

OUR ALBANY LETTER.

ALBANY, N. Y., Sept. 25th, 1890.

The coming month will probably see the McKinley tariff bill a law but it is uncertain yet when the lumber schedule will take effect. When it was first learned that the McKinley bill threatened to increase instead of decreasing the duty on lumber coming to this country from Canada the largest concerns in this market, including Arnold & Co, Saxe Bros., D. L. White & Co., J. Benedict & Son, Boyd & Co., Babbit & Saunders, and Rodney Vose, all dealers in Canada pine, prepared a protest and sent a delegation composed of Chas. G. Saxe, of Saxe Bros. and John Macdonald, of Boyd & Co., to Washington to appear before the Honorable, the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives. These two gentlemen have large lumber interests in Canada and own extensive limits. They argued that the duty on lumber should be \$1 per thousand, in which event Canada would repeal her \$2 per thousand export duty on logs. The Committee at that time agreed in case the tariff was increased to amend the bill by providing that the lumber tax should not go into effect until March 1891, thus giving men who had made large purchases of Canada lumber a chance to turn them selves before the bill became law, but now that the tariff has been reduced to \$1 per thousand instead of being increased it will probably go into effect the moment the bill has received the President's signature. At any rate it cannot go into effect any too quick now to suit the dealers here who seem to have a mistaken idea that their everlasting fortune will be made the moment the duty on lumber is removed. Some concerns are even now holding back their shipments of lumber from the mills so as to take advantage of the reduction in duty when it does come. They will find, however, that within a very short time after the reduction takes place the whole thing will be lost sight of entirely and lumber will be no cheaper than it was before, for the supply and demand as in all cases regulates the price.

Right here perhaps it might be of interest to quote the opinion of Dean Sage on the subject. Mr. Sage is the head here of the firm of H. W. Sage & Co., one of the oldest, richest and most extensive lumber concerns in this state and in Michigan where they own large limits. He says: "The papers state that were the rate per thousand lowered, Sir John McDonald has agreed to secure a remission of the Canadian export duty. The Canadian market controls the lumber interest of this country, and will more and more as time goes on. The Michigan trade is very different, and is now merely strong enough to compete in a comparatively small way with Canada as long as these duties are levied. Suppose the export duty is taken off, Canadian dealers will raise the price of lumber by the amount of the old duty. Of course Michigan dealers could get the same prices. The merchants in Canada make no bones about the matter. One of the arguments used by them to induce Michigan dealers to work for the reduction of duty here and the subsequent repeal of the \$2 per thousand Canadian export duty on logs, was that an increase in price was just as beneficial for them, and meant an increase in profits with no diminution of business. The chief point at issue seems to me to be: shall the United States by a reduction of the duty let Canada get several millions of dollars which otherwise we would have? Of course those men who own Canadian tracts favor lower rates as their property would increase as much again in value. Lumber dealers, both Canadian and Michigan, will gain, but the rest of this country will lose."

It seems to be pretty generally understood by dealers here that Canada will add in price just in proportion as the rate is reduced.

The lumber trade in this vicinity and throughout the state has been exceptionally good this year and from all indications it will remain so the rest of the season. From the New York and the adjacent markets come favorable reports of a good fall trade with prices firm. The export trade from New York to South America, Australia, Africa, England and France have improved very much of late and the demand for ten and twelve inch uppers has increased in consequence, but ship-

ping boards are not the only thing in demand as good lumber comes in for a share of the trade. Only this week a cargo of choice Michigan Uppers was shipped from this market by A. S. Kibbee & Son to New York there to be loaded on a vessel for Cape Town, South Africa, and a part for some port in Australia, truly a long journey from the remote logging camp in the Michigan forest to those far away lands under the equator.

The Shepard & Morse Lumber Co., of Boston, Mass., have sold one million feet of 1x12 shippers which they will begin to load on vessels this week for Monte-video and Buenos Ayres, South America.

The trade in Canada pine in this market has been heavy this season, all the intermediate grades selling well, while the call for good lumber has been better than in some years before, 1 1/4 and 1 1/2 inch uppers experienced the most demands but 2 inch uppers are slow sale as are all the thicker grades. The stocks on hand is in splendid assortment as the receipts have been heavy of late. The bulk of the Canadian pine here comes to us by canal by way of Tonawanda but we have always had a considerable quantity from the Ottawa district until this summer when the supply dropped off.

Dealers find it almost impossible to obtain boats in Ottawa to fill their orders as the majority of them are carrying ice this season as it pays them better than lumber, consequently the Albany men are left high and dry with orders on their hands awaiting shipments.

The spruce and hemlock trade has been better this season than in years, and better prices have been obtained, but the dealers have been handicapped by a shortage of stock, especially in spruce and hemlock culls, owing to the mild winter we had with little snow. The logs in the booms at the mills in Northern New York have been nearly all cut up and the dealers can now see the end of their stock. They are holding prices very stiff on all grades and are not attempting to force sales, but are rather holding back desirable lots for their regular trade.

Hardwoods have had a good season with good prices, but certain lots have been short in stock. Ash, quartered oak, cherry and whitewood have had the best demand, but dry lots are scarce and high.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BRIDGEWATER, N. S., Sept. 16th, 1890.

Editor Canada Lumberman.

In your September issue we noticed that Mr. C. Young, of Young's Point, on the Otonabee river, had been fined \$20 for allowing mill refuse to enter the river.

