

Chamber of Commerce. - I proceeded to Gloucester, thence to Cardiff, Caermarthen, and other places in Wales. I had interviews with Messrs. Price & Co., of Gloucester, Messrs. Watson & Co., Cardiff, and Mr. Lewis, of Caermarthen, and find that the proportion of Baltic timber imported into those places is very small—not more than 15 to 16 per cent. of the whole. The freights from the Baltic ports to Gloucester, Cardiff, and Caermarthen average at present (7th June) about 20s. per load, while the freights from Quebec have come down to 30s. This is disproportioned, as the former is usually about one-half the latter, and is caused partly by the very large quantities of grain to be removed from the Baltic ports, and partly by the troubles in the United States, which have caused a number of American ships to be sent round to the St. Lawrence.

I observed when travelling in England, that our timber, in the shape of sleepers, is now almost entirely driven out of the market by an inferior article from the north of Europe, which can be laid down in England, owing to the difference in freight, at prices we cannot compete with. I have examined them in many places and find that from 30 to 40 per cent. of their cubic contents is nothing but sap. This timber is put through a process of creosoting which may preserve the sap, but I doubt it; and I have no hesitation in believing that within a few years it will be found that our tamarac would have been cheaper in the end.

As some of the older railways were then undergoing repair, I was anxious to have the opinion of some respectable practical engineer as to the durability of our tamarac sleepers—feeling satisfied in my own mind that they will bear comparison with timber of any other country for that use, and as such repairs were going on in the neighborhood of Cardiff, I requested Mr. Alexander, of the firm of Messrs. Watson & Co., to write to the engineer for that purpose. He did so, and I have great satisfaction in referring you to his letter on the subject, which I herewith annex:—

TAFF VALE RAILWAY,
GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,
CARDIFF, June 10, 1861.

HECKMATAC TIMBER.

DEAR SIR,—Some ten years back I used this timber extensively in bridges and general work. I then formed a very favorable opinion of the same. Since that time little, if any, has been imported here, and I have lost sight of it. This morning, I had some portions examined, and I find it tolerably sound, fully confirming the opinion I had formed of its strength and durability. I am fully persuaded Heckmataac would be used largely in Railway works, of course governed by the price at which it could be sold.

Yours faithfully,

GEO. FISHER.

WM. ALEXANDER, Esq., Cardiff.

My tour of the principal ports of Great Britain being now completed, I proceeded to Ireland. Arrived in Dublin on the 13th June, and presented letters of introduction to James Martin, Esq., who is extensively engaged in the lumber business in that city, he satisfied me from statistics in his possession, that about