



A FRIEND has written me from Madawaska, N.B. He expresses the hope that "Eli's pen will prove mightier than the sword to cut the thread of beggotten ignorance and imbecile legislation, such as removing the export duty on our logs and allow Americans to retain their duty on spruce and raise it on cedar, giving them a premium over us to slaughter our forests." I am after all 'em fellows who would give away this country of ours even to a beloved Yank; and in my opinion it was a serious blunder of the government to have included spruce with logs when removing the export duty. This legislation is especially rough on the lumbering interests of New Brunswick, where spruce forms so large part of their stock in trade in lumber. Of course the Yank had an eye to business here, spruce being the chief growth of the Maine forests, the State that can claim the Plumed Knight of the Harrison cabinet, and in the arrangement of tariff matters, this much was made solid for Maine. On the general question of the removal of the export duty on logs, opinions of lumbermen are undoubtedly a good deal divided.

"The lumber trade would certainly be injuriously affected in Canada" said Mr. Sinclair of Paisley, "should any course of legislation necessitate an increase in the import duty on lumber going into the United States. Since the reduction of the duty from \$2 to \$1 we have been enabled to ship in much larger quantities to the States. Our cutting is chiefly hardwood, maple to a good extent. We have also some cedar in this locality. The woods however in this section are getting cleared and in about 10 years we'll not have very much more of the present forests to cut."

Duty or no duty continues to be a leading question in lumbering circles. Wherever I meet lumbermen the matter comes to the front in some shape. "We have been able," said a large operator, "to get lumber into the United States that could never have been shipped there with the extra dollar duty in existence. We have shipped over, 1,000,000 ft. culls across the line, that hitherto remained here depending entirely on local trade for a market. And this has been the case with other lumber, besides culls, that has gone from Canada. I am speaking now of lumber, manufactured at our Canadian mills. No doubt the abolition of the log duty has had some local effect among saw mill men, but as between the injury it has caused the few and the general benefit to the entire lumber trade there is a wide gulf."

Nothing better than history to help in the intelligent discussion of a question. One need not necessarily follow in the line of history always; but it is an experience and as such is an actual guide post of what is best and wisest to follow—it may be; or to shun; or perhaps modify. I have come across a bit of Scottish history touching the matter of forestry, that may point a moral or adorn a tale in this newer land. The Scotch are proverbially a canny people and their recognition of the value of forests and the danger arising from denuding the land of them was very early. In 1535 the Scottish parliament passed a law inflicting the death penalty upon any one convicted of stealing timber for the third time from the public domain. The area in timber in Scotland in 1812 was 913,698 acres, in 1872, 734,490 acres and in 1881, 829,476 acres. And the same lively and intelligent interest in forestry is taken by the Scottish people to-day. I don't know that they do any hanging now-a-days, but they are adopting the more intelligent methods of modern times and propose establishing a school of forestry, so as to educate the people up to a higher understanding of the value of this God-given wealth.

"The curse of the lumber trade in this country," said Mr. J. Gray, of Geo. Hastings & Co., city, "is the credit system. We sell a lot of stuff, nearly all on time, and then every little while some fellow goes under and taking the season throughout losses enough are made to take off a good slice of the year's profits." How about duty on lumber, inquired "Eli?" "I am on the road nearly all the time," said Mr. Gray. "Along the North Shore the mills are feeling the effect of the large shipment of logs to the States, and where they do not close down, they are running on short time. Whole communities are affected of course where this is the case, men are thrown out of employment, the storekeepers lose their customers and villages will be depleted. All this is offset by certain general benefits. Timber limits are made more valuable; and coarser lumber, even culls, that with the heavier duty could not be shipped to the States are going over there in considerable quantities. The lumber trade is in this way benefitted. Where the Americans are towing logs over to be cut in their own mills, they are leaving behind a lot of rough stuff, tops of trees and that like, which are not going to benefit our limits any."

A reader of this page takes me to his bosom in this fashion: "Eli, you have a venerable appearance, evidently a man of great wisdom and good nature. I like your smile and your nose. Your mature years are a guarantee that whatever appears in your columns will be worth the most serious consideration of mankind. The writer is most pleased to learn that the CANADA LUMBERMAN has found its way to far off India. Permit me to say a word or two about forest administration in India. The forest officials of that part of the British Empire, by their zeal and scientific knowledge, have placed the administration of the forests beyond that of almost every other country. In 1886 a revenue of about £2,000,000 stg. was obtained. Formerly there was not only an entire absence of revenue but a capital each year becoming less. The rapacious timber dealer, who cut but for self aggrandisement, was restrained, and a course between reckless waste and legitimate demand, was followed resulting in the revenue mentioned above. If you could induce some Indian forest official through your subscriber, to send an article or two on the subject of forestry, from which we Canucks could learn how to manage our fast disappearing forests, you would be doing a very wise act, and for which your descendants, near and remote, would rise and call you blessed. In the language of Milton; 'Long may you wave. Adieu my venerable friend.'"

