wonderment, at the same time, from a commercial point of view, they tell of a measure of wealth that finds few parallels in any other part of the Dominion.

The forest area of British Columbia is 285,000 square miles or 182,400,000 acres. This area is densely covered with some of the most valuable timbers that are known to the lumber world. The most prominent and valuable of these is Douglas fir, named after a noted botanist of that name. It is not local to any particular section, but is distributed generously throughout all parts of the coast. For many commercial purposes it fills a place, that bars out any competitor, because of its immense length, strength and straightness. Some of these trees grow to a height of 300 feet, and have a base circumference of 50 feet. The best averages, however, are 150 feet clear of limbs and 5 to 6 feet in diameter. Professor Macoun classifies it as standing midway between the spruce and balsam, and expresses the view that it would make a valuable paper-making tree. In a day when much value is attached to spruce for paper-making, if Professor Macoun is correct in his diagnosis of its properties the time cannot be far distant when Douglas fir will also be sought after for this purpose.

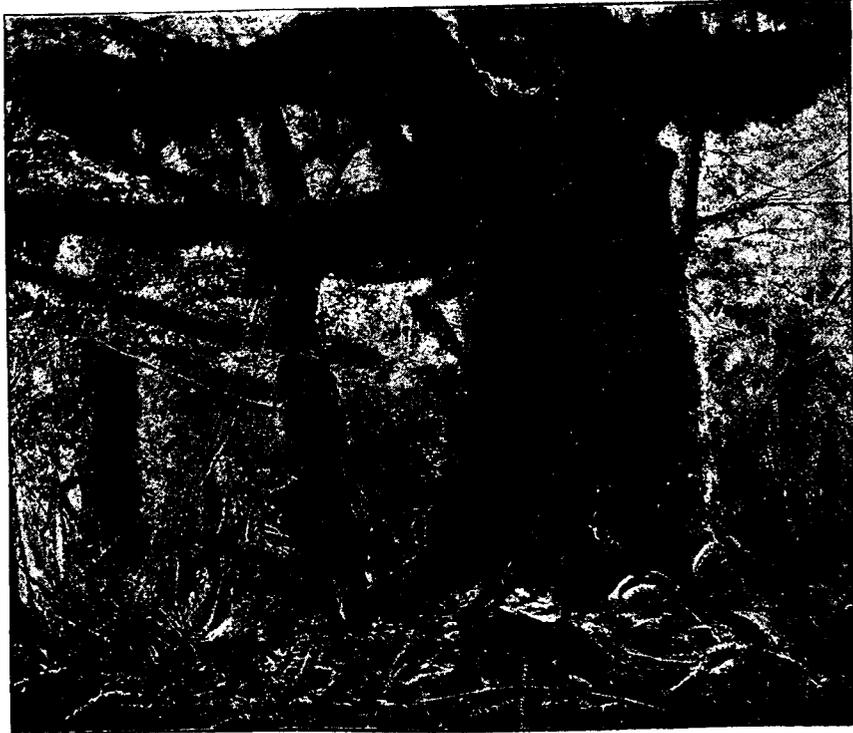
Both from the picturesque, as well as the commercial standpoint, the red cedar (*Thuja Gigantæ*) follows closely after Douglas fir. This tree is likewise well distributed throughout the province, though it reaches its greatest size and majesty on the coast, where it quite outgirths any other tree. As a general-purpose timber red cedar is the most valuable of the Pacific Coast woods. It grows to a height, sometimes, of 200 feet, and 20 feet in diameter. The settler on the coast finds it beside him when building his rude hut, whilst the resident who has reached the point where he has discarded the humble beginnings of his early struggles finds in red cedar a wood that gives beauty and finish to the finest mansion. For inside finish it takes a beautiful polish and is in popular demand for the interior finishing of residences, not alone at home, but to a wide extent, abroad. Just at the present time interest centers around this wood because of the hindrance that has been placed upon its export by the ruling of the United States custom authorities in placing it under the 25 per cent. duty list. It is expected, however, that this difficulty will be shortly overcome. A companion wood to red cedar is the yellow cedar, which is possessed of great durability and likewise grows to a great size.

On the coast is found a species of spruce, known as white spruce (*Picea Sitchensis*), which is found interspersing the forests where the other trees grow, and in swampy lands. In circumference it is almost the equal of Douglas fir, but does not grow to nearly the same height. It makes a beautiful lumber for doors, dressing, etc., and large quantities of it are used in making salmon boxes, fruit boxes, and to some extent, barrels. Other

woods of the coast are hemlock, white pine, (though this is in no way to be ranked along with the white pine of Ontario), cotton wood, balsam, and crab apple, which grows in swampy ground.

