

PEAT FUEL
MANUFACTURE
IN CANADA.

A late number of *Engineering* contains an interesting account of the manufacture of peat fuel at Lapigeonnière—some thirty miles south-west of Montreal. We extract from that periodical the following account of the *modus operandi*, as introduced by Mr. Hodges, the well-known engineer, now engaged in Callao, in the construction of the harbour works in progress at that port:—

Over an extensive undrained bog of considerable depth, a centre line, level, of course, is traced out, and on each side of this line, for a distance of about 10 ft., the surface is cleared of the living vegetation, which is piled up on either side, so as to form two low banks of turf and moss 20 ft. apart. Upon one side of this cleared space, it was at first the practice to clear an area some 99 ft. in width, for the reception of the peat pulp, but experience

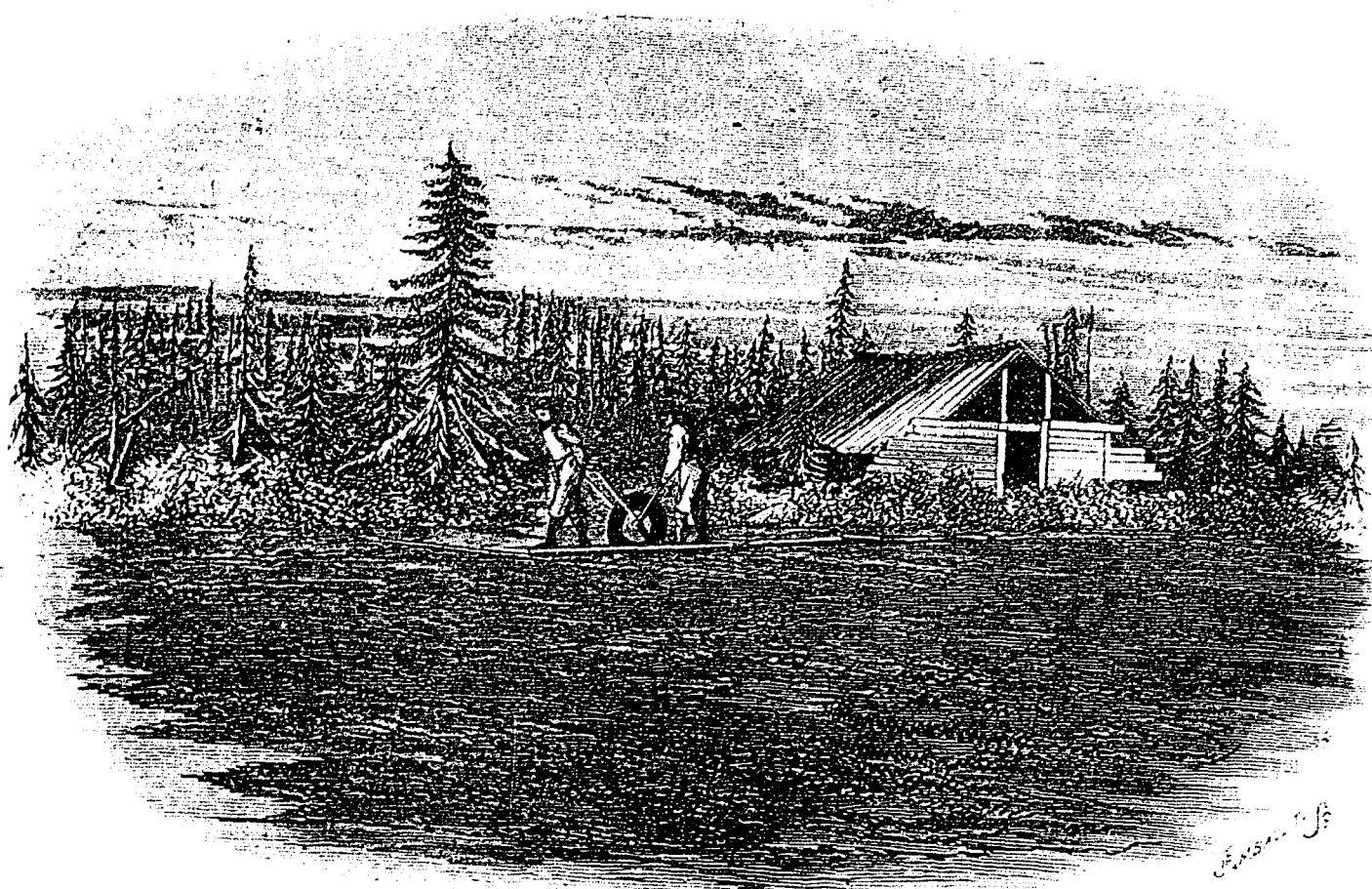
showed that it could, without inconvenience, be distributed over the uncleared bog, excepting that it is necessary to cut down any long rank grass, to draw the roots of trees, and remove stumps, and to level as far as possible any irregularities of the surface. Drains from 9 in. to 12 in. deep have, moreover, to be cut at intervals over the face of the pulp bed, and covered over with turf. On some bogs where the vegetation

was very rank, and shrubs grew freely, the surface of the bogs was at first stripped, and the turf cut was reversed, and laid down again. It was found preferable, however, not to disturb the natural surface, but to cut the drains as just described. The work of removing the roots of trees is not a difficult one, as they take but a comparatively slight hold in the ground, and may be cut away with an axe at some distance from the

canal. We believe that in one instance only during the whole of Mr. Hodges' experience, a scarcity of water was met with, and in this case the evil was remedied by pumping; but if the flow of water from the sides and bottom of the channel be very deficient, it is obvious that constant pumping from an independent source would be necessary to maintain the water

