



THE CANADA LUMBERMAN

DEVOTED TO THE LUMBER AND TIMBER INTERESTS OF THE DOMINION.

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A GROWL FROM MONTREAL.

THE *Montreal Herald* is dissatisfied with the action of the Dominion Parliament in increasing the log export duty. It claims—and quotes from the Trade and Navigation returns to sustain its claim—that there has been no reckless export of timber in the rough, and that, therefore, the increase was unnecessary, or "silly," as the *Herald's* choice phrase reads. But the *Herald* has evidently ignored recent events and must have shut its eyes to current news. United States lumbermen have purchased largely of limits in Canada, but they have made no preparations towards erecting mills. Instead, we hear of barges and steamers being built on an extensive scale, for the purpose of carrying the logs from the Canadian shores to Michigan, to be there sawn into lumber. These purchases and preparations for exporting the logs are much more extensive than they have been on any previous year and all indications go to show that they would have increased had not the Parliament stepped in to protect the Canadian forests and the interests of the Canadian lumbermen. If the United States lumbermen wish to work Canadian limits let them build mills on this side of the line, or at any rate let the Canadian manufacturers be placed in such a position that the foreigner, who does not give us the benefit of the labor of manufacturing, shall not have an advantage over them on account of the operation of the tariffs. This is what has been done, and efforts to undo what has been accomplished will have little chance of being successful.

GOING TO EXTREMES.

WHILE approving of the action of the Dominion Parliament in increasing the export duty on logs, the *Montreal Star* wishes it to go farther and impose an export tax on sawn lumber. It is not at all likely that the *Star's* advice on this point will be accepted or acted upon. One reason why the export duty on logs was increased was because the Canadian manufacturers were, under the former tariff,

placed at a disadvantage as compared with the American exporter of logs, and it was thought desirable to relieve the manufacturers from this disadvantage.

At present the Canadian lumbermen are compelled to pay the duty imposed by the United States custom laws and, weighted with this burden, compete with the lumber producers of that country. If they were compelled to pay the Canadian Government for the privilege of taking the lumber out of this country, and to pay the United States for the privilege of taking it into that country, they would be unable to compete with the lumbermen who had no customs duty to pay at all. The lumber industry of Canada is too valuable to be stamped out by ill-considered legislation.

An export duty would not only effect the trade with the United States, but with other countries. The Canadian lumber or timber dealers to push trade, have to compete with other exporters of lumber wherever they send it, and to place a duty on the export of the material would result in handicapping them, and crippling the business and the export trade of the country.

The idea of the *Star* is to build up on this side of the line factories for making sash, doors, etc., but it leaves out of account the trade done with other countries besides the United States, and does not stop to consider that, in giving protection to sash and door factories, it would not exclude foreign manufacturers from our own country—the powerful argument of the protectionist—but would cripple or extinguish an extensive industry already existing in the country with the hope of creating another.

It is not probable that the suggestion made by the *Star* will be further urged. It would not be a wise policy, and that fact is so easily seen that it will fall to the ground.

STRIKES AND THE LUMBER TRADE.

The present unsettled condition of affairs in the building trades in Boston, says the *Commercial Bulletin*, has naturally powerfully affected the lumber business, the prosperity of which is dependent upon the building business. At the opening of the season the prospects for a large demand for lumber were very bright, as there promised to be a very active building business. The improved outlook for general trade appeared to have effected real estate owners and operators very favorably, and the architects were kept busy with enquires and orders. The permits for building taken out for the first few months of this year were considerably in excess of those for last year. * * * There would have been a considerable amount of tearing down and rebuilding in the business district also. The prospects for the erection of small and medium class dwelling houses in the suburbs and suburban towns were good.

The lumber dealers, wholesale and retail, thus looked for an excellent business in this market and at profitable rates. This latter expectation was based upon the fact that the cut of pine and spruce in New England, and of pine in the west, would only be of average proportions at the most. The cut and supply of hardwoods was placed at only an average amount also, and as the prices of southern pine were down to a very low level, only a change in the direction of higher figures was expected. The prospects of a strike on May 1st by the builders' workmen for eight hours and an advance in wages put a much different face on the condition of affairs.

The buildings which were under way were hurried to completion, and no new work of importance was undertaken. The only exception was in the building of small and medium class dwelling houses. The men employed on this class of houses have generally not struck. The building of these houses has therefore been continued in the suburbs and suburban towns, and indeed all over the state. The lumber used is coarse lumber, that is New England lumber, principally spruce. For this there has been a good demand, particularly for framing stock, and the northern mills have been, and are now, well supplied with orders. The demand for laths, clapboards and shingles has not been as large as if general business was good, but it has been of very fair proportions, and prices have ruled high.

TIMBER CULTURE ADVOCATED.

The March number of *The Century* contained an article on "Timber Famine and a Forest School," from S. W. Powell, who said: "Savages live lavishly as long as their stock of food lasts, although they know they will have to starve afterwards. We say they can never climb out of savagery until they learn to save and to provide for coming want. Yet with respect to the forests—which are, no doubt, the most indispensable product of the soil—we have acted very much as the Comanche does with respect to his store of food.

"The value of our forest products is not less than \$500,000,000 a year. Our store of white pine is rapidly approaching exhaustion, and other valuable species will be as ruthlessly wasted when the pine is gone. When the resulting timber famine comes, it will for several reasons be a more serious calamity than would be the failure for 10 consecutive years of any other of our crops.

"Failure, or even great scarcity, of working timber involves the derangement of total ruin to a vast number of important industries which wholly or in part depend upon the forest for their raw material. Some of these are metal lurgy, building, wood-turning, tanning and the manufacture of articles made of leather, the making of wagons, carriages, furniture Musical instruments, sewing-machines, etc. In short almost everything one uses needs wood directly or indirectly for its production.

