

# THE CANADA LUMBERMAN.

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## THE CANADA LUMBERMAN

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### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:

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THE CANADA LUMBERMAN is published in the interest of the lumber trade and of allied industries throughout the Dominion, being the only representative in Canada of this foremost branch of the commerce of this country. It aims at giving full and timely information on all subjects touching these interests, discussing these topics editorially and inviting free discussion of them by others.

Special pains are taken to secure the latest and most trustworthy market quotations from various points throughout the world, so as to afford to the trade in Canada information upon which it can rely in its operations.

Special correspondents in localities of importance present accurate reports not only of prices and the condition of the market, but also of other matters specially interesting to our readers. But correspondence is not only welcome but is invited from all who have any information to communicate or subjects to discuss relating to the trade or in any way effecting it. Even when we may not be able to agree with the writers we will give them a fair opportunity for free discussion as the best means of eliciting the truth. Any items of interest are particularly requested, for even if not of great importance individually, they contribute to a fund of information from which general results are obtained.

Advertisers will receive careful attention and liberal treatment. We need not point out that for many the CANADA LUMBERMAN with its special class of readers is not only an exceptionally good medium for securing publicity, but is indispensable for those who would bring themselves before the notice of that class. Special attention is directed to "WANTED" and "FOR SALE" advertisements which will be inserted in a conspicuous position at the uniform price of ten cents per line for each insertion. Announcements of this character will be subject to a discount of 25 per cent, if ordered for three successive issues or longer.

Subscribers will find the small amount they pay for the CANADA LUMBERMAN quite insignificant as compared with its value to them. There is not an individual in the trade, or specially interested in it, who should not be on our list, thus obtaining the present benefit and aiding and encouraging us to render it even more complete.

WHILE the timber supply of the Northern States is gradually and surely giving out, dealers are watching for the most contiguous markets for future supplies. From casual observation many would come to the conclusion that Canada, with its boundless forests and excellent water ways, would prove a tempting field for Northern capitalists, but while quite a number have taken advantage of the forests of this country, by far the greater number have gone into the South. That is not only the nearest field, but the vexatious customs duties which would be experienced by Americans operating in Canada are avoided. For the past three years or more there has been going on a very quiet, but enormous traffic in Southern timber, and this will increase in volume and strength each succeeding year. The South abounds in cheap timber, the choice purchases, it is said, being now already taken up. It is only a question of time before Southern timber will have a stumpage value that will be counted in dollars instead of as now in cents.

IN the *Timber Trades Journal* we find two items of information that should have an interest for the trade on this side of the Atlantic. Our contemporary's Stockholm correspondent says: "There are several orders in the market for Australia from both the Geffell and Soderhamn districts, and good payable rates are being offered." Again in its letter from its correspondent in Christiania we read as follows: "The improved prospects for shipments to Australia (principally of white flooring)." Now why should this important Australian trade be left to Norway and Sweden when Canada is even better able to supply the market. The Atlantic coast of the Dominion is at least as well situated for the trade as the Scandinavian countries, and the Pacific coast is far better situated especially as regards distance and time of transit. We observe also that the United States secure a large portion of this profitable trade, of which Canada might surely obtain the lion's share if not a virtual monopoly. It should be remembered that there is a large demand for coniferous lumber in Australia, where, though there is abundance of hardwood, there may be said to

be no pine, and though New Zealand is better provided in this respect the supply there is not in excess of local requirements. It is a market that Canadians should develop, giving due attention to the kind of goods that suit the Australians. That the chief demand is for goods more highly manufactured than when they come from the saw mills makes care in shipping advisable, but adds to the value of the trade.

QUEBEC, where so much timber has been handled for the last half century, has seen many changes of late years, notably in the rapidly decreasing traffic in square timber, deals and staves. Many of the extensive docks which have done service for so long are now going to ruin, and adding to the many other signs of decay which abound throughout the ancient Capital. A recent visit among the timbermen of Quebec convinced THE LUMBERMAN of the fact that the wood trade was demoralized in the extreme, with little prospect of future revival. It may be said that the trade here depends entirely on the European markets, and partially through the depression in the old country, and also the fact that Norway pitch pine has come into such strong competition with Canadian timber, the outlook is of the gloomiest description. The Norway pine is not only placed on the English market at a lower price than the Canadian, but is also considered a more suitable wood for the purposes for which it is required. In addition to this there are other things militating against the Quebec dealers. A few years ago a very large trade in deals was carried on, but gradually this branch of the timber trade has been transferred to Montreal, the latter city, it is said, affording cheaper dockage and improved facilities. Then again, the Quebec operators have only to look back to find an extensive and prosperous stave trade, now almost, if not quite, nil. All these things considered the prospects for the future do not look very encouraging. Still, while such a state of affairs exists, we have not yet heard of any financial embarrassments of a serious nature, and all to whom we conversed, while seriously lamenting the depression, showed, so to speak, a "stiff upper lip" and were waiting, Micawber like, for something better to turn up. Doubtless before very long a different and more profitable branch of the wood trade may assume sufficient proportions to compensate the timbermen of Quebec for the losses sustained in the withdrawal of the trade above enumerated.

