

MOUNTAINS OF WOOD TO FEED PULP MILLS

Army of 16,000 Men, Getting Big Wages in Maine and Living on the Fat of the Land. Cut 2,000,000 Cords, Worth \$22,000,000--Systematic Accounting and a Hint to Hoover.

(Bangor News.)

One of the largest pulp wood operators in Maine, a man who has made a study of the business, estimates the quantity of that material cut in this state within the year ending May 1, 1918, as approximately 2,000,000 cords, which would equal 1,000,000,000 feet of lumber, board measure. These figures will surprise most persons not intimately acquainted with the progress of pulp and paper making in Maine, but they may be taken as fairly accurate, coming from a man who has had much practical experience and who is a careful statistician.

In the cutting of this great pile of wood, there have been employed, first and last, about 16,000 men and in the hauling of it not fewer than 5,000 horses. The average piece price paid to the cutters was \$2.75 a cord, and the value of the wood, delivered at the railroads, or at the mills, ranges from \$10.50 to \$12.50 a cord, or a total of perhaps \$22,000,000. In addition to all this wood, cut in four feet lengths, hundreds of millions of feet of long logs are cut every year for the pulp mills.

Persons who are familiar with the shipping history of Bangor recall the

time, about 33 years ago, when the first four-foot pulp wood ever seen here was shipped, a few hundred cords of it, to Pawtucket, R. I., where it was to be manufactured into pulp as an experiment. At that time the saw mill still dominated the river, and pulp making from wood was not dreamed of as the future great industry of the Penobscot. Now the situation is reversed—the saw mill has almost disappeared, while cutting



ARMENIAN REFUGEES.

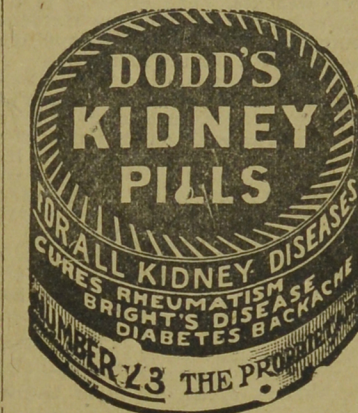
and grinding of pulp wood engages the attention of armies of men and employs millions of capital. The wood is chiefly spruce, and trees that are much too small to serve as lumber are suitable for pulp material. Lands that have been denuded of their heavy timber still furnish pulp wood in great quantities, and such has been the demand this past year that besides the regular operators every farmer who owns a woodlot has been out with his boys chopping a few cords for the maw of the pulp digesters and getting in that way much more money than he possibly could make at growing potatoes, even at \$4 a barrel.

From scattered growths in the woodlots of Maine have been taken in the last ten months more wood to be sent to the pulp mills than would supply every family in Maine with fuel—and lately some of it has been used to keep rural communities from freezing. The regular operators go where the growth is thicker and do business on a more extensive plan, employing sometimes a hundred,

sometimes 500 and occasionally a greater number of men. One of the big operators, Edward B. Draper of Canton, Mass., is just completing an operation on Molunkus stream and in that vicinity yielding 60,000 cords, equal to 30,000,000 feet, board measure, and his crew has at times numbered as many as 700 men, with 250 horses. About 36,000 cords of this cut already has been hauled to the railroad. Vast quantities of pulp wood have been cut in such distant regions as the upper courses of the St. John river, to be driven down stream to the most convenient railroad point and thence transported to mills in various parts of the state, several hundreds of miles away. Last fall, when, with the labor supplies of both the state of Maine and the province of New Brunswick depleted by war, a scarcity of pulp materials was threatened, there was a tremendous effort to increase the cut, and the rapidly mounting price of the wood tempted hundreds and thousands of farmers and others to cut a few hundred cords as a speculative venture.

Wages were high, and all supplies were at top prices yet, with wood that used to sell at \$6 and \$8 a cord bringing \$10 to \$12.50, ready cash, the chances of money making looked good, were good, and everybody who could muster half a dozen men and a pair of horses went at it. The result has been the turning of famine into plenty, and Maine now has all the pulp wood that will be needed for this year, at the least.

Stories of the high wages paid to pulp wood cutters attracted to the industry men who never had had an axe in their hands. The stories were true, and the newcomers got the big money—are getting it yet. Those who hired out by the month got as high as \$65 and board, equal in all to \$95, for the board of a woodsman now is (Continued on page 6.)



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