

Correspondence.

CANADIAN TIMBER AND THE GREAT EXHIBITION.

To the Editor of the Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufactures.

SIR,—Allow me to correct an error which occurs in an article under the above heading, copied from a recent number of the *London Canadian News* into the January number of your Journal. The error I allude to is the statement that, “Dr. Hurlburt, the Commissioner who had charge of the woods exhibited in the Canadian department of the last Exhibition, has nobly exerted himself in bringing under the notice of the proper authorities the valuable advantages possessed by these woods, and to his labours we may, we believe, attribute the high opinion the committee of Lloyd’s now entertain of them for shipbuilding purposes. Dr. Hurlburt has well earned the thanks of all Canadians for his perseverance in attaching public attention in this country to one of the most valuable products of the Province.” It affords me pleasure to know that Lloyd’s have placed the standard of Canadian Timbers over that of other countries for ship-building purposes; but I do not wish you or the people of Canada to suppose that the Province owes Dr. Hurlbert a debt of gratitude, or thanks even, for any services he may have performed in bringing before Lloyd’s commissioners the superiority of Canadian Woods. On his first interview with them, in endeavouring to describe the various kinds, the Doctor found it rather a difficult task; for on showing them a Tamarack board he tried to impress upon them that it was White Cedar. This would not do for men of their practical knowledge, and they soon found out that all the Doctor knew of these woods—their proper names and qualities—might be put in a snuff-box and the lid shut down.

Finding they could not get the information they required, the Commissioners went home in disgust, leaving the Doctor alone (not in his glory) by the side of his Cedar-tamarack to mourn over his inability to discharge the duties of the honourable office our Government had placed him in.

All then went on quietly for a time, nothing occurring to disturb the quiet of our Wooden Commissioner, who went off on a pleasure excursion.

I think between one and two weeks elapsed when these same gentlemen paid another visit to the Canadian Court, and inquired of the courteous Secretary-Commissioner, Mr. Chamberlain, of Montreal, if there was no other person besides Dr. Hurlburt from whom they could obtain a description of the Canadian timber. Mr. Chamberlain

introduced them to me as being well acquainted with their names and qualities. They remarked I had better get the Catalogue of the timber; I said No, there is no wood amongst them that I do not know the names of. The catalogue is of no use, as it does not correspond with the numbers on the timber—duplicate numbers being placed on totally different kinds.

I described to them a number of specimens that I considered most suitable for ship-building purposes. They said they would leave it to my judgment to choose some specimens for them, as, to use the language of one of them, “I had my head screwed on the right side.” I selected for them five specimens, viz.—Black Walnut, Hickory, Black Birch, and Red and White Cedars—these kinds they have added to their list for ship-building purposes, as I recommended.

Now Sir, if there is credit due to any one, I claim the honour, as the above statement cannot be contradicted.

I attended the Exhibition with my World Renowned *Invalid Bedstead*—which by the way was pronounced by the principal surgeons and doctors of London, to be the best bedstead for patients suffering with asthma, consumption, spinal disease, heart disease and fractures of limbs, that have ever come before the British public. It was to show and explain this that I remained nearly eight months at the Great Exhibition, where I labored early and late for Canadian interests; and I now feel gratified if I have in any degree been the means of placing before the British public the woods selected by me.

I do not wish to extend this letter to an unreasonable length, or I might mention some other things for which we have no reason to thank the worthy Commissioner, but I forbear, hoping you will insert this in your next, and confer a favour on.

Yours truly,

THOMAS McILROY,

Brampton, Feb. 10th, 1864.

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for the statements of our Correspondent, and felt some hesitation in publishing his communication; but as Mr. McIlroy has given it over his proper name we have thought it advisable to insert it, and will cheerfully give space in our next for a reply.—Ed.]

Proceedings of Societies.

HAMILTON AND GORE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.

The Annual Meeting of the members was held in the Reading Room of the Institute, at Hamilton,