

APPENDIX No. 4

By Mr. Thoburn:

Q. What kind of timber is it?—A. On the coast, south of the north end of Vancouver Island, and including the area covered by the island, and extending on an average 25 to 50 miles inland from salt water, the timber is chiefly Douglas fir, cedar, hemlock, balsam and spruce; and then, from the north end of the island north to the southern Alaska tip, the Douglas fir disappears and the timber is chiefly spruce, hemlock and cedar. East of the Rockies, speaking generally, the timber is in about half of the region south of the Railway Belt, yellow pine and spruce, and on the higher elevations lodgepole pine and spruce. In the other half of the region south of the Railway Belt, in the Columbia and Kootenay, hemlock and cedar take the place of the yellow pine. North of the Railway Belt the timber is very much smaller, and is comparable to the timber in northern Ontario and northern Quebec, where you get timber that, as a rule, does not average probably more than 10 to 16 inches on the stump. Of course, there will be a few larger trees. This is more suitable at the present time for pulpwood than anything else, and it is nearly all spruce, lodgepole pine and balsam, with very little cedar and hemlock.

The first work undertaken by the Forest Branch was a general survey of the forest resources of the province. This was very difficult to carry on owing to the lack, during the two seasons we have been at work, of getting men who have been trained to that character of work. We have found it economical to co-operate with the Surveyor General, who is now making a geodetic survey of the province, and at an expense of from one-third to one mill an acre we have covered over 20,000,000 acres in regions for which we had previously absolutely no information of the timber. The regions covered were in the upper valley of the Nass, north of Prince Rupert; the junction of the Finlay and the Parsnip rivers; the territory around Quesnel lakes; the route of the Grand Trunk Pacific and of the Canadian Northern, between Kamloops and Yellow Head pass; the territory around the Nation lakes and the Cassiar country, and along the line of the new Kettle Valley railway. In the northern country we find that the timber possibilities are much better than before supposed. For instance, in the valley of the Nass we found in a survey which did not extend to the head of the river, and did not go out of the timber, six billion feet of pulp timber, with water-power sufficient for the development of a pulp industry. In the interior we found that, except in a very few locations, there was not much mature timber at the present time, but there are millions and millions of acres of timber twenty to fifty years old, and growing generally on land which cannot be used for agriculture. This timber at the present time we are endeavouring to protect from fire. I have no doubt but that the timber possibilities of British Columbia, by the time the population exists in Western Canada to use the timber, the capital has been brought into the country to manufacture it, and the transportation facilities provided to handle it, will be able to sustain indefinitely an annual cut of five billion feet. At present the annual cut for all purposes is about two billion feet; about two-thirds is manufactured into lumber, and the remainder into other products. An estimate was made last year of the value to the province of the timber industry. On a very conservative basis, even at the low prices which have been realized during the last year or two, there has been brought into the province at least \$30,000,000 from the manufacture and sale of timber products.

In this respect timber ranks about even with mining. It employs more labour, however, and gives rise to much more local trade than does the mining industry.

Our first difficulty was to develop an organization for the protection of the forest from fire. The fire hazard in British Columbia has increased very rapidly in the last three or four years owing to the rapid development of the country. The building of railroads through the north, and the coming of settlers who have been unused to living in timber regions, have made necessary a much more extensive system of fire