THE CROWN LANDS OF NEW BRUNSWICK. By Edward Jack, C. E.

THE position of the crown timber lands of this Province is none too encouraging to the lumbermen. Years ago the lumbermen were given leases 'or a period of ten years; the stumpage payable under such leases was \$1.25 a thousand. Many of them had been purchased at large sums over and above the upset price of \$8 a mile, very conclusive evidence that the rate of stumpage, \$1.25 a thousand, was not too high. Owing to some trouble with the representatives of the city and county of St. John, the:local government finding that they could not stand without the aid of money, resorted to the unheard-of and extraordinary measure of rebating to those who had contracted to pay this sum of \$1.25 a thousand, a fifth part thereof, or in other words the sum of 25 cents a thousand, thus virtually canceling the solemn agreements which the lumbermen had made to pay a certain and specific sum of money. They did not are all the whole agreement and offer the lands at sale -sam by public auction subject to this lower rate of stumpage, for the simple reason that it did not suit these lumbermen whose representatives desired to make the corrupt bargain above referred to, because there were outsiders who stood ready to buy these leases and to pay large bonus for them. This bonus had been lost, thus entailing a double loss on the unfortunate country, first, that of the 25 cents a thousand, and second, that of the bonus for the unexpired term of ten years. This bonus might have been safely estimated at \$50,000. This statement will explain fully enough the inwardness of the famous or rather the infamous Northumberland deal. Now what is the present state of matters? The ten years lease will expire in a year or two; they will be renewed to the present lease holders, or will they be offered again for sale by public auction? What is the government policy? since, until this is known, capital from the United States cannot be introduced into New Brunswick to forward any extensive wood manufacturing enterprises which will have to depend for their source of supply upon timber lands which are not the property of the crown. The writer has always looked unfavorably on the annual or even decennial sale of chinery, circular saws, belting, hose, lace leather, belt

timber berths at Fredericton, and believes that the parties who have bought their timber leases at public auction should be allowed to hold them so long as they comply with the conditions therein contained, since it is no difference to the country who holds these leases so long as the stumpage is paid and conditions performed; in fact if one would be willing to pay the mileage on the land and not cut the lumber, but hold the same until there should be a greater demand, he would be doing the country a great service for holding and caring for the timber, and would also be aiding to curtail the cut of lumber for spruce in this province, which is not excessive. There is a large amount of capital in the United States which can be introduced into New Brunswick, to be used in the manufacture of woods in various shapes, so soon as the government will adopt such a policy as will give some security that the leases of crown land which may have been purchased shall not be subject to be taken away at the expiration of a short period and again offered for sale. There is in New Brunswick a vast area of crown land not now under lease; much of this would rapidly be taken up did the government give leases renewable yearly, so long as the conditions contained in them are being complied with, and the revenue from the crown timber lands would thus be greatly increased.

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Are broad as the kingdoms and empires of old; And the lakes are like oceans in storm or in rest, Away, far away, to the Land of the West.

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Georgian Bay Division.

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