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## Market in United Kingdom for Douglas Fir

Conditions of Lumber Market in Great Britain — Possibilities of Supplanting Pitch Pine From United States — A British Columbia Shipping Company Would Expedite Trade.

Mr. H. R. MacMillan, special Dominion Trade Commissioner and formerly Chief Forester of British Columbia, contributes the following in the Weekly Bulletin of the Department of Trade and Commerce, Ottawa:

So far as the United Kingdom market is concerned there are two problems of interest to Canadian shippers of Douglas fir:

1. The probability of an increase in the use of this wood in the United Kingdom.

2. The means to be adopted to increase the proportion of Canadian Douglas fir from the 15.9 per cent. of 1914 to a more creditable showing.

The amount of timber used each year in the United Kingdom does not appear from the customs statistics to be increasing rapidly.

The rapid growth of timber consumption, which in other countries holds promise of affording relief for the over-production of lumber in Western Canada does not exist in Great Britain. Any increase in use of Douglas fir will therefore follow only on the displacing of some other wood.

On the other hand, adequate measures to produce timber in Great Britain are not being taken, although the waste areas of the country, estimated at nine million acres suitable for timber growing, might, as in European countries, be devoted to the production of timber to the exclusion of at least three-fifths of the present volume of imports and the consequent narrowing of the market. Therefore there is not likely to be a diminution of imports, except during periods of trade depression.

The extent to which Douglas fir will displace its competitors will depend upon several well defined conditions:

1. The price of Douglas fir for heavy construction work as compared with the price of American pitchpine.

2. The price of Douglas fir for cheaper work as compared with the price of European timber, chiefly Swedish, Norwegian and Russian sawn lumber, which is imported annually to the value of \$150,000,000.

3. The still existing ignorance concerning the proper-

ties and uses of Douglas fir, which in some quarters amounts to prejudice.

4. The inadequate liner service to Great Britain from Douglas fir ports as compared with the liner service from pitchpine ports.

5. The comparatively small quantities of wood used for interior finish and the many varieties of high-class timber on the market.

Pitchpine is the timber now used in Great Britain

for those purposes for which Douglas fir is used in Western Canada. It is the wood upon which the British purchasers have relied for nearly all timbers in sizes over 3 inches by 9 inches. It is also used for joists, studding, flooring, joinery, interior finish, car building, fittings of public buildings, cheap furniture, and large quantities are consumed in various manufactures. An attempt to extend the use or sale of Douglas fir brings it into immediate competition with pitchpine, which is thoroughly well known, while Douglas fir is not so well known, although the latter is recognized as superior to pitchpine. Douglas fir sales must be governed, with two exceptions, by the extent to which it may be sold at pitchpine prices. The exceptions are in wide clears and timbers (or logs as they are called in England) over 16-inch x 16-inch x 40 feet, neither of which are produced in pitchpine, and for which Douglas fir shippers control the price.

There are about 150,000,000 feet of pitchpine imported into Great Britain yearly. A large part comes in the form of logs 10-inch x 10-inch and up, averaging 30 to 32 cubic feet contents each, solid measurement.

The largest logs in such a shipment are about 16 x 16-inch x 30 to 40 feet, although there are few of them. These logs before the war averaged 65 shillings per load in price, or about \$26 per thousand feet. Smaller logs, 6-inch x 6-inch to 9-inch x 9-inch, are imported at an average of 50s. per load or \$20 per thousand. Large quantities of the logs 6-inch x 6-inch to 9-inch x 9-inch are used in the mining districts.

While a large proportion of the logs are imported to be used in construction works without further re-sawing, many are also sold to timber merchants operating saw-mills, who carry the logs in stock and re-saw them to the order of cus-

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