



"As usual," writes P. O. Byram, of Madawaska, N.B., "our bluenose lumbermen generally lose about one week