

United States Timber Supply.

Statistics gathered from trustworthy sources by the Puget Sound Lumberman, says the *Engineering News*, "tell us that the United States has about 1,200,000,000 feet B. M. of standing lumber, with a present annual consumption of about 10,000,000,000 feet B. M. This means an apparent supply for 120 years; but the rapidly increasing demand for timber may easily reduce this period to a century, and possibly exhaust it in seventy-five years. It is true that Alaska is credited, on very little information, with 66,000,000,000 feet B. M. of standing timber, and British Columbia with 1,000,000,000,000 feet more, but these are certainly not to be assumed as home supplies. The Lumberman gives the following figures for the aggregate of standing timber in the United States:—

	Stumpage value.	Number feet standing.
Washington	\$269,561,329	410,333,335,000
Oregon	56,685,709	236,893,255,000
Nine southern states		280,600,000,000
Wisconsin		26,560,03,5520
Michigan		24,140,699,199
Minnesota		12,794,526,000
Pennsylvania		7,500,000,000
Maine		1,500,000,000
New York		1,000,000,000
California	100,700,000	100,700,000,000
Montana	48,750,000	65,000,000,000
Idaho	22,500,000	30,000,000,000

"In the above list the three states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota are elsewhere said to have cut up in 1892 nearly 9,000,000,000 feet B. M., or over 14 per cent of the aggregate amount of standing timber in these states, as given in the above list. The state of Michigan alone is credited with a lumber output for 1892 of very nearly 3,800,000,000 feet B. M., or over 15 per cent of her standing timber.

"While these figures of annual production may be taken as indicating enterprise on the part of timber cutters, the question naturally arises as to what the people of a century to come are going to do for lumber. Cheaper and more rapid means of transportation may enable them to go further for their supply, but it would seem wiser for the present generation of Americans to pay more serious attention to the subject of forest planting and preservation, and in this way gain somewhat from the experience and practice of other nations. This action was long ago forced upon the people of Europe by the waste and carelessness of their predecessors, and it is hardly in accordance with modern methods for us to wait until we are compelled by similar causes to adopt a similar course, with all its attendant disadvantages of a short and costly supply. Forests may be made to disappear into the maw of saw mills at the rate of thousands of acres per year, but it takes many years to replace this loss; and one serious forest fire of a few weeks may cancel nature's effort of a century in tree production.

"The whole subject of timber preservation is one of time as much as it is one of money, and the subject cannot be taken up too seriously by the people and government of the United States. Some halting action has already been taken by Congress, and the President is now authorized to set aside certain parts of the public domain as forest preserves. But more active work still is needed in the gathering and dissemination of useful and much-needed statistics on this head of present supply and present consumption and waste. It is true that we have a forestry bureau as an adjunct to our department of Agriculture; but, judging from the difficulty it has in securing from Congress the paltry sum of \$40,000 for the continuation of exceedingly interesting and commercially valuable timber tests, our lawmakers yet fail to appreciate the true purpose and value of such a department. By a more liberal policy its scope of action and general usefulness might be very much increased, and it was with such a career in view that the department was originally created.

"We have here only treated of the value of timber in its industrial sense; but it has been proven beyond controversy that forests are absolutely necessary as a conservator of water supply, and for this purpose their preservation or cultivation is even more generally necessary than when the timber is to be converted into buildings and fences or used as fuel. Aside from the question of first cost, it would be better for the safety of property and life if timber were less used in our houses, and the substitutes for timber in construction are becoming constantly cheaper. But water we must have always, and no substitute has ever been suggested. The destruction of timber in many parts of Europe has altogether changed the habitable conditions of great areas of territory by reducing the rainfall and the storage for rainfall always provided by dense forests, and the arid regions of our own country show evidences of having been, in part at least, once covered by timber, long ago destroyed by fire or other agencies. Timber-land as permit the rapid evaporation or escape in surface streams of the water that falls upon them, are more subject to destructive wind storms, and are generally less pleasing and inviting as sites for habitation. We have enough of this description now in the United States, and whatever the government can reasonably do to prevent any marked increase in its area should be done, and done promptly and with vigor and intelligent effort."

Growth of the Lake Marine.

The *Chicago Evening Post* says:—"Unusual activity is expected to mark the opening of navigation on the great lakes this coming season. An unusual amount of freight has accumulated at Chicago awaiting transportation, and until it has all been moved there is little likelihood of any space going a-begging. At the same time it is probable that the carrying capacity of the vessels engaged in the lake trade will be quite equal to the demands made upon it. There will be at the disposal of lake shippers nearly 75,000 tons carrying capacity more than they had last year, and this addition, it is believed, will be fully equal to the natural growth of the business of the country which enters into the promotion of the carrying trade.

