

HIGHEST POINT IN LUMBER OUTPUT?

Has Canada Reached Climax in This Primary Industry? —Returns from Each Province

What will be Canada's lumber production ten years hence? is the question suggested by the latest official figures regarding lumber output. The total value of the lumber, lath and shingles produced in Canada in 1913 was \$70,644,362, a decrease of 13.1 per cent. from the previous year, the separate items being:—lumber, 3,816,642,000 feet, board measure, valued at \$65,796,438; lath, 739,678,000, valued at \$1,783,283, and shingles, 1,485,279,000, valued at \$3,064,641.

The 1912 production decreased 10.7 per cent. from that of 1911. It would seem as if the climax had been passed and that the production was now declining at about the same rate as it increased up to 1911, states Mr. R. G. Lewis, B.Sc.F., in the annual returns of the forestry branch of the department of the interior. The cut of lumber in 1911 was 4,918,202,000 feet, board measure, valued at \$69,475,78.

The climax of production in the United States was reached in 1909 when 48,112 mills cut 44,509,761,000 feet of lumber, or over nine times as much as was produced in Canada in the climax year of 1911.

Canada cut in 1913 a total of 3,816,642,000 feet, board measure, of lumber, valued at \$65,796,438. The cut in Ontario decreased by 20.5 per cent., while that of British Columbia decreased only 10.7 per cent. This resulted in a change of relative position, which puts British Columbia at the head of the provinces in the production of lumber, Ontario, which has headed the list in the past, falling back to second place. An increase in production in Manitoba of 82 per cent. brings this province up to seventh place and drops Alberta to eighth place.

British Columbia's Output.

Reductions in the cut of lumber are to be noted in every province except Manitoba, the greatest proportional reduction taking place in Saskatchewan.

The average price of lumber at the mill throughout Canada increased by \$1.41, increasing in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan, and decreasing in Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Alberta and Prince Edward Island. The greatest increase in price (\$4.08) took place in Ontario.

The largest mills in Canada are located in British Columbia, where the average mill-cut was 7,381,428 feet, board measure, in 1913.

The production of tamarack increased by 36.5 per cent. from 1912 to 1913. Douglas fir still formed over two-thirds of the production. The production of cedar lumber showed a great decrease. This wood is the most important shingle material in Canada at the present time, and its importance in this respect should not be overlooked in considering the relative importance of the wood among the other Pacific Coast species.

The most expensive softwood in British Columbia is spruce, at an average value of \$15.42. Of the entire production, 97.3 per cent. was made up of coniferous woods, or softwoods.

Eastern Canada's Mills.

The average mill-cut in Ontario in 1913 was 1,607,396 feet as compared to 1,708,000 feet in 1912.

The production of basswood in Ontario in 1913 was a reduction of over a third from the cut in 1912. A reduction of over a fifth is shown in the cut of tamarack in the province. The only increases to be noted are in the cases of red pine, jack pine and the poplar group, (aspen and balsam poplar and cottonwood).

The average prices reported increased, on the average, by \$4.08, the greatest increase among the more important woods being in the price of white pine and amounting to \$8.57.

While the number of mills in Quebec and in Ontario is almost the same, the average production of mills in Quebec is only 921,558 feet as compared with 1,607,396 feet in Ontario. The larger number of small neighborhood or custom mills in Quebec cutting wood for the farmers accounts for this difference. While a small increase was reported in the cut of the most important wood spruce, other commercial woods decreased in production from 1912 to 1913.

While only 177 mills reported from New Brunswick in 1913 these mills cut a high average quantity, namely, 2,255,

633 feet of lumber. This is the highest average mill production in Eastern Canada.

With the exception of Prince Edward Island the mills in Nova Scotia cut a lower average per mill than those of any other province. This average in 1913 was 853,174 feet. Custom mills and small portable mills cutting out small stands of scattered timber are numerous in this province.

The smallest province in Canada has also the smallest average mill-production of 142,022 feet. The timber in Prince Edward Island occurs only in small isolated stands, many of which are merely farmer's woodlots. This material is sawn almost entirely by small neighborhood or custom mills. The hardwoods in this province formed 13.1 per cent. of the total in 1913; this province is exceeded only by Ontario in this respect.

Manitoba Showed Only Increase.

The three prairie provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, are chiefly engaged in the manufacture of spruce lumber. The few other kinds reported are relatively unimportant. The average mill-cut in Saskatchewan was 4,592,000 feet, coming second only to British Columbia in this respect.

Manitoba was the only province in Canada reporting an increase in lumber production in 1913. The mills cut, on an average, 1,439,220 feet each. The cut of every kind of wood but cedar increased, the greatest increase being with jack pine.

Some of the eastern hardwoods, such as birch, oak and elm, are reported in small quantities from eastern Manitoba, but are commercially unimportant.

Alberta's forty active mills cut an average of 1,111,550 feet of lumber each in 1913. Douglas fir, which is cut by only two mills on the east slope of the Rocky Mountains, showed an increase, while other woods were produced in smaller quantities than in 1912.

FARMING AS A BUSINESS

Some interesting facts and figures showing that good farming pays its way come from the Bradwell district of Saskatchewan. This district covers two townships and was originally settled by homesteaders, of whom 160 took up land. Of these, we are told, 77 still remain, and 32 farmers have since come in and purchased. Of those who first settled on their homesteads and tried to farm, 17 have failed. Eight failures are said to be due to purchasing threshing outfits and being unable to run them, six are attributed to liquor, and three to getting into debt too deeply. Thirty-five homesteaders are said never to have owned an outfit and never tried to farm. The number who ceased farming was 53. Of the 32 who purchased or rented farm land, 28 are successful. Two have failed on account of the lack of capital, and two as the result of purchasing power machinery which they were not able to operate successfully.

At present there are about 100 farmers in the district, 24 of whom have purchased too much land for their capital, eight are still heavily involved for threshing outfits and power machinery and about 40 are similarly involved for horses and equipment. Of the original homesteaders, 38 have purchased land, and seven are apparently making threshing and power machinery pay. The total number who are involved for land and machinery is about 50 per cent.

Seventy-five of the present farmers are making farming pay and making satisfactory interest on their investment and a good living. Of the original 160 homesteaders, 83 proved up and sold out, that is, they went on the land merely as a speculation and not with the intention of going into farming as a business.

The recent underwriting of the Canadian loan of £5,000,000 in London, was evidently unexpected in financial circles there. Quite a flutter was caused, says the London Financial News, which adds:—"This unexpected addition to the candidates for public favor had a numbing effect on the stocks with which it will come into direct competition, and though there was no great shrinkage in the volume of business in the war loan, New Queenslands, and other Colonials, their quotations visibly weakened."