In my ramifications among business men I get wormed into discussions on many different topics. The oft-talked of subject of advertising came up the other day in a business office in this city. Did it pay to advertise was the not very fresh query? One occupant of the office doubted it, another said it was a wasteful waste of money, the owner of the establishment himself was spending a considerable sum in this direction, and speaking from his own experience he knew that advertising paid. I was a listener rather than a talker; was indeed "a chiel among them taking notes," and it was interesting to diagnose the case. "A" was sceptical—truth his calling did not throw him in the way of advertising, he had not studied the question closely and yet as only a casual observer he could not believe that so many shrewd business men would spend the amount that was indicated by their space in leading journals, and do this continuously if no results were forthcoming; so that for this reason, while mentally he had misgivings, he was not going to dogmatise. "B" was a business man of the old school, fortune and special circumstances had favored him, so that without much effort he had made money, and "he didn't have to throw any away in advertising either," and taking his own experience to be typical of the general experience, instead, it was exceptional, he denounced the whole business as a humbug. We've all met these kind of people and the logic of a John Stuart Mill would be wasted on them. Who was number three? Well he was an advertiser. He had faith in printer's ink and he had shown it by his works. He did not, it is true, make a

thousand dollar contract thoughtlessly. The medium offering advertising was studied. Did it suit his particular needs? As a manufacturer he believed in trade journals, as reaching specially the people with whom he could expect to do business. He knew that not only was a trade journal carefully read by its subscribers, but in nine cases out of ten it was kept on file for future reference—yes for the advertisements, as well as the general reading. He paid attention to his advertising. His argument was that if it paid to spend a given sum per year in this way, it paid to have it looked after and well done, and I happen to know that there are few "ads" in any of our newspapers more striking than those that bear this firm's name. He knows how to advertise and it pays. I got some pointers on advertising in this short half hour with men of various minds that will be valuable to me.

A few days ago I called on Mr. James Tennant, the well-known lumber merchant of Victoria street, and whilst there had an interesting chat with Mr. Christie, one of the oldest and most respected members of the trade in Canada.

Speaking of general business, Mr. Tennant had the same story to tell, that is found recorded elsewhere in this page from the lips of Mr. Gray. "Business in Canada," said he, "is awkwardly handicapped by the extent of the credit system. We sell on three months' time, and too often are obliged to renew the larger part for another three months. In the States terms are at the outside 60 days and more frequently 30 days or net cash. It is a steady cash outlay by the manufacturer from the time the men go into the woods until the finished lumber is ready for the dealer, and just as much as the load of wheat the farmer draws to market, and sells only for cash, should lumber be net cash."

"General business," said Mr. Tennant, "is quiet. Dealers all through the country complain of a scarcity of money and as a consequence few purchasers. Trade in the city is akin to the conditions in the country notwithstanding the figures paraded in the daily press assuming to show a large increase in building permits over last year. Permits to-day are issued for almost every stick of building that goes on; in 1890 this was not so."

"Besides," joined Mr. Christie, "a large part of this year's building is such as you see across the road—pointing from the office window to the massive stone structure of the Loan Association being erected on corner Victoria and Adelaide streets—in which there is very little wood used."

"Most certainly the reduction of the duty on lumber to one dollar a thousand," quoth Mr. Tennant, "has increased shipments to the States."

"And there has been no general closing down of saw mills along the North Shore," added Mr. Christie, "such as was predicted. I have been pretty nearly over the whole of that ground this season, and only know of two mills that have been closed, and there were exceptional reasons for this. The mills at Spanish river, Bying Inlet, Victoria Harbor, Parry Sound Collingwood, Pt. Severn, Cook Bros.' mill, Bryant's mill and a string of others I could name are all running and doing good business. No such quantity of logs as some have named is being shipped to the States. Pity is that the duty was not removed entirely. There should be complete free trade in lumber."

"The extra shipments of lumber to the States," resumed Mr. Tennant, "are also having some effect in stiffening prices in Canada. I have no idea that the government will make any move to reimpose the log duty. The Ottawa lumbermen, among whom are some of the strongest friends of the government, would never consent to any step that would lead to an increase in the duty on lumber, and the reimposition of the duty on logs would of course work this way."

"Moreover," said Mr. Christie, "as a matter of policy it is the worst thing the government could do. Commercial interests cannot be imperilled by constant tinkering with the tariff."

And with a hearty good-day we parted.

California has 2,675 of the giant trees still left, and the largest of these is thirty-three feet in diameter.