

and by the judicious expenditure of that money, the value of the whole could be so increased as to enable the Province to repay the debt and interest.

The Timber Licences for the past year, and which will expire on 1st May next, cover an area of 2,157 square miles, at an average rate of 16s. 8½d. per mile, producing to the end of the year £1,992 8s. The highest rate paid for any one lot was £20 1s. per square mile, being a Licence for nine square miles, situate on the left bank of the River Saint Croix, about 25 miles above Saint Stephen. The quantity of Land under Licence in 1847, was 5,360 square miles, which produced the sum of £3,585 7 9, the highest price paid per square mile being £5, the whole quantity averaging only 10s. 5½d. per square mile. By the above Your Excellency will perceive that the system of Auction has this past year produced some beneficial results, having increased the rate from 10s. to 16s. 8½d. per square mile, although only 68 lots were contested.

The Export Duty Act, intended to alleviate all the evils under which the Province suffered, has, to a great extent, proved highly injurious to the Trade. The Auction system in previous years has only been so in name, as the cases are rare where the Revenue has derived any benefit therefrom; and as in the performance of my official duty, I never could reconcile it to my ideas of common sense, that 640 acres of well Timbered Land should be permitted to be worked over for twelve months for 10s., so I have always considered that a most pernicious stimulant was thereby given to the speculator in the Lumber Trade. The simple question may be asked, would any man in his senses so dispose of his private property, and if not, why should the Public Lands be so dealt with? The Lumber Trade should not be the only branch of industry receiving such protection, which, in practice, has proved injurious by enticing into the woods a larger amount of men and money than the Market could possibly remunerate.

I pray Your Excellency's pardon for these remarks, which, perhaps, may be considered as inconsistent with the subordinate duties required of a Surveyor General, but I wish to raise my humble voice, now that the opportunity offers, of correcting the evil; for past experience has convinced me, that should such an improvement take place in the Lumber Market at Home as would present the least prospect of profit, vast numbers of persons would again rush into the woods, in the vain hope of recovering what they had lost. Again the Market would be overstocked; and again the same results would occur.

Independent of the prejudicial effects of the Export Duty Act, it is unjust in its operation, for whatever may be the intrinsic value of the commodity, the duty is the same. If therefore the Export Duty is still to continue, I cannot but hope that some more equitable scale may be established; for while the large Square Timber could well bear a much higher rate, the Deals can hardly pay even six pence per thousand superficial feet of one inch thick.

Numerous objections have been raised against the manner in which the Crown Estate was managed previous to the year 1837. A reference to the accompanying Statement of Receipts for the last twenty years, will at least show that the Revenue for the first nine years, viz: from 1st January, 1829, to 31st December, 1837, amounted to £203,719, while that derived from the same source for the eleven subsequent years, has only reached the sum of £145,357.

The Mining transactions of this Department may be stated to be twenty three Leases now extant, viz:—One in Gloucester, four in Carleton, two in York, two in Sunbury, six in Queens', one in Northumberland, two in Kent, one in Saint John, one in Westmorland, one in Albert, and two in Charlotte. The whole have realized the sum of £365 10s. Two rights only were sold during the last year, one for £35 and the other for £5. All these Leases are held subject to the Regulations which existed at the several periods when they were taken out.