

OUR QUEBEC LETTER.

A QUIET SEASON - STOCKS WINTERING IN QUEBEC - THE MONTMORENCI MILLS - THE PROPOSED SHIPMENT OF LUMBER BY RAIL - THE NEW TIMBER DUES OF QUEBEC - CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE LUMBERMEN AND THE GOVERNMENT.

QUEBEC, March 25th, 1881

In lumbermen's offices in this city, the present is the quietest season of the year. The accounts of last year's operations and shipments, and of stocks on hand are for the most part completed before the end of January. Contracts for next season's delivery have mostly been made weeks ago, and the chartering of vessels has hardly commenced. The stocks wintering here, as appears from the annual trade circulars of Messrs. J. Bell, Forsyth & Co., are unusually light, particularly those remaining in first hands.

The Montmorenci mills are working on full time night and day, the full yield for the season having been long ago disposed of. The figure paid for the season's cut of pine deals by Messrs. Bryant, Powis & Bryant, of London, has not yet transpired. It is believed in usually well informed circles to fully sustain recent quotations. The firm in question are opening an office in this city, and will certainly load twenty to thirty vessels here during the coming summer.

The shipment of lumber from Ottawa to Quebec, by rail instead of by water, has for some weeks past been engaging public attention here. The question has been opened by the recent connection made between the Canada Central, and Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railways, and by the facilities offered in this port, where the terminus of the Q.M.O. & O.R. has been extended to deep water. The only difficulty in the scheme appears to be in connection with the rates of freight charged upon these two lines of railway. Lumber has been actually brought for over 200 miles over the Canada Central and its connections to Hull, but it has not been found possible after paying the freight thereon, to go to the expense of shipping it by Q.M.O. & O.R. to this city. The Local Government of Quebec and the management of the Provincial line have attempted patriotically enough to overcome the difficulty, by offering exceptionally low rates for the development of this trade, amounting to something like \$17 to \$29 per car from Hull to Quebec, a distance of 280 miles. Those interested in this proposed route are not without reasonable hopes that an arrangement will be made between the Provincial or Q.M.O. & O. Railway and the Canada Central, which will allow of the shipment of lumber by rail direct to deep water at Quebec, and avoid the danger and delay of rafting.

The most important event in connection with the lumber industry which has occurred here for a long time past, is the conference had here yesterday between the members of the Local Government and a deputation of lumbermen, concerning the new table of Crown timber dues imposed by the Order-in-Council of November last. It will afford a better understanding to readers outside of Quebec, to explain that prior to the passing of this Order, the dues imposed were ten cents upon logs of 16 inches diameter and under, and fifteen cents upon those of 17 inches and upwards. These dues have been increased to twelve instead of ten cents, and twenty-six cents in the latter case instead of fifteen. Now, the lumbermen complain with reason, not only that the rates, since the new imposition, are exorbitantly high and more than they can afford to pay, especially after so many seasons of depression in the trade, but also that the system of levying the dues is manifestly unfair, and operates to the disadvantage of those getting out a small class of logs. The lumbermen ask therefore, not only that there should be a reduction in the dues, which, by the new Order-in-Council, have been increased from 50 to 75 per cent, but also that the method of levying them should be assimilated to that which obtains in Ontario, where, instead of levying upon the dimensions of the log, a standard of the board measure contained in it is adopted, based upon the tables in Scribner's Doyle. These demands of the trade, decided

upon some weeks ago at a convention of lumbermen held in Ottawa, were embodied in a petition to the Provincial Government of Quebec, and an interview was arranged which took place in Montreal. The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Hon. E. J. Flynn, was prevented by illness from participating in this meeting, and consequently a second convention was arranged, through the exertions of Hon. J. Ruggles Church, and took place in this city yesterday. All the Ministers of the Local Government were present, and the following lumbermen. Messrs. James McLaren, E. H. Bronson, J. A. Cameron, J. R. Booth, and W. G. Perley, of Ottawa; and Messrs. Robert Hamilton, Andrew Thompson, and McNaughton, of Quebec. The grievances of the trade, as already exposed, were fully explained, and the demands of the lumbermen were urged upon the Government. It was shown that the dues imposed in Quebec amounted to something like \$1.22 per 1,000 feet if imposed as in Ontario by Doyle's Scribner upon the board measure contents of logs, while the dues in Ontario are but 75 cents per 1,000. By way of a compromise, it was agreed that the majority of those in the trade, recognizing the necessity of the Provincial finances, would be willing to pay equivalent to \$1.00 per 1,000. After a lengthy and pleasant conference, the Hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands informed the deputation that he hoped to be able before long to promise the lumbermen some slight concessions and probably a diminution in the tariff. It was also possible, he said, that next year there might be a change in the system of collection. This, however, could not be attempted during the present season, owing to other instructions having been sent to agents and bush rangers. The members of the deputation left for home the same evening.