We are quite interested in cases of this kind as the law is very strictly enforced on the river Lahave, and in a case before the courts to-day the lawyer contended that "the miller should be fined, if one cupfull a week dropped into the water, as the law had been broken."

We presume the offence in the case mentioned was refuse outside of sawdust, but on our river there has never been any refuse but the dust which could not be saved from dropping into the water that was allowed into the river.

The Minister has lately been down in Nova Scotia, but carefully kept away from this his very *pet* district, and has claimed he was carrying out the law thoroughly, and had fined four men in Ontario who were now endeavoring to keep some of the sawdust from the rivers, and that in doing their best he would be lenient with them. This sort of administration is very apt to excite the query formerly raised by Mr. Joseph S. Wallis of Port Carling, as to whether Mr. Young was not also a Grit, since all the parties prosecuted on the Lahave have inclined that way.

Our firm has been waiting two years for the law to be carried out not only on the Lahave and Otonabee rivers, but on the *ten thousand similar* rivers of our Dominion so that the business could all stand on the same footing.

Certainly very few water mills in Nova Scotia can be worked under the rendering of the law quoted to-day, i.e., liable to a \$50 fine for allowing a tea cup full per week to drop into the water, and while such a law remains on our statute books it is useless to attempt business while the Fisheries Department so partially apply the law.

After thirty years steady sawing, our river is entirely free from sawdust, except in the deepest pools of the lower river, and we contend, with the whole native

population, that it has never done the least injury to either fish or navigation.

We do this in the face of the report made last year, in the drouth, by Capt. Gordon who based his current on the August flow of water, offset our lumber industry against the whole county of Lunenburg's fishery, which extends from the Sand Banks of Newfoundland to Bermuda, and charges against our sawdust the discoloring of the water, which all people of sense know is the natural color of all the rivers in this part of the country, caused by flowing over iron deposits or something of that nature. He also laid to the sawdust the foul odors of the mud in the bottom of the river, when everyone on our coast knows the coves and creeks are just as bad where they never saw a grain of sawdust.

He also refused to hear the testimony of respectable citizens, of all shades of politics, after asking for their attendance, but finally he could not get any testimony to agree with the evident inclinations of his superiors, he suppressed the whole, and started to hunt out all the sawdust he could find. The alignments of his surveys show he did this very effectually, as he certainly covered all the deposits at that time existing, though no doubt since carried to sea by the last season's freshets.

The stock of lumber having been very much reduced prices have held good in this district, and much more stock could have been sold to foreign customers who have been supplied from this quarter.

People are preparing for a hard winter as no logs will be cut on the Lahave till the mills are allowed to saw, and the loss of \$200,000 per year for the last two years is beginning to have a very sensible effect in all kinds of business. We only have to console ourselves that no large sums have been squandered in N. P. industries like some of our neighboring towns, so our merchants still remain solvent.

FRANK DAVISON.

POWER'S CREEK, MADAWASKA, N. B. Sept. 16th, 1890.

Editor Canada Lumberman.

Last week Mr. Connors started his fall drive, and the clearing of the Grand Falls of its lumber, just in time to take advantage of the late heavy raise of water. Mr. Connors was providentially favored with all his drives this season. The season has been remarkably good for driving, and never, perhaps, was the St. John and its tributaries so completely cleaned out of all the old and new stock, and no one begrudges Mr. Connors the favors Providence has thrown in his way, as no man is better adapted to take advantage of them.

Interested parties are again on the move with the intention of trying their luck in the forest which holds out fine inducements for operators to make a fortune.

Our American neighbors are again trying the game of bluff by dangling reciprocity before our eyes, saying, will you take it now or will you wait until you get it. They have tried this game until it has become threadbare. The proper thing for the Dominion government to do, so far as lumber is concerned, is to act and not wait for a reciprocity in lumber, but exact at once an export duty equivalent to the American import duty on our lumber. It is most absurd to permit our forests to be cut by Americans and the logs taken across the line to be manufactured into lumber when we need the timber for our mills. In the parish where I live one hundred thousand dollars of the export duty has been lost by not exacting it for years past, which I can prove if required, and still the slaughter goes on.

We hear Americans say, "for many years past the export of logs from the States to saw mills in New Brunswick, and other parts of Canada has been many times greater than the export of logs from Canada to the States. So far as New Brunswick is concerned the Americans have not one log that could be floated on New Brunswick waters if we had got our just deserts under the Ashburton treaty, and as it is all the timber cut on our capitulated lands is manufactured by Americans and by American labor. They are allowed to cross the lines, year after year, and slaughter our forests to the extent of millions of feet annually, and this will be permitted to go on until our forests are completely denuded, and then we may expect reciprocity with the Americans after securing our virgin wealth and leaving our lands a barren waste."

P. O. BYRAM.

—A double raft owned by Messrs. Thistle, Carswell & Co., and A. Barnett, broke the tow rope in Lake Deschene, Ont., on Sept. 20th, and was carried on to a rock on the rapids where it hung. A large number of men were on the raft and their position was for a time very perilous, but the men were ultimately rescued in safety. The raft finally broke up into cribs and the whole of the timber passed safely through.

—Mr. W. D. Morris, of the Bradley, Morris & Reid Co., (limited), of Hamilton, Ont., timber and lumber merchants, was recently elected president of the company for the ensuing year by a unanimous vote of the shareholders. The firm does a very large business in hardwood lumber, making a specialty of American and Canadian dimension oak.