"Destruction of the forest, especially upon steep hillsides, causes irregularity in rain fall and other climatic changes very harmful to agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and health besides the loss from floods, of which during the last few years we had such sad experience.

"But we shall never keep the hillsides wooded merely as preventive measure. We must learn to make timber culture in such localities profitable; and that can never be done without skilled labor and such professional training as the forest schools of Europe afford. * * * We are rapidly nearing a terrible reckoning for the breach of natural law involved in our wasteful treatment of the woods.

"We have a great deal of second growth woodland which although it may be of value as a means of regulating climate and the flow of water in springs and streams is producing very little of the timber which we are beginning so sorely to need. If we had a forest school, with a large tract of woodland under its care, it would be easy for farmers' sons to learn in a few weeks of observation, study and practice how to do the pruning and thinning necessary to change these unsightly and nearly profitless wood lots into rich and permanent sources of gain. If the proposed Adirondack reservation is made, as it should be, to yield a large revenue instead of being a heavy and increasing burden and peril to the public, a thoroughly equipped forest school will be one of the first requisites."

PROTECTING CANADIAN LUMBERMEN.

A Detroit despatch to the *New York Times* says:—Lumbermen in the Saginaw valley section of the State are much exercised over the news from Ottawa, Ontario, that the Canadian Government has advanced the export duty on pine saw logs from \$1 to \$2 per 1,000 feet. The effect of this advance in the export duty will be to materially injure the saw mill industry of Eastern Michigan. Parties in this State own about 1,700,000,000 feet of pine timber in the Georgian bay district, the great bulk of which was purchased in the expectation of cutting the logs and shipping them to Alpena, Tawas, the Saginaw river and other ports for manufacture. The Emery Lumber Company alone owns 100,000,000 feet and cut last winter 55,000 pieces, scaling about 15,000,000 feet, which it was expecting to bring to east Tawas and Saginaw this season. Ralph H. Loveland, of east Saginaw a member of the Emery Company, started for Toronto immediately upon the receipt of a despatch announcing the decision of the Minister of Customs, to look after his company's interests, and others will follow at once. Mayor Hill, of Saginaw City, among the number. It is, of course, generally conceded and the object of the Canadians is to prevent the exportation of saw logs to American points for manufacture, and

compel Americans who have purchased timber limits in Canada to erect mills in Canada.

SPEED OF CIRCULAR SAWS.

It is highly entertaining to run across the estimates made years ago of the pine standing in Michigan. In 1869 the Hon. John F. Driggs, in "an elaborate and carefully prepared statement," put the figures at 15,000,000,000 feet less than there are standing to-day on the upper peninsula. Three years later O. B. Headley, considered to be well posted, went the honorable gentleman 2,000,000,000 better. Mr. Headley thought that the maximum cut in the Saginaw valley would be reached in 1873. By 1873 the production was 610,000,000 feet in round numbers, and in nearly 10 years of the prophecy the figures run up to 1,000,000,000. In 1873 Colonel Ben Wait said there were 43,000,000,000 feet of pine in the state. Since Mr. Wait set those figures as much pine has been cut in Michigan as he named, and doubtless, if asked he would reply that there is now standing nearly, if not quite, as much more. A dozen years ago Mr. Wait was the most liberal estimator whose figures got into cold type, but as seen, even he was not liberal enough by 100 per cent.—*North Western Lumberman*.

CANADA ON STRIKE.

The Yankee fishermen are highly indignant because the Canadians are determined to protect their fisheries, and the Michigan lumbermen are highly indignant because the Canadian Government has placed an export duty on saw logs, which will necessitate the establishment of saw mills in Canada. The trouble with these Americans is that they have always been accustomed to think of Canadians as slow-going innocent country people, easily imposed upon and willing to always remain hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Americans. They will soon understand that Canadians are wide-awake practical people, quite able to take care of themselves and that it takes more than an act of the United States Congress to decide any matter in which Canada is concerned. The right place for the saw mills is in the district where the lumber is cut. Northern Ontario is especially well provided with water power and there is no reason why mills should not be erected there as well as in Michigan.—*Montreal Star*.

PHOSPHATE AND LUMBER.

OTTAWA, June 4.—A deputation consisting of from fifteen to twenty phosphate and lumber merchants, headed by Mr. Alonzo Wright, M. P., waited on the Minister of Public Works this morning, in reference to the improvement of the River Lievre, or which a vote of \$10,000 had just been made by Parliament. They showed to the Minister that the increase in the phosphate trade alone was over \$1,500,000, and that the proposed lock and dam at Little Rapids, backing the water and rendering the river navigable up to the high falls, would be a great addition in the way of increasing the trade.

The Minister assured them that the intention of the Government was to benefit that trade as much as possible, and that a proof of that intention was given by the Government asking Parliament for the money voted. The plans and specifications would be immediately prepared and tenders invited.

HANDICAPPED.

Under existing regulations the lumber trade of this part of the Dominion is seriously handicapped. Besides the heavy timber dues now enforced, the export of dressed lumber to the other side is virtually paralyzed by the heavy duty imposed by the United States customs. According to the Canadian tariff, the duty on all kinds of lumber imported, rough or dressed, is \$2 per thousand feet, whereas, if a Canadian firm ship dressed lumber to the States they have to pay at the rate of \$6 per thousand, all lumber other than rough being tarified as finished material. This state of things naturally tends to cripple the lumber industry and prevents competition, besides cutting out all labor of dressing lumber. Again, the high rate of rail way freight is ruinous to shippers.—*The Miner*.