Board of Trade Returns.

Showing receipts of wood imports into the United Kingdom for the last three years:—

TIMBER, WOODS.			
	1878.	1879.	1880.
Russia	322,219	171,888	336,649
Sweden and Norway	468,090	436,053	658,881
Germany	216,158	200,911	277,570
British North America	230,880	196,131	360,622
Other Countries	413,442	369,322	486,143
	1,650,805	1,378,215	2,110,974
TIMBER, SAWN OR SPLIT, PLANED OR DRESSED.			
Russia	914,807	723,609	1,000,608
Sweden and Norway	1,434,477	1,406,730	1,098,201
British North America	963,171	904,559	1,147,040
Other Countries	257,611	218,414	271,055
	3,610,066	3,253,312	4,086,904

As it may be of interest to timber operators to know the points in the United Kingdom which received the bulk of the imports of hewn timber, we annex the following statement:—

IMPORTS.		1880.
Cardiff		210,230
Greenock		90,303
Hartlepool		168,866
Hull		80,329
Liverpool		128,330
London		211,424
Newport		125,711
Sunderland		122,855
Tyne		112,973
All the above in loads of 50 cubic feet.		

Value of Sawdust.

We should hardly credit so large a story from a less reliable source than the *N. W. Lumberman*, but we presume the editor has the statistics at hand to confirm his assertions:—

"In New York there are about 500 venders of sawdust, having a capital of \$200,000 invested, and doing a business amounting to more than \$2,000,000 annually. Forty years ago the mills were glad to have sawdust carted away; twenty-five years ago it could be bought for fifty cents a load, but the price has increased, and now it brings \$3.50 a load at the mills. It is used at the hotels, eating houses, groceries, and other business places. It is wet and spread over floors in order to make the sweeping cleaner work. Plumbers use a great deal about pipes and buildings to deaden walls and floors. Soda water men and packers of glass and small articles of every kind use it, and dolls and some living creatures are more or less stuffed with it. Yellow pine makes the best sawdust, as it is the least dusty, and has a pungent, healthy smell. But any white wood dust will do. Black walnut sawdust will not sell and is burned."

THERE are 215 penitentiary convicts employed in logging camps in Texas.

THE VANISHING FORESTS.

The New York *Shipping List* says: The American people boast of their quickness to profit by the logic of events but in respect to many things in the line of general duty to society, they are as slow to learn as was the ancient Egypt, who resisted a number of very convincing arguments with which the Lord had intrusted Moses. There can be no doubt, in light of events, that the greed of man, and not the unkindness of nature, must be held responsible for the increasing frequency of droughts in this country. By such an extensive denudation of forest lands is now being practiced, we are seriously disarranging Nature's economy and interfering with the conditions that are essential to her healthy processes. It is a generally understood fact, upon which scientific men have now no monopoly, that the increase of draught is, in the long run, in direct ratio to the destruction of the forests and general tree supply. A statistician, who claims to have made accurate calculation, declares that the pine forests of Michigan will be exhausted in thirteen years, and those of Wisconsin and Minnesota in thirty and forty years. There is little reason to doubt the approximate accuracy of the estimate. Twenty years ago this region had scarcely been touched by the axe. The disappearance of forests will make the economy of wood a matter of duty, could a generation habitually thoughtless of its descendants be influenced by such a remote evil. We are a little too much inclined to guard the claims of our descendants as did the miserly humorist, who, when asked to do something which conduced to the good of after ages, asked why he should be called upon to do anything for posterity since posterity had never done anything for him. Wood must always enter more or less into building enterprises. If for no other purpose, our forests should be spared from wanton destruction. If we can economize them by using the more substantial building materials with which nature has so lavishly supplied us, and at the same time save moisture for the parched country, and add safety, beauty and durability to our cities and villages, it is certainly worth our while to make the effort.

Blowing off Boilers.

