

Industries of British Columbia

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III.—FORESTRY

It is my intention to present in as concise a form as possible the growth and present conditions of the five great basic industries of British Columbia; those industries which, though each a separate entity in themselves, are of necessity blended together and dependent on each other, all working towards the one end, the general prosperity of the Province and the development of her natural resources.

VANCOUVER ISLAND'S PRE-EMINENCE.

Dealing first with Forestry, the leading industry of this Province, we find that British Columbia has within her borders more than half the standing merchantable timber of Canada, and fifty per cent of this is on Vancouver Island. This timber stand is now estimated at 350 billion feet and the approximate annual cut is two billion feet, bringing a revenue to the Government of over \$3,500,000. A wide variety of trees is found in British Columbia forests, the principal growths being of Western Yellow Pine, Western Hemlock, Douglas Fir, Sitka Spruce, Balsam, Western White Pine, Tamarack, Yellow and Red Cedar, Larch and Cottonwood.

During the last ten years the growth of this industry has been remarkable; the production having increased from \$30,000,000 in 1913 to \$59,477,000 in 1922. Of this production nearly half was lumber, the total timber cut and scaled last year amounting to 1,899,158,273 feet with a value of \$26,400,000. This cut was apportioned as follows among the different species: Douglas Fir 846,171,000 ft.; Red Cedar 461,265,000 ft.; Spruce 149,247,000 ft.; Hemlock 238,891,000 ft.; Balsam Fir 38,904,000 ft.; Yellow Pine 43,630,000 ft.; White Pine 34,405,000 ft.; Jack Pine 43,774,000 ft.; Cottonwood 2,869,000 ft. In the production of this vast quantity of lumber there are 2,652 logging operations being carried out and 292 saw mills operating with a daily capacity of 9,683,000 ft. There are also 108 shingle mills turning out the best grades of cedar shingles at the rate of 15,544,000 every 24 hours.

POSITION IN THE WORLD MARKETS.

British Columbia lumber holds an enviable position in the world's markets, no less than 273,146,800 ft. being shipped by water to foreign points last year. Of this quantity 83,856,504 ft. went to United States, 72,339,531 ft. to Japan, 55,945,129 ft. to Australia, 24,640,268 ft. to China and 12,698,383 ft. to United Kingdom. A total of 151,518,712 ft. of logs were also exported from British Columbia last year.

There are 887,980 acres of privately owned timber lands in British Columbia with an average value of \$11.99 per acre. These are but a small part of the vast areas which are patrolled by the staff of the Forest Fire Protection Department. This work is carried out under the greatest difficulties and at a great expense, no less than \$722,865 being spent on Fire Protection during the nine months ending Dec. 31st, 1922. To show the efficient manner in which this work is carried out, it is interesting to know that out of 2,591 fires fought during the 1922 season, only 6.4 per cent did damage over the \$1,000 mark.

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S PLACE RE PULP AND PAPER

Turning to the Pulp and Paper branch of this industry, we find that British Columbia stands third in the Dominion of Canada for the production of newsprint. Last year the mills here produced 86,894 tons of sulphite, 9,674 tons of sulphate and 100,759 tons of ground wood. All the ground wood and 35,000 tons of the sulphite were manufactured into 124,639 tons of newsprint and 7,945 tons of other papers. Of the cords of pulpwood cut, 67% are consumed in Canada and the balance exported. At the present time there are six pulp and paper mills employing 2,872 workers with a capital in-

vestment of \$32,763,965, operating in this province, and there is still room for a much greater development, particularly in lesser plants for the manufacture of the finished products, tissue and kraft papers, testboard, etc.

Another allied industry is the manufacture of wall-board, principally of three-ply cottonwood and fir. British Columbia possesses a wealth of the raw material and the ever increasing demand for this product in the world markets is extending the capacity of the factories to the limit.

THE RECORD OF 1923.

The industry during the year 1923 has given fresh indications of strength. The period of deflation has been passed and this year has shown a steady increase in volume of business; the lumber cut during the six months ending June 30th last amounting to 1,206,936,927 ft. as compared with 878,026,789 ft. during the same period of 1922, and it is expected that the record set in the year 1920 will be nearly equalled. The industry has clearly demonstrated its ability to go out and secure a large percentage of the world's timber trade, as is shown by the fact that the off-shore business has increased 300% since 1919. This trade now equals 40% of the lumber produced. If this rate can be maintained it will have a stabilizing effect on conditions in the industry. In these foreign markets, British Columbia timber will come into keen competition with substitutes and lumber from other regions, so that the greatest care must be exercised to retain our existing markets.

It must be obvious to all that the greater the quantity of finished forest products made and bought here, or exported from British Columbia, the greater the number of workmen employed, and general prosperity will follow.

It is therefore incumbent on the citizens of the Province to patronize and support the many industries allied with or dependent upon Forestry, by giving a preference to the products of those industries before all others, so that the greatest of our natural resources, the untold timber wealth, may be developed to the fullest extent possible, thus strengthening the other basic industries and calling into existence other lesser industries, with the natural increase in population which is so essential to the proper advancement of this great province.

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