

wages hold good for the future, or will they suffer a decline or advance? A prominent Ottawa district lumberman gave it as his opinion that the wages would drop. He figured that there would be an easier feeling in the labor market during the coming summer, and that lack of other employment would make

good help remains short, they will get what they ask. This phase of the case takes on a humorous turn when it is borne in mind that the high wages are responsible in a large measure for the advance in lumber.

The hardy contented lumber jack of former years is slowly but surely passing from the

city shown below, transportation to the camps to be advanced by the Company and repaid by the undersigned, but will be refunded to those who have worked until the end of the hauling season. The Company agrees to remit monthly on demand one-half of the wages earned by the men to their families so soon as men have worked sufficient time to protect transportation. Insobriety, insubordination or incapacity to be sufficient causes for dismissal at any time."

The manager of this company stated that the law will not uphold a company that makes any deduction other than that for railway transportation when a man quits his job before his time is up.

GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS.

The lumberman who contemplates operating in the woods next winter will probably be able to purchase his meat supply at very favorable prices; in fact, it is a question if he should not take advantage of the low prices which now prevail. Compared with one year ago barrelled pork, which is one of the principal commodities purchased for the lumber camp, can be obtained at a decline of six dollars per barrel. Current prices of live hogs and packing house products as compared with the corresponding time in 1903 are as follows:

| | 1903. | | 1904. |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------|
| Live Hogs, \$ | 6.75 to \$ 7.00 | \$ 5.12½ to \$ 5.25 | |
| Mess Pork, 20.00 | to 21.00 | 14.00 to 15.00 | |
| Pure Lard, 10 | to 10½ | 7½ to 8 | |
| S. P. Hams, 11 | to 11½ | 10½ to 11 | |
| Smoked Hams, 12½ | to 13 | 12 to 12½ | |
| Long Clears, 9½ | to 10 | 7½ to 8 | |

It would seem reasonable to expect a stronger tone to the pork market throughout the summer period, as the consumptive demand will no doubt improve. It must be admitted that prevailing prices are on a very reasonable basis.

Grocery supplies have been somewhat uneven in price. One of the leading staples, sugar, is about 20 cents per 100 pounds higher



SLEIGH HAUL, CLEVELAND-SARNIA SAW MILLS COMPANY, ON VERMILLION RIVER.

more men available for the limits and consequently wages would drop.

On the other hand, the managers of the employment agencies state that the wages will remain firm at the figures quoted above. There seems a good prospect of the resumption of operations on the part of the Soo companies and that will make an increased demand for men. Then again the building of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway will make a hole in the supply of labor, but it is hardly likely this will affect the lumber interests before next year.

The French Canadians' undisputed claim to the work on the limits and drives is being challenged. Winnipeg was not the only city that sent hardy immigrants into the camps. Several hundred, nearly all Britishers, were forwarded from Ottawa. With their willingness to work and their natural intelligence they made good, where other immigrants from across sea would have failed. The Canadian firms are averse to engaging any but the French Canadians, claiming that the others, not having the necessary experience, are a hindrance rather than a help. However, the American firms think different. As was the case with the men hired in Winnipeg, they were not averse to giving the newcomers a trial. Of course, they started them in at reduced wages, but this was only an incentive to the immigrants to quickly master the fine points of the game and get on the full pay list. As a matter of fact they are even eager to try their hand at log driving, but few have been engaged for this risky work.

In discussing the future of the labor question as far as it affects the lumber industry, the buoyancy of the lumber market itself must not be overlooked. As long as high prices rule, the men hiring for work on the limits and drives and in the mills will demand correspondingly good wages. As long as the supply of

land. High wages in other lines of industrial activity and the prospect of an all year residence in town or city has lured many of the able bodied fraternity from the limits. Their places have been taken by undersized youths and inexperienced men from different walks of life. As a consequence there was no end of trouble last winter from "jumpers." The proximity of the railways and the very question of wages itself were responsible for the flittings to and fro of the hands. In former years the men at the low wages were content, even



SKIDDING LONG TIMBER WITH STEAM SKIDDER, CLEVELAND-SARNIA SAW MILLS COMPANY.

eager to work, not only the whole season but season after season, with the one company. The following is a copy of the agreement demanded by one of the leading employment agencies which was found to give satisfaction and prevent "jumping":

"We the undersigned do hereby agree to work for and faithfully serve during the lumbering season of 190 and following spring for the wages and in the capa-

than last year. On account of the prospects for the sugar trade in Europe this advance is likely to be maintained. Coffee is about ten per cent. higher than one year ago owing to a shortage in the crop and manipulative tactics on the part of speculators, but tea values show no material change. The price of evaporated apples is about ½ cent per pound higher, the supply being in a few hands and indications pointing to no decline in price before autumn,