A French scientific journal gives some useful hints in regard to emptying and blowing off steam boilers. It is injurious to empty a boiler soon after stopping it, because, in the case of an externally fired boiler, the masonry in which it is placed being at a higher temperature than the boiler it envelops, imparts to it some of its heat, which, in the absence of the water, may do it some harm. It is well to admit a current of air through the flues some hours after stopping the generator, and not to empty it before the flues become cooled to a temperature below 300°. When the flues are not too hot, no serious inconvenience is experienced in emptying the boiler under pressure. We do not say at high pressure, as for a boiler, the pressure of which would be 10 pounds, the temperature of the water being 304°, a great quantity of steam would be generated during the process of emptying; we think at a pressure of two pounds the boiler could be emptied without danger or inconvenience. We have sometimes seen owners empty their boilers almost immediately after the fires had been extinguished, clean them with cold water as soon as they were empty, and keep up a current of water so that the workmen might work there. Boilers of small dimensions sometimes resist such treatment, but in large boilers it will be seen that unequal contractions must take place, causing the rivets to burst.

Accurate Statistics, &c.

THE CANADA LUMBERMAN.—This is the title of a paper published in Peterborough, by Tokor & Co., devoted to the interests of the Lumber and Timber Industries of the Dominion. THE CANADA LUMBERMAN will be purely a trade organ, and will be absolutely non-political. It will contain those accurate statistics which are necessary to the trade as a basis for intelligent operations. All information of value to the trade at large will be diligently collected and matters of interest to them will be discussed and advocated. Subscription \$2 per annum, published semi-monthly.—*Brantford Courier*.

APPREHENSIONS OF NORTH-WESTERN LUMBERMEN.

The *Mississippi Valley Lumberman* and Manufacturer has the following concerning the logging situation on the Upper Mississippi streams:—

"The gravity of the situation comes not so much from the fact that there is too much snow for logging purposes as from the danger of a sudden thaw, which would certainly create the most disastrous floods ever known on the continent. This danger is so imminent that all stand in fear at the probable events of the next sixty days, which will almost certainly ruin scores if not hundreds of lumbermen. There is now more than double as much water on the 150,000 square miles drained by the waters of the Upper Mississippi as there has been since its first settlement at any one time. Last year the floods did more than a million and a half of dollars' damage to the lumbermen of the valley, but from the situation now the losses of 1881 will render the damage of last year insignificant. Those who have logs secure in lakes and small streams will do well to keep them there as long as possible."

FOREST FIRES.

We find the following editorial in the *Montreal Witness*:—

The loss caused by forest fires may be partially seen by a statement made by Mr. Mackay, the great Ottawa lumber merchant, that in four townships between the Mississippi and Mackinaw rivers, which fifteen years ago were one of the finest pine countries ever known, the pine has almost all been destroyed by forest fires, started by malicious vagabonds. A series of interesting articles on forestry, by a special correspondent, appeared in the *Witness* a couple of years ago, in which it was made very plain that if remedial legislation were not had and a stern example made of the "malicious vagabonds" and others who, though not malicious, have no sense of responsibility when making fires in the bush, our magnificent forests would in a few years be a thing of the past. Every patriotic man should consider himself personally a custodian of these immense sources of wealth to the country, and do what is in his power by example, rebuke, advice, and, where necessary, "legal persuasion," to make people, especially wandering vagabonds, understand their value.

Port Hope Freight Rates.

A meeting of the vessel-owners of Port Hope was held at the office of Mr. R. C. Smith, jr., to take into consideration the rates of freight from this port. Mr. R. C. Smith, jr., was in the chair. After a general discussion and careful calculation of the expenses of vessels, at the lowest rates, the following rates of freight were adopted, and the owners pledged themselves to carry them out in good faith. The resolutions are based with equal fairness to owners and shippers:—From Port Hope to Oswego, and other American ports on Lake Ontario, lumber, \$1.20 per 1,000 ft.; shingles, 20c. per 1,000; lath, pickets, &c., at a proportionate rate; grain 2½c. a bushel (Oswego to Kingston); coal, 4c. per ton (free in and out Oswego to Port Hope); hay, \$2 per ton (on and off rail, with deck load); on all other articles of freight, the rates to be regulated by the expenses incurred for the trip and the foregoing freights.—*Times*.

Toronto Freight Rates.

The ice still remains firm in the bay, although the recent fine weather has so honeycombed it in places that crossing it is now considered dangerous. Special telegrams from various ports tend to show a similar state of affairs existing over the lakes, and point to a late opening. At this point preparations are being actively made for the opening of navigation, and both vessels and docks are being thoroughly overhauled and repaired. Rates promise to open higher than last spring, and charters have already been made at \$1.25 per thousand on lumber to Oswego.

THE difficulty experienced, in filling orders in the Chicago market, on account of broken stocks is on the increase in the American markets, and it is said that on this account in some markets the lumber being handled is not far removed from green.