

THE MAN WHO KNOWS IT ALL.

"I found myself the other day," says Montesquieu, the author of the Spirit of the Laws, in his "Lettres Persanes," written early in the last century. "I found myself in a company of persons, among whom was a man very well pleased with himself. In a quarter of an hour he decided three questions of morals, four historic problems, and five points of philosophy. I have never seen so universal an arbiter; his judgment was never held in suspense by the slightest doubt.

"Leaving aside the sciences, as a subject of conversation, the company talked about the news of the day—he pronounced upon the news of the day. I desired to entrap him, and said to myself, 'I must go into my stronghold—I must take refuge in my country.' So I spoke to him of Persia. But scarcely had I spoken four words when he twice gave me the lie, on the authority of Messrs. Tavernier and Sir John Chardin, respectively. 'Good God!' said I, 'what kind of man is this? He already knows the streets of Ispahan, the capital of my country, better than I.' My resolution was soon taken, I held my peace, and he went on settling everything, as before."

ARE LUMBER PRICES AT THE TOP?

"Lumber prices at the present time are about as high as they were in 1892, and in some cases higher. There should be a gradual advance in average prices as the years go by, for in spite of natural growth the quantity of available timber is decreasing and a carrying charge is to be added. But it is probable that the carrying charge since 1892 or the spring of 1893, and the present time, has been covered by the advance.

"In yellow pine the general range of prices is about what it was in 1892, with some items a little higher. In white pine good lumber is about the same, with low-grade lumber higher. In hardwoods some lines are decidedly higher, with the general average somewhat in excess of the prices in 1892. Hemlock has shown a decided advance in the west. The general tendency of shingles, however, is an exception, for since 1892 red-cedar shingles have come into prominence, and by their enormous supply have had the effect of lowering the average range of values, though at some stages of the market prices are higher and well maintained.

"It should be remembered that 1892 and the first few months of 1893 marked the culmination of a profitable business period that was followed quickly by the panic and a heavy decline in values which are only now being restored. At the present time the country is not at the culmination of a 'boom' period, if such it may be called, but apparently hardly begun on a period of industrial and commercial prosperity of indefinite length.

"The change began in 1897, and with some fluctuations there has been on the whole a steadily-swelling volume of business ever since. Lumber prices have moved upward since the summer of that year, and the tendency is still upward. What will be the outcome? Prices are now at a point which yield a profit if properly distributed to all engaged in the business—manufacturers, all legitimate middlemen and distributors. This is as it should be, and is for what the Lumberman has always stood. Incidentally, however, we might throw out a warning. There is a growing feeling through the country that prices of many commodities are being pushed too high. It is doubtful if this is the case with lumber; but it certainly would be better to rest content with what already has been secured than to risk

collapse by carrying the process of price increment to the point of inflation. Still, the warning may be unnecessary; in fact, there is a feeling quite generally noticeable, through the lumber trade, that the top notch of average prices has nearly or quite been reached, though a few items or classes may yet go higher."—Lumberman.

FORESTRY.

"Forestry is the rational use of the soil for wood crops just as agriculture is the rational use of the soil for food crops," said E. B. Fernow, at a meeting of the American Statistical Association. "Rational use of the soil requires a division of the same, and the assignment of different portions to food crops and to wood crops. In the well-ordered state the soils most fit for agriculture are devoted to systematic cultivation of food crops, as fields and pastures; but just so should the non-agricultural soils, the absolute forest soils, be devoted to the systematic cultivation of wood crops. When such a disposition or distribution and use of soils is accomplished, the highest state of civilization from the cultural point of view is reached. Since, then, the statistician, especially the census statistician, has for his final task to measure the state of our civilization, the distribution of farm and forest area forms a proper object of his enquiry.

"Wood growth fulfills a twofold function; not only does it supply materials most necessary to civilization, but it forms a condition of the earth's surface, which is known or believed to have a determinative influence on other cultural conditions, namely, those of climate, soil and waterflow. Especially in the last two directions the forest cover, in certain situations, on hills, slopes and mountains, exercises a potent influence in preventing erosion of soils and in regulating the drainage of rain and snow waters, thereby decreasing the excess and frequency of high and low water stages, both in the water channels and the subterranean ground waters.

