

CHAR-PIT METHOD IS DEMONSTRATED

Huge Stumps of Trees Destroyed at Trifling Expense and Little Attention

New Westminster, June 28.—A most interesting demonstration of the efficacy of "char-pitting" was given to the members of the Pacific Logging Congress by Professor H. W. Sparks, supervisor of the state demonstration farms at Pullman, Wash.

As even the name of char-pitting may be unfamiliar to people who have had no experience in, or the chance of the observation of, land-clearing operations, it may be explained that it is a scientific process for burning out stumps in a manner which calls for a minimum of expense and attention. Here in the Pacific Northwest the methods used in the east for clearing stumps from land which has been logged over would prove quite inadequate as the stumps are so huge as to defy the efforts of even the heaviest stump-pullers. Dynamiting is effective, but it is costly and the element

of danger in the use of dynamite, those not thoroughly familiar with it is always to be reckoned with seriously. Burning, then, is plainly the best method of ridding the land of the remains of former monarchs of the forest. But to attempt to burn any of the huge stumps simply by building a fire round them would plainly be a long and tedious process which would require constant attention; char-pitting has, therefore, been devised, and has proved successful wherever adopted.

There are any number of enormous stumps in the immediate vicinity of the Fraser Mills and it was to some of these that the professor directed his attention.

The stumps there are big enough to satisfy the most capacious as the slogan of British Columbia's famous Douglas fir is "big as your arm."

Professor Sparks first attacked a stump. Two holes were chipped into the stump between claws of the huge rook and a tunnel, or flue, was bored from the top of the hole, well into the heart of the stump.

At the mouth of the most convenient of these orifices a fire was quickly built and almost immediately after its ignition the professor turned his attention to the hole from the other hole. The fire was then banked with gravel, it being explained that just sufficient air bled through the gravel to keep the necessary oxygen for combustion.

Once properly started, Professor Sparks explained, the fire will continue to burn until even the most rotten stump has been completely converted into charcoal and the outer portions of the stump itself now mere shell, can easily be toppled over by the wind left by the combustion in the interior.

Professor Sparks stated that all the attention the process required was for a man to visit each stump once a day to see that the fire-hole was properly banked with gravel. The time that it took to destroy stumps by the charcoal method varied greatly with the nature of the wood and the condition of dryness, or otherwise, in which it was found. Some stumps he had destroyed in as short a time as nine hours, while others had smouldered

The professor was asked a number of questions concerning details of the process, all of which he answered promptly and to the satisfaction of his listeners. The party then returned to the wharf and re-embarked for New York.

ORIGIN OF FIRE UNKNOWN.

New Westminster, June 28. — The cause of the conflagration which destroyed the shingle mill owned and operated at Port Haney by Messrs. Abernethy & Co. is unknown.

everybody as the fire started at 5 a. m. The mill yard was supposed to be deserted at the time and the boilers were cold, there having been no fire underneath them since the evening previous. There is a belief in the minds

The loss is estimated at about \$4,000. It is estimated that in addition to the building and equipment, about 35,000 shingles were destroyed.

Geologists estimate that the great German deposits of potash salts, practically the only important ones in the world, will last at the present rate of exploitation 600,000 years.

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