

WOOD PULP ~ ~ DEPARTMENT

PINE AS A PULP WOOD.

TORONTO, Oct. 23rd, 1899.

To the Editor of the CANADA LUMBERMAN:

DEAR SIR,—I have carefully read your last issue of the LUMBERMAN, and note with pleasure that you are giving more attention to the pulp industry. This great and growing industry should have every assistance, and such a paper as THE LUMBERMAN is in a position to render it great service.

I note an article mentioning a few woods which are considered as likely to be rivals of spruce as our principal material for pulp making. Some of these enumerated in your article will, in special localities and for special reasons, reach some importance, but the bulk of paper pulp will be made from spruce and its allied woods for a good many years to come. Investors need have no fear that capital invested in spruce limits and pulp mills is likely to be lost because of a substitute being found for spruce. There is no substitute in sight, as far as I know, except for special grades of pulp, which can hardly be considered as competitors for spruce "news" pulp.

Now, there is no doubt that nearly all kinds of wood can be manufactured into pulp and paper, but the question for the pulp maker is, Will it pay? There seems to be some discussion regarding yellow pine, and also the short-leaved variety, for pulp making. From my personal experience I do not think these woods will amount to anything for this purpose, especially in Canada, where there are at present such large tracts of good spruce, which can be obtained at \$2.50 or \$3 per cord, laid down in the mill yard.

In the case of the two woods mentioned, the principal objection is the presence of resin. This must be got rid of, and if the process for doing so is not cheap enough, or if the by-products of tar, etc., do not bring in sufficient returns, the use of pine for pulp making will never assume any considerable proportions. There are other objections to its use which, though not so important as that mentioned, will seriously act against its use. I think pine will be found to grind much easier than spruce, especially if the wood is at all softened during the process of extracting the resin. This is an advantage, and will to some extent increase the output in tons per horse power. The pulp made from it will be cream yellow in color, or darker, will be soft in texture, close—or short and mealy—in grain, lacking the tough, strong character of the spruce. It will be ground in short fibres of comparatively large cross-

section, which will be difficult to pass through the screw plates. This latter is, however, largely a matter of the degree of sharpening given to the stone and the amount of pressure used in grinding.

The process for extracting the resin will have to be one which does not injure the fibre or discolor it in any way, otherwise the pulp will be useless as a first-class article.

In Ontario the supply of spruce is as large, or will soon be as large, as that of pine. This means that the supply of pine is of more value as lumber than as pulp wood. It is not likely, then, that under these conditions much pine will be used in this way, especially as the pulp would not bring as high a price as that made from spruce, on account of its inferior quality.

The qualities required in a good "news" pulp are whiteness and strength, with a fibre uniform in size and of a good length, giving toughness. These qualities depend to a very great extent on the wood or material used, but evenness and uniformity will always depend on the skill used in sharpening the stones, the judgment of the pressure, and the care taken in choosing the screen plates.

Whatever may be said for or against pine, of either the long or the short-leaved variety, as a probable substitute for spruce in pulp making, it will never be considered as a question of much importance by Canadians.

W. H.

THE LATE J. C. WILSON.

ONE prominently connected with the paper and pulp industry of Canada passed away on October 9th, in the person of Mr. J. C. Wilson, principal of the firm of J. C. Wilson & Company, paper makers, Montreal, with mills at Lachute and St. Jerome. Mr. Wilson came to Canada from Ireland when but an infant, was educated at McGill Normal School, taught school at Beauharnois from 1859 to 1862, then removed to Belleville and later to Toronto. In 1863 he secured a position with T. W. Strong, publisher, New York, but in a year or two returned to Montreal, becoming book-keeper for Angus Logan & Co., now the Canada Paper Co.

In 1870 Mr. Wilson started in business for himself with a small capital, and gradually worked up the ladder of success until at his death he was one of Canada's most prominent paper manufacturers. He built his paper mill at Lachute in 1880, since which time considerable additions have been made thereto.

PULP MARKET IN FRANCE.

Mr. Wohlfarth, general director of an importing company of Paris, France, and representative in that country of the Sault Ste. Marie Pulp & Paper Company, was recently on a visit to Canada, and gave some information as to the possibility of increasing our export trade in pulp. The French market, he says, is accessible only to dry pulp, by reason of the high freight that must be paid. Dry pulp occupies 90 cubic feet to the ton weight, while the regular space allowed for a ton is only 40 feet. Special freight rates are therefore applied to pulp, and all it can stand is a freight of 20s. per ton to Spain and Marseilles; the Compagnie trans-Atlantic charge 20 francs from New York to Havre. The Sault Ste. Marie Pulp & Paper Company is about the only one that makes dry pulp, although recently the Laurentide Pulp Company made a start in that direction. As the small mills in Canada are provided with apparatus for wet pulp only, and as this wet pulp contains 50 per cent. of water, Mr. Wohlfarth says that it would be necessary to have a freight rate of 10 francs or 10 shillings at the most in order to place it on the market in Spain, Portugal or Belgium to compete with the Norwegian pulp. If the eastern mills could supply dry pulp they would have a great advantage in transportation charges over the Sault Ste. Marie Company.

FLAX PULP.

IN the last issue of THE LUMBERMAN reference was made to the proposed establishment of a flax pulp mill at Niagara Falls, N.Y., the process to be adopted being the invention of Mr. F. H. Hickman, of New Jersey. Concerning the process we find the following in the World's Paper Trade Review, of London, Eng.:

It is well known that flax straw as a raw material differs essentially from wood and the straw of other fibrous plants, such, for example, as jute and hemp. The fats and waxes of the flax plant are far more difficult to break down and saponify with a caustic alkali solution than are those of wood, and the percentage of fats and waxes in flax is much higher than in other fibrous plants. Hence, it is necessary to provide a solution for flax which will efficiently break down and eliminate this unusual quantity of fats and waxes, and which can overcome their peculiarly refractory character without destroying or weakening the fibre.

The inventor says it has been found, in a long course of experiments, that by combining a proper percentage of sulphur with an aqueous solution of caustic soda, the former unites with or saponifies the more refractory fats and waxes of flax and retards the oxidizing effect of the caustic alkali, and thus the process of saponification is so far modified and hastened under proper conditions of time, temperature and pressure, that the fibrous material is protected from injury by oxidation, and the encrusting matter, such as lignin, fats, waxes and gums, is broken down before the fibrous and cellulosic tissue can be

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