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By A. G. MORTIMER.

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A. G. MORTIMER, PETERBOROUGH, ONT.

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PETERBOROUGH, ONT., SEPTEMBER, 1887.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

THE evil results of the labor troubles in the building trades at Toronto have not been confined to the immediate locality or to those directly concerned. The amount of building in that city has been greatly reduced by this obstacle with the effect that there has been an appreciable reduction of the consumption of timber and lumber.

ELSEWHERE in this issue we publish full details of the examination of Stewart Bros., insolvents, which took place in the London courts during the past month. Ever since the Maritime Bank failed in New Brunswick, in which this firm was implicated, no small amount of criticism and censure have been lavished on the Messrs. Stewart. From the evidence taken it now appears that Mr. Registrar Linklater was perfectly satisfied with Mr. R. A. Stewart's explanations to the questions put, and Mr. John Stewart having replied to the only question put to him the examination closed. Those who have endeavored to make a mountain out of a mole hill will now have time to reflect on the old maxim: "Be sure you are right, and then go ahead."

THE big Nova Scotia raft is again assuming its natural proportions, and the owners have made up their minds that it is going to be launched some time this month. The length of the structure has been increased 160 feet, and it has been entirely rebuilt. The ways will be made of pitch pine, imported from Pensacola, and an experienced launcher will be brought from New York to guide the raft in the bay. Mr. Robertson, the inventor, it is said, feels certain of success, and the owners are laying out large sums to test the merits of the invention. If this one proves successful there are several places on the bay that have been spotted for like ventures by the same parties. The owners of coasters are naturally much

concerned at the progress made in rebuilding the raft, and it is said that several offers have been made to Mr. Robertson, making it worth his while to forgo the project.

THE Chaudiere lumbermen holding limits in the province of Quebec have appointed a committee to wait upon the Quebec Government with a view to arriving at some satisfactory understanding in reference to the increase in the ground rents recently made by the Government. The object of the lumbermen is said to be principally to make some arrangement or agreement by which they may know what advance in crown dues and ground rents they may expect for a certain number of years. *L'Electeur*, of Quebec, publishes the semi-official announcement that Premier Mercier is at last disposed to favorably regard their representations asking that the ground rents be reduced from \$5 to \$2 per square mile. The lumbermen were represented by Mr. Lemieux, Q.C., a warm personal friend of the Prime Minister.

THE Dominion Exhibition is to be held at Toronto from the 5th to the 17th of September, in conjunction with the Industrial Fair, and the two exhibitions combined will without doubt be one of the grandest things of the kind we have had in Canada. The prizes offered amount to \$30,000. The Toronto people are making great preparations, and although their exhibition grounds and buildings are regarded as the most extensive in the country, they are adding \$40,000 worth of additional buildings. Large special prizes offered for horses, cattle, sheep and pigs, to be shown during the first week of the exhibition in addition to the regular prizes to be awarded the second week. Superior special attractions will be distributed throughout the entire time, so that the show the first week will be equally as attractive as during the second. Cheap railway rates and excursions will be given and every one will be afforded an opportunity of visiting the show.

THE Montreal *Witness* says: "One effect of Unrestricted Reciprocity would be a decided and beneficial change in the lumber trade. At present the forest products of Canada are mainly exported in the roughest state compatible with cheap shipment, as the American duty on rough lumber is much lower than the duty on dressed lumber and the manufactures of wood. The removal of the American duties would enable our saw mills to combine the business of sawing with that of planing and dressing lumber, the manufacture of mouldings, beadings, doors, window sashes, and several other kinds of finished woodwork, all of which can be made more economically direct from the log than they can from the standard lumber. The increase in the number of men who would be employed in this natural and legitimate industry, of which Canada is now largely deprived by tariff laws, would alone probably more than counterbalance the decrease in the number employed in these hot house industries which would suffer from the lack of protection."

IF the Mercier Government carry out their proposal to increase the ground rents on timber limit holders the new arrangement will come into force on the first of September. The rise in the ground rents from \$2 to \$5 may be wise or it may be otherwise. If the rise in the ground rents is a matter

of reform there are other reforms in connection with the forests which are pressing on the attention of the public, and chief amongst these is forest protection. In all the vast territory on the Quebec side of the Upper Ottawa the lumbermen say they never see a fire ranger. The whole country is left to the mercy of chance. This is a matter that concerns the limit holders primarily, but it goes further than that. The forests are the chief wealth of this part of the Dominion, and all in the lumber business and out of it are interested in the preservation of the forests from fire. In 1870 over ten millions of dollars' worth of timber was destroyed by fire in Michigan and Wisconsin, the igniting spark in this case being the remains of a camp fire fanned by the wind. Such a conflagration is liable to break out in the woods of the Upper Ottawa at any time. This season has been one of protracted draught, and the woods are like tinder. If the months of September and October are as barren of rain as the summer months that are gone, the danger will remain until the snowfall. It is a matter of the most vital importance that the great staple of this country should receive adequate protection, by the appointment of fire rangers in sufficient numbers to reduce this danger to a minimum. It is opportune that the lumber manufacturers, whose interest are directly at stake, should urge this matter on the Mercier Government now that the increased prices are about being levied.—*Ottawa Journal*

THE Gilmour-Paradis case, or rather series of cases, for there seems to be no end to the proceedings in which the two parties, or one or the other of them, are concerned, have attracted much attention from the general public, and especially from those interested in operations in the forests of the Province of Quebec. As the various disputed questions of property are now or will shortly come before the courts, we reserve any discussion regarding them, for we believe that it is neither expedient nor right that matter *sub judice* should be prejudged. It would have been well if all had loyally observed this rule, but, unfortunately, some individuals, and especially certain journals, either from being too impetuous or from a desire to obtain the applause of the unthinking, have improperly imported into the case questions of race, tongue and creed. Now the Messrs. Gilmour have a high reputation for fair dealing, and for an honorable impartiality never influenced by such considerations. They have done much to develop the resources of the Province, and have given employment to thousands of French Canadians. They certainly might expect to escape any imputation of being unfairly actuated by prejudices of race and creed; not only, however, have they been thus assailed, but even their counsel has been attacked for daring to act for them. It would be a bad thing for the trade and for the Province itself should lumbermen or others be subject to such charges whenever they may appeal to the law courts to determine rights of property. Besides the Gilmours other English speaking lumbermen are large operators in the Quebec forests and public as well as private interests would suffer, if they were exposed to having such prejudices excited against them. We do not believe, however, that the people of Quebec as a body will sanction the unjustifiable outcry raised by some hotheads, but will give fair play to all without bringing questions of race or creed into the determination of legal rights.