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ONTARIO WOODS AND FORESTS.

THE report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for Ontario, presented to the Legislature a fortnight ago, gives the total collection from woods and forests for the year as \$853,179.86, in which there is included \$76,579.73 on account of bonuses and \$61,493.49 on account of ground rents, leaving the net revenue from timber dues, \$715,106.64.

The sawn lumber market it is stated, has during the past year been in an inactive state, and there was a distinct break in the prices of all but the superior grades of lumber, which constitute not more than twenty to twenty-five per cent. of the total quantity of lumber produced at the present time in Canada and the north-western States. The English market for board timber and deals has been fairly satisfactory and prices remunerative, but this is a very limited and conservative market, easily overstocked and demoralized, and takes only the very best qualities of timber and lumber.

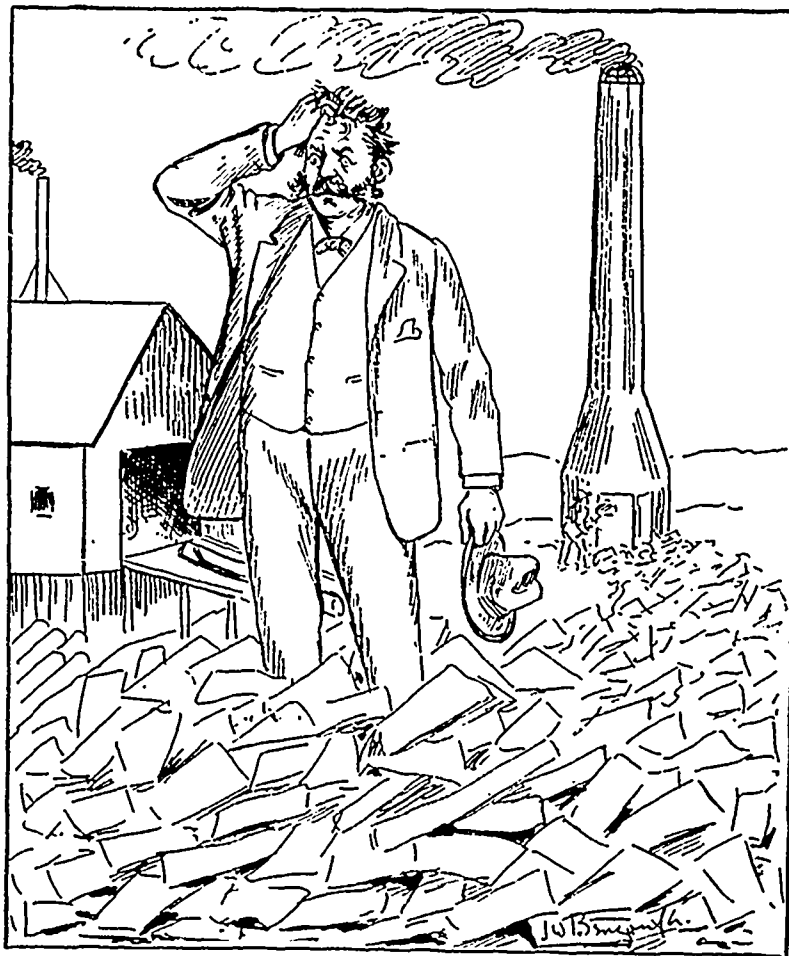
The principal market for Canadian sawn lumber is in the United States, and any overstocking or depression in that market is immediately felt by Canadian lumbermen. In the early part of the year there appeared to be an improvement in the general business of the country, and, in sympathy with that, a hope arose that trade would be better on the opening of navigation. Very soon after navigation opened it was seen that there would be no improvement, but that things were going to remain in the unsettled and unsatisfactory position in which they had been during the previous year. As a consequence all but the upper grades of lumber moved slowly during the summer, with a decreasing demand and lowering of values.

The markets have become enormously overstocked with inferior grades of lumber, and it is this which has caused the present unfavorable condition of the trade. The circumstances which have led to this plethora of coarse, rough lumber are easily understood, and some of them may be noted. First, the removal of the duty on Canadian lumber passing into the United States enabled the coarse Canadian lumber to get into that market and thus stimulated cutting closer, the consequence of which was that a largely increased percentage of coarse logs was taken out. Secondly, the prices which have recently been paid for limits have rendered it necessary, if a profit was to be obtained, that every log which

could be got out with any expectation of a return, should be cut and taken to the mills. Thirdly, during the summer of 1894 disastrous bush fires occurred in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin and enormous quantities of pine timber were so badly scorched that in order to realize anything from it the timber had to be cut last winter. Accordingly, the western market, which in an ordinary year consumes a very large percentage of the cut of the north-western States,

and depressed condition. It is a matter of congratulation, however, that under such unfavorable circumstances the revenue collected from woods and forests has been so large.

With respect to the future, it is difficult to forecast what may happen. There does not appear to be any grounds upon which to base expectations of immediate substantial improvement in the condition of the trade. The western lumber markets are overstocked with large quantities of inferior grades of lumber, which will have to go east, and there does not appear to be any material decrease in the output of logs this present winter, besides which large stocks of last year's logs are still on hand, more than sufficient to equal any possible decrease that may take place in the output this season.



THE QUESTION OF THE DAY FOR SAW-MILL MEN.

"Can't I make something out of mill waste more profitable than smoke?"

was flooded with coarse lumber of an inferior quality largely in excess of what it could use as its normal supply. The consequence was that this coarse lumber overflowed in large quantities into the markets of the eastern and middle States, overstocking and demoralizing them, until coarse lumber was a drug everywhere and prices broke. Fourthly, large quantities of southern pine are being cut each year, and it is finding a market further and further north until now it is actually competing with Ontario coarse lumber in the United States as far north as the south shore of Lake Ontario.

It will be easily understood, therefore, from what has been stated that during the past year the lumber trade has been in an unsatisfactory

remedies it may have, to collect tolls on the difference between the quantity so falsely estimated and the quantity actually passing over the works."

Section 46 is amended by adding thereto the following words, to provide for payment for the advantages derived from the holding dam: "But in case of a holding dam where it is made to appear that the use of the water held therein is necessary to enable parties to drive their logs or timber through or over other parts of the works, and that such logs or timber could not be driven through or over such other parts of the works or some of them without such holding dam, then the Commissioner of Crown Lands may fix such tolls for the use of the waters of the holding dam as shall appear adequate and reasonable."

The amendment to section 54 provides that such companies shall within two years from the date of incorporation complete the works required by their charter, unless further time is granted by order of the Commissioner of Crown Lands or by a by-law of the county in which the works are situate.

TIMBER SLIDE COMPANIES' ACT.

A BILL has been introduced in the Ontario Legislature by Hon. Mr. Hardy to amend certain sections of the Timber Slide Companies' Act. Among the amendments the following are of most importance:

Section 20 is amended by adding thereto the following: A detailed description of any repairs or renewals that may require to be made after the 31st day of December in the year to which said report relates and before the time of settling the tolls, together with an estimate of the cost thereof, and in case such repairs or renewals are actually made before the settling of the tolls, the cost therefor may be taken into consideration in fixing such tolls and such estimated cost of such repairs or renewals shall be advertised along with the schedule of tolls as provided in section 8a of this Act.

The amendments to section 42 are intended to protect the companies from misrepresentation as to the quantity of logs to be floated in order to reduce the rate of tolls and read "And in case any owner or person in charge shall, knowingly or wilfully, falsely return a larger quantity than it is his intention or the intention of such proprietor or person in charge to pass over any of said sections, the company shall be entitled in addition to any other