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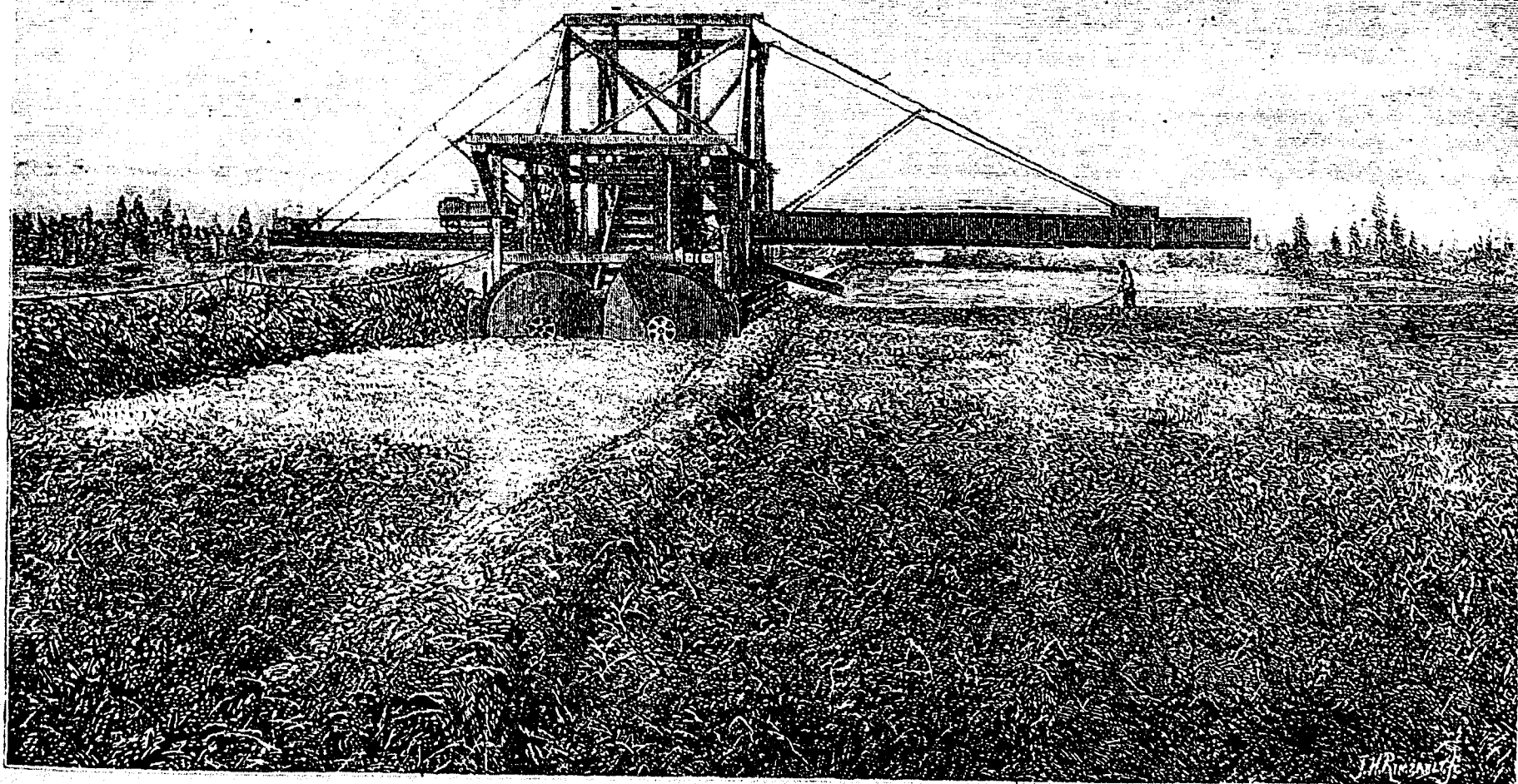
THE MANUFACTURE OF PEAT FUEL AT LAPIGEONNIERE, P.Q.



stem, the tree being pulled down to one side by one man, while a second cuts the roots.

Great care must also be taken in clearing the area to be occupied with the future canal, of stumps and roots, and while the surface is stripped to a depth of 6 in. of the upper covering of vegetation, the stunted trees and their roots are also taken away.

At one end of the area thus prepared with the low banks at each side, and 20 ft. apart, a dock is formed, and in it the travelling manufactory is to be launched. It is evident that a convenient site for the construction of this floating workshop must be chosen as a terminal point of the canal, and care must be taken to ascertain before operations are commenced that the bog contains a sufficiency of water to flow in and fill the excavation as the cutting is advanced. This may be easily found, by making trial borings at intervals along the line of the intended



HODGES' PEAT MACHINE.