"January 1, 1893, there were under construction in the shipyards around the lakes fifty-one vessels, all of which were designed for the lake carrying trade. The average carrying capacity for each was 2,000 tons, making a total addition to the carrying capacity of 102,000 tons. From this, however, has to be deducted 28,708 tons, which, owing to shipwreck, fire, or other causes, were withdrawn from service, and have passed out of existence, leaving a net increase to last year's tonnage of 73,292 tons. Nearly all these new vessels were iron or steel, wooden vessels having now been discarded almost entirely on the lakes. The estimated cost of their construction was \$6,900,000. The value of the tonnage that passed out of existence was \$1,011,250.

"The total carrying capacity of the lake marine cannot now be much short of 1,400,000 tons. The last official returns, June 31, 1891, show that at that time there were 1,592 sailing vessels employed on the lakes, of an aggregate capacity of 736,751 tons, and 2,008 sailing and unrigged vessels, aggregating 418,119 tons, making a total of 1,154,870 tons. The value of the lake marine was then estimated at \$70,000,000. For the five years ending June 30, 1891, the tonnage had increased 37.24 per cent, and the value 86.47 per cent.

To-day was a big settling up day, says a Montreal telegram of April 4, and bankers report payments very bad, a large number of renewals having been given. There are no big failures reported as the banks generally are carrying their customers. Bad roads and the late winter are given as the cause of poor payments.

Australian Butter.

A Victoria (Australia) dairyman, after a visit to England, has communicated some of his impressions to *The Australasian*. Australian butter, he says, beats both the Normandy and Danish makes in its keeping qualities, but where it is lacking is in its uniformity. On the necessity for uniform quality strong stress is laid. Better, he says, a slightly inferior butter which is uniform than superior butter of varying grade. It is the belief also of this authority that Australian butter is destined to drive the French and Danish out of the English market. It may be mentioned as one of the curiosities of the trade, due principally, no doubt, to the bonus system, that Victorian butter may be bought cheaper in London than in Melbourne.

Butter Kegs.

A new kind of butter keg, holding about a cwt., or 112 pounds, is being made for packing creamery butter for shipping to the European market. It is lined with parchment paper, preventing any woolly flavor round the sides at the top and bottom. Some of these were forwarded to the English market last year, and gave great satisfaction. Fifteen or twenty years ago nearly all the butter turned out in the Brookville and Morrisburg sections were put up in kegs or firkins.—*Trade Bulletin*.

Business Embarrassments.

Bradstreet's report of business failures in the Dominion of Canada and Newfoundland for the past quarter with comparisons are made public by *Bradstreet's* as follows:—

Provinces.	Failures.	Assets.
	1893. 1892.	1893. 1892.
Ontario	219 224	782,659 595,295
Quebec	190 195	453,691 918,651
New Brunswick	23 29	109,650 169,250
Nova Scotia	42 61	186,542 311,200
P. E. Island	12 5	39,350 48,100
Newfoundland	5	662,660
Manitoba	24 23	128,486 116,561
N. W. Territories	6 5	19,467 4,800
British Columbia	15 18	79,600 5,043

Total	226 559 2,477,105 2,205,208
Province.	Liabilities.
	1893. 1892.
Ontario	1,676,097 1,411,609
Quebec	1,161,093 2,287,365
New Brunswick	195,850 179,461
Nova Scotia	319,664 596,437
Prince Edward Island	86,800 85,000
Newfoundland	896,830
Manitoba	217,962 210,157
Northwest Territories	66,893 9,800
British Columbia	167,600 105,390

Totals

There were thirty-three fewer failures in the Dominion of Canada during the past three months than in the like period in 1892 the total being 526 against 559 last year. The aggregate liabilities have fallen off a trifle amounting to \$4,735,000, or 4 per cent. less than they were last year, while the decrease in the number of failures is 6 per cent. The total assets aggregate \$2,477,105, or 10 per cent. more than in the like quarter last year, showing a relatively greater degree of solvency this year. There were five fewer failures in the province of Ontario this year but the liabilities there are 19 per cent. higher than a year ago. In the province of Quebec there are fifteen fewer failures with only 10 per cent. of the liabilities reported last year. Nova Scotia also returns fewer failures with a marked reduction of liabilities, while Manitoba reports only one failure more than last year with a slight increase in aggregate indebtedness, and the Northwest Territories one more than last year with a disproportionately large increase in liabilities. British Columbia reports a reduction in the number of failures, but an increase in total debts.