

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S FOREST WEALTH.

The lumber industry and the lumber trade both showed very satisfactory returns for the year 1911, stated Hon. Price Ellison in the British Columbia Legislature when introducing his budget. "I ventured to predict in my last budget speech that 1911 would prove a prosperous year in the lumber trade. My forecast was correct. The steadiness of the lumber market enabled the mills to operate during the entire year though some of those in the interior curtailed their output during November and December, on account of the American mills dumping their surplus cut on the markets of the northwest at less than cost price.

"According to the returns made to the chief timber inspector the lumber cut for 1911 was as follows:

"Logs officially scaled west of Coast range 619,000,000 feet; cut from Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway lands, 144,000,000 feet; logs officially scaled east of Coast range 297,000,000 feet; total, 1,060,000,000 feet.

"Of this amount the total manufactured into lumber was 113,000,000 feet, and the total exported 47,000,000 feet.

"The royalty collections for 1911 exceeded those of 1910 by no less than \$50,734.

"The causes of this better return may be summed up as follows:

"1. The crops in the prairie provinces compared favorably with those of 1910.

"2. The record number of incoming settlers increased the demand for dwelling and other houses.

"3. The checks on the dumping from the United States effected by the enforcement of the customs regulations by the new government at Ottawa will prevent the importation of other than real rough lumber.

"4. The lesson taught by the prolonged shutting down of mills in the United States has produced a lasting effect.

"I look forward, therefore, to a still greater stimulus in the lumber trade in 1912—especially as there will be a larger amount demanded provincially owing to our development.

"The supply of pulpwood in the eastern United States has been hopelessly insufficient for the present needs of their people, and they already import one-quarter of the whole of the raw material for their paper mills from Canada. We are also exporting to them \$4,000,000 worth of manufactured pulp for the paper mills of the eastern states.

"I look forward to a rapid growth in that industry. I may add that the completion of the Panama canal in 18 months time cannot but have enormous influence in the development of our lumber trade. It can hardly fail in fact to become by far the most profitable of our staple industries. The cheaper freight rates, which will necessarily accompany the opening of the canal, must give an unprecedented stimulus, and will at the same time prevent a recurrence of periods of depression. With an easy means of communication secured to us by water as well as by land the depletion of the world's timber in other regions cannot fail to make the timber output of our forest lands a most permanent source of revenue for generations to come.

"This province more than two years ago outstripped Quebec in the production of lumber, while in 1910 her output was on a par with that of Ontario. It does not require the eye of a prophet to see that, with a vast proportion of her virgin forests still untouched she will, in proportion to her size take prominent place within a year or two among the great timber producing countries in the world.

"In order to bring about this end and to encourage the establishment of the paper making industry in the province the government granted in 1901, 21 year leases of pulp forests to companies on liberal terms. In 1903 the law granting

pulp leases was repealed. The annual rental now paid under these leases, is two cents per acre and a royalty of 25 cents per cord of pulp wood cut. Four companies are now either erecting or operating plants, the British Canadian Wood Pulp Paper Company, the Swanson Bay Forests Wood Pulp & Lumber Mills, the Ocean Falls Company, Bella Coola and the Powell River Paper Company. As proof of the prosperity of the industry the last named company is filled up with orders for all the paper and pulp it can produce.

"I believe that the mills of Powell River, Swanson Bay, Howe Sound and those of the British Columbia Wood Pulp and Paper Company, vast as they are, are but the pioneers of an enterprise which will fling its tentacles all over the world.

"Looking forward into the centuries, one can imagine a time when the great forests of this province will be denuded of most of their timber; but even then, if all the wealth were gone, British Columbia would remain the greatest producing region in the world. No country shares with us our climate or our soil. It is the most congenial for the cottonwood, spruce, balsam, hemlock, and Lombard poplar, which produce the best paper. Already our ships are conveying the output of our forests in pulp and paper to Australia, New Zealand and the Orient, and no far sighted man can doubt that in the near future half of the whole world will be the market place of the pulp and paper produce of British Columbia.

"We have in this province a combination of the three factors which together insure the prosperity of the pulp and paper trade—factors without which the industry can nowhere be successfully maintained. These three factors are (1) cheap water power; (2) cheap timber; (3) cheap transportation in close juxtaposition. Washington, Oregon and California have the last two but they lack that most essential factor—cheap water power. My conviction is, therefore, that we can always compete successfully against other producing countries in capturing the pulp trade."

IRON ORE IN QUEBEC.

The iron ore industry of the Province of Quebec has, in the last few years, shown a serious decline. The bog iron ore deposits of the St. Maurice district and of Drummond county seem to be passing away, and, so far, no other iron ore deposits have been brought into prominence to replace them. In 1911, only 931 tons of local ore were charged into the Drummondville furnace, of the Canada Iron Corporation, the main supply of ore having had to be imported from Ontario. The Radnor furnace of the same company went out of blast in the summer of 1910 and was not blown in during 1911.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS.

According to the record of industrial accidents kept by the Department of Labor, 61 persons were killed and 178 injured during February, 1912. This record compares very favorably with that of January, when 86 workmen were killed and 214 injured. Compared with February, 1911, the record is still more favorable, as 93 were killed and 197 injured in that month. The worst disaster of the past month was the premature explosion of dynamite on construction work near Fort Frances, Ont., on the line of the Canadian Northern Railway, by which 13 construction hands were killed and six others seriously injured.