"The forest, therefore, forms a special cultural element aside from the material which it supplies, hence forestry statistics must have two objects in view, namely, to furnish information regarding the material supplies of the forest resource, and information regarding its conditions with reference to the other-mentioned conditions which the forest cover influences or predicates. We may at once distinguish 'supply' forests and 'protective' forests. As a rule the two functions are or should be exercised simultaneously.

"As a result of the method of culling, which our lumbermen have pursued in harvesting the valuable virgin growth, we shall find that large areas, which to the unprofessional eye appear an unbroken forest, contain in reality hardly any kinds or individual trees fit for industrial uses. Worse, by this gradual culling out of the useful kinds, the ground is left to the occupancy of the tree weeds, which must first be removed to give room for a valuable forest crop, just as the forest had to be removed to make room for the agricultural use of the soil.

THE PRESS EXCURSION.

About seventy-five editors and other members of the Canadian Press Association are being made happy by an excursion trip over the C.P.R. and Northern Pacific railways from Winnipeg to the Pacific and back. According to the Free Press, the committee in charge of the proposed excursion of the members of the Western Canada Press Association,

made all arrangements. The party embraces representatives of about fifty of the leading papers of Western Ontario, Manitoba and the North-west Territories. Two sleeping cars were chartered, and attached to the regular passenger train, leaving Winnipeg at 13 o'clock, Tuesday, June 13th. The first stop of a whole day was arranged for Banff, then the itinerary reads to Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, Ore., and return via Victoria, Vancouver, the Kootenay country, visiting Spokane from Rossland, then back to Nelson, B.C., and home over the Crow's Nest road, reaching Winnipeg June 30th, the trip occupying eighteen days.

Cordial invitations have been received by the committee from commercial and press organizations of the different cities on the route, so that splendid receptions await the party at all points. At Portland, Ore., the Canadian residents have taken in hand the matter of receiving and entertaining the editors, and a royal time is anticipated.

FRUIT AT AUCTION.

Monday afternoon, 12th inst., at the Montreal Fruit Exchange Company's warehouse, there was one of the most brisk sales of the season. A carload of bananas was the first on the programme, and sold up to \$1.15 per bunch. The Missouri tomatoes, a splendid car of prime stock, consigned to Messrs. Moquin & Cote, met with vigorous bidding, and they sold up to \$1.20 per crate. A peculiar feature of this sale was the fact that Mr. John Callaghan, the energetic, enthusiastic and tireless member of the firm of Hart & Tuckwell, bought some 20 lines at one slap at \$1 per crate. When the market showed strength, as it did, he allowed his purchase to be again submitted to the competition among those who were disappointed in not securing the choice lines they wished. Mr. Callaghan's pluck was well rewarded, and the "round up" showed in a few moments a profit of 10c. to 15c. per crate. Well deserved as it is, just this style of substantial bidding is the mainstay of a sale.—Potter & Morin conducted the sale.

DELIVERY OF LETTERS.

In a Montreal court, a week ago, Mr. Justice Mathieu declined to grant the petition of Martial E. Leprohon, who alleged that he had done business under the name of Leprohon & Leprohon booksellers, and that he had since made an assignment, to order the acting postmaster of Montreal to deliver up to him all the letters addressed to the firm. The court said it was the duty of the postmaster to deliver letters to those to whom they belong, and that it did not think proper to interfere or give general instructions, especially when an abandonment had been made, and settled as alleged it had been done in this case.

—The difference between talent and genius is this; while the former usually develops some special branch of our faculties, the latter commands them all. When the former is combined with tact, it is often more than a match for the latter.—Beaconsfield.

—On the subject of "Electricity for Insect Bites," "Dr. Friedlander, of Wiesbaden," says Electricity, "recommends galvanism to relieve the pain and irritation and to reduce the swelling caused by the bites of insects. The negative electrode is placed over the seat of the sting. It is effective in the case of gnat and wasp stings, and would probably also be of service in poisoning by the stings of tropical insects."