

Canada.

THE CANADIAN TIMBER TROPHY.

(From the Illustrated London News)

We do not pretend that the Canadian timber pyramid with its white birch bark canoe on top, and green draperies, as if in memory of the for ever departed leaves of its logs, forms a very ornamental object in the English end of the centre aisle; and in truth, at first we many times wished it at the back of the bay. By degrees, however, the appropriateness of its position has grown upon us. We have looked around on all the thousand gatherings of trade brought by wind or steam in huge ships from every seaboard in the world, and then at the canoe rightfully raised to view above them all: for in such trail vessels the first traders of the world paddled from creek to creek, and island to island exchanging fruits and skins, clubs and bows and arrows: and from such rude beginnings grew the spirit of enterprise, the desire of commerce, the daring love of sea adventure that now crowd the waters with the commercial navies of the world; from that shell of stitched bark has man by invention and indomitable industry, risen to his steam ship, conquering not alone the wind and waves but time and distance; and for the timber, although it does obstruct the view, and make but an uncouth sort of pile, it too is there rightfully enough, reminding us that even England a few centuries ago, was thick set with forests, and that the first work towards her present busy industry was to fell the old timber, and let the sunlight warm the earth. Man is no dweller in the woods; go where he may, the forest must bow before him: he clears a field for himself, and drives the plough into the soil, grows crops of annual provender for himself and his beasts of burden and fills the land with busy multitudes. We would have the visitors of the Exhibition therefore, pause a little by the timber trophy; it may remind them of the settlers in those regions—of those who go forth to found fresh centres of commerce: to face in strength of the hope of independence, the toils and difficulties of planting new regions. There is a log but look about the timber trophy that takes us to the back woods of Canada; to the prairies of the United States, and the vast park-like sheep ranges of Australia. In their new homes the industry that has felled the woods will push it away—will not alone grow corn and feed cattle and trade in timber, but will raise up mineral products from the earth's depths, and call machinery to its help, and organise industry, and have one day a thousand fruits of skill to show at some future Exhibition.

We have not yet had possession of Canada for a hundred years. It is set down amongst the discoveries of Sebastian Cabot in 1447. The French, it is asserted, made a map of a portion of the coast in 1508; in 1525, the country was formally taken possession of in the name of the King of France; in 1535, Cartier explored its river, and named it the St. Lawrence, from having on that saint's day first sailed upon its waters. The first settlement was in Quebec in 1603, and the country remained in possession of the French until the capture of that city by General Wolfe, in 1759; and by the treaty of Paris in 1763, the whole territory, comprising an area about three times as large as great Britain and Ireland, was ceded to England.

The Canada contributions at the exhibition, to be seen in the compartments opposite the timber trophy and a general view of which we have already given, are in themselves sufficient evidence, that, in this

England beyond the Atlantic, not alone land industry, but manufacturing skill and art-workmanship, have made progress; but still, vast regions even of the best lands are covered with forests. In 1844, the occupied land in East or Lower Canada amounted to 7,540,450 acres; of which 3,083,950 were cultivated, and 4,456,400 still unreclaimed and overgrown with wood. The great plain between Lakes Huron, Erie, and Ontario, comprising about 20,000 square miles, and the best grain country of any of the northern parts of America, is still for the most part covered with lofty forests. The Ottawa or Grand River, which joins the St. Lawrence near Montreal, forms almost entirely the division of the Canadas, and is the great highway so far of the timber trade, which along its banks employs from eight to ten thousand men—an army waging perpetual war with the forests, and which, under the false impulse of our former high differential duties in favour of Canadian timber, carried on its operations most wastefully and unfavourably for the character of the timber and the advance of the trade. Hitherto, white and red pine have formed the chief timber exports of Canada, felled mainly by the banks of the Ottawa, and floated in huge rafts down that river and the St. Lawrence, a distance of from 600 to 700 miles to Quebec. A single raft of timber will not unfrequently have a surface of three acres. The trees are cut down in winter, lopped, squared, dragged by horses over the frozen snow, which forms a slide for them to the water's edge. The rafts are formed upon the ice, on which when the spring thaw sets in, the lumberers, as these forest felling timber traders are called, float down to port, anchoring when they come within range at each rise of tide, and again pursuing their voyage at its fall. A raft seems almost as if some land-slip, or island, huts and all, were sailing down the river; it has five or six houses upon it, and when the wind sets fair, a range of broad thin boards serves for sails. Some of the white pine trees yield planks five feet in breadth, and the largest red pine will give 18-inch square logs, as much as 40 feet long. Of the red pine order is the hemlock a ship's futtock of which is seen in the trophy, and which it is said bears water well, and is of all the woods in those regions the most everlasting as railway sleepers, piles, or for any other underground purpose. But a single tree of the kind, which stands on a little island in the river St. Maurice, is to be found in all Eastern Canada.—The tree in close forests is drawn up frequently to more than sixty feet in height, but its best height is about 40 feet, and its diameter in such specimens is rather more than 2 feet. The specimen in the trophy was cut from a tree 15 feet in circumference and 50 feet high. Close by this hemlock is a thick plank of a beautifully feathered and highly polished dark wood, cut for veneers, from the fork of a black walnut—a timber extensively used in Canada for furniture, and some beautiful tables, sofas, chairs, beds, and a piano of which are in the compartments opposite them, and to be sold at the close of the Exhibition.—The tree from which this plank was obtained was an old giant of its kind, and judged by its size and internal appearance, though sound as a bell, had probably spread up its evergreen leaves to the sun for more than a thousand years. It stood in the valley of the Nanticoke, in the township of Walpole; and in the winter of 1847, Mr. Fisher having marked it for destruction, set up a shanty near it. Its circumference at the ground measured 37 feet, three feet up 23 feet, from which it tapered very little to 31 feet, where it branched into two trunks, 6 feet and 5 feet in diameter;