OUR Toronto contemporary, the *Manitowal and Milling News*, has evidently not studied the question of Commercial Union from a lumberman's standpoint, as the following paragraph will demonstrate:

"How often we find the news columns of our daily papers contradicting most effectually the arguments advanced in their editorial columns. As a case in point, the *Mail* gives as one reason for its advocacy of Commercial Union that it would benefit Canadian lumbermen, while the Ottawa correspondent of that journal, who is coming in contact constantly with leading lumbermen, states that 'of late years the demand for Canadian lumber has been very great in the United States, and as the supply is gradually becoming limited, the lumbermen at Ottawa know that they can have a good market for all the lumber they can cut.' In view of the above satisfactory condition of affairs, it would be interesting to know what use our lumbermen would have for Commercial Union."

In reply to the query contained in the above paragraph, "what use would our lumbermen have for commercial union?" the answer is not hard to find. As our contemporary is doubtless aware there is at the present time a duty of \$2 per thousand feet on all lumber entering the United States from Canada. This duty virtually comes out of the pockets of the Canadian manufacturer, for the reason that lumber from this country has to be placed on the American market at the same price as it can be obtained for at Buffalo, Tonawanda or any other point. If the Americans pay the duty in the first instance it is deducted in the price of the lumber and the Canadian shipper finds himself thus much short on every thousand feet of lumber exported. Not only would Commercial Union be a great saving to the trade in this way, but it would also open up a greater market for spare lumber, the production of which is too great for the home market, and cannot be exported owing to the high duty referred to. We are quite aware that the demand across the lines for Canadian lumber is great, but it would be considerably greater were the custom houses along the frontier abolished. Not only this, but a fair margin of profit would then be realized by the manufacturer, instead of allowing this money to go into the pockets of Washington.

FROM various quarters there come reports of want of sufficient railway accommodation to move lumber promptly, but this is by no means general. The lumbermen and dealers in Canada may well be thankful as they compare their position in this respect with that of their neighbors. From one after another of the centres of the trade in the United States come complaints of lack of cars to move their lumber till the cry seems universal. Crowded piling grounds, inability to fill orders, and other difficulties affecting business at this important season, are the result. It must of course be admitted in fairness that the railway companies should be allowed some consideration if in a busy season they do not have cars ready the moment they are wanted at every point on their extensive and complex system. Such a period is the fall when the mills are clearing off their heaviest summer cut, vessels are delivering all they possibly can before navigation closes, and dealers are stacking their yards for the winter, while the great movement of the crops is also taking place. If, however, some consideration and a few days' delay should be accorded, there is no excuse for a shortage of rolling stock causing a serious and prolonged check to business. The evil is so much greater than customary that it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that while there has been a great and rapid extension of railway mileage, undue parsimony has prevented the supply of additional rolling stock in proportion to the increased work. It is not sufficient for the companies to allege that if they supplied cars and staff sufficient to meet on the instant all the demands of the busiest season much of it would be idle at other periods. By their charges they have been granted almost a monopoly of the carrying business, and this and other privileges have been given on the understanding that they meet the business requirements of the public. They are not at liberty to consider merely what stock and what staff they may most profitably maintain. The Canadian lines as a rule are giving less cause for complaint in this respect than are those of the United States, and hope not only that readiness for the service of the public will be continued but that any present shortcomings may be remedied.

ONE of the most striking features of the lumber industry of this continent is the great and rapidly increasing development of operations in the Southern States. This extraordinary activity in the southern forests is making its mark not only locally but in distant places. The industrial progress on the spot is of course adding greatly to the demand on the spot, but from Chicago and other northern cities of the trade comes the cry that the South is becoming a formidable competitor in neutral markets, that in States where the white pine was formerly the main timber of commerce the yellow pine is fast growing in favor and increasing in consumption. Not is the increased demand by the products of the southern forests confined to this continent; it is now and more gaining a hold in the European market. This is a movement which Canadian lumbermen will naturally watch with interest, but there is another aspect of the question with which they are fully as much concerned. Not only have the forest products of the South been greatly augmented of late, but equally marked has been the demand for their lumbered lands by operators at a distance. The lumbermen of the Northwestern States have been and are investing heavily in the yellow pine forests, and the area thus held in the South by northwestern lumbermen must aggregate an enormous average. From these facts Canadian lumbermen may draw the conclusion that their brethren of the northwestern pine States, however contradictory may be the reports as to the exhaustion of their forests, are looking forward to a scarcity of standing timber as an event of a not far distant future. It tells the same tale as their efforts to obtain timber limits in Ontario. The lesson that our limit holders and mill owners may learn from these indications is that before very long the supply of pine in this country will be in greater demand and of greater value. With such a prospect they will do well to cut cautiously and not be in too great haste to sacrifice valuable property without obtaining adequate remuneration. To force their goods too rashly on the market may be a losing policy in the long run for more reasons than one. It will be wise to consider the future as well as the present, and in this way be guided by the experience of the past in other States of the Union.