The area covered by timber in British Columbia is not the most remarkable feature of the province. Its density is so great that as high as 500,000 feet have been taken off a single acre, and it is recorded that on one acre in the Comox district 508,000 ft. have been found. This, of course, is exceptional, but a fair average would run as high as 75,000 feet.

With forest products in rich abundance, it is to be expected that the saw mill industry would take rank as one of the most important of the province. At present there are upwards of 60 saw mills in British Columbia, with a daily capacity of over 3,000,000 feet. The whole cut of the province last year was 65,000,000 feet.



PRIMEVAL FOREST GROWTH, BRITISH COLUMBIA—A GIANT CEDAR.

Speculation is indulged in there, as in other lumber producing countries, as to the possible longevity of its timber resources. Mr. R. E. Gosnell estimates that there are over 100,000,000,000 feet of good timber in sight, and that the present saw mills running, fully employed and making an average output, would take between 150 and 200 years to exhaust the present supply. Another authority has figured down the possibility in this respect as low as 60 years. One thing we may be certain of, taking other countries as an example, that British Columbia will come to the end of its timber resources much earlier than they anticipate. It seems a difficult matter in all new lumbering districts, whilst the virgin timber exists in great abundance, to impress lumbermen with the fact that, as steady droppings wear away the hardest stone, so will continuous, and too often prodigal, cutting wear away the wood products of a country, as rich even in their resources as British Columbia.

British Columbia will rise to its greatest importance as a lumber district after lumbermen have exhausted the province of Ontario and other provinces of the Dominion. Then they will flock to the coast, and as has been remarked, the men who possess large holdings of timber will find themselves quickly becoming millionaires. This pleasant experience has fallen to the lot of several in Ontario and Quebec, who years ago bought limits at

practically a nominal price, and in later years disposed of them at a figure to represent a handsome margin.

The lumbermen of British Columbia find a market for their products both at home and abroad. As the province itself has grown, and the adjacent northwest territories and Manitoba, they have been able to cultivate a domestic trade of fair volume, and one that will grow as the country grows. Large quantities of timber are exported to Great Britain, Australia, South Africa, South America and other foreign points. This trade will receive a great stimulus when the projected Nicaraguan Canal has been completed. Since the removal of the United States duty a fresh market has been found in California, and within the past four or five months some considerable shipments have gone into that territory, and the trade is growing rapidly. It may be expected that in time it will be found profitable to send these products a greater distance than simply the neighboring state of California.

The red cedar shingle industry has reached large proportions on the coast, and these shingles are well known, not only in their native province, but throughout Ontario, and to some extent they have been placed in different parts of the United States. Just at present this industry is in somewhat a depressed condition, suffering from that bane that comes to every business that seems to show great possibilities—over production.

Mr. J. R. Anderson, provincial statistician, is authority for the statement that the total extent of lumber leases in British Columbia is 524,573 acres and the principal owners or lessees are as follows:

	Acres.
British Columbia Mills, Timber and Trading Co., Ltd.	87,433
Toronto and British Columbia Co.	60,982
McLaren-Ross Lumber Co.	51,190
Vancouver Saw Mill Co.	36,306
Brunette Saw Mill Co.	22,331
Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing Co.	18,537
Andrew Haslem	17,934

Leases of surveyed, unpre-empted crown lands may be obtained for a period not exceeding 21 years by those tendering the strongest cash bonus subject to the pay-

ment of an annual rental of 10c. per acre and a royalty of 50c. per thousand feet on the scale measurement of the logs. The lessee, though not actually engaged in the manufacture of lumber, must, to retain his limits, erect a mill capable of cutting at least 1,000 feet a day for over 400 acres of land included in the lease, within two years, and give a guarantee equivalent to 10c. an acre that he will do so before obtaining his lease. A timber license may be granted for 1,000 acres for four years on payment of \$10 annually and 15c. for each tree (except hemlock), and no person not licensed may cut timber on crown lands except for farming and mining purposes. Only one license at one time is obtainable and is not transferable. A special license for 1,000 acres for one year may be obtained by application in the Official Gazette and the payment of \$50 to the chief commissioner of lands and works.

The Upper Ottawa Improvement Co. has commenced its operations for the season, when the first gang of men went to work on the booms and saw logs left from last fall in Thompson's Bay. The start this year is about two weeks later than last season, on account of the river not being clear of ice. There will be no rafts of square timber down for some months, as all of last year's timber passed down to Quebec before the winter closed in.