

Pacific Coast States and placed further heavy contracts absorbing practically the entire output for six months ahead. So far as the actual demand for sole leather in British Columbia is concerned, a conservative estimate places it at 250 "sides" daily, (a side being half a hide). This is equivalent to 120,000 "sides" per year. As above stated, British Columbia produces 25,000 hides (equal to 50,000 "sides") per year, so that the local market would more than absorb our local production of leather.

The above facts would seem to make a very good case for the establishment of a sole leather industry in British Columbia, the raw material being abundant and the consuming market steady.

Difficulties in the Way

We now come to the influences which have prevented the establishment of a tan-bark and tanning industry up to the present time.

Up till a few years ago, western hemlock was in little demand as a building material, the name suggesting the inferior eastern species. The prejudice against hemlock was so strong that timber limits containing a large proportion of this timber were almost unsaleable owing to mills finding difficulty in marketing hemlock lumber. Practical education has changed this and to-day the prejudice of prairie consumers has been removed, western hemlock commanding a price commensurate with its true value. In addition to this, hemlock is being very largely used as a pulp wood and its use in this connection will undoubtedly increase very greatly within the next few years.

It may be asked why hemlock bark in British Columbia cannot be marketed and used in the same way as the inferior eastern hemlock bark, the more so since its tannin content is so much higher. The difficulty is purely an economic one. In Eastern Canada there is a steady demand for hemlock bark at prices which make the peeling and marketing of the bark quite an adjunct to the

eastern timber industry. There the lumbermen send a section of their river-driving gangs back to the woods in early mid-summer to peel and pile tan-bark for drying, and before the fall rains it is hauled out of the woods on wagons. On the Pacific Coast this plan is not practicable, owing to the different logging methods in use and to some extent to the difficulty of haulage. Here most of the logging is done by donkey-engines and the log receives rough treatment in hauling over the ground to the loading deck, the comparatively soft hemlock bark becoming torn and pitted with stones and pebbles, which greatly lessen its market value. Efforts have been made by parties wishing to make experiments on a commercial scale, to secure regular supplies of hemlock bark from the loggers, but there appears to be a disinclination on their part to bother with the matter, as they did not feel assured a regular market will exist.

Experiments Needed

This situation is obviously one which should be studied by our provincial forest department. Some way can be found for creating regular supplies of the bark and it appears to the writer that the best plan will be to demonstrate to the loggers that it will pay them to peel the logs and market the bark. The process of extracting tannin from the bark is a simple one and the cost of establishing an experimental plant for manufacturing dry tannin extract would be comparatively small. Once the government have assured themselves of the feasibility of the business, there is not the least doubt that capital would readily be forthcoming to establish the industry on a large commercial basis. If the manufacture of dry tannin extract were carried on in British Columbia the product could be shipped to any part of the world, as the freight on the concentrated material would enable it to compete with similar products in the world's markets. Such industry could without doubt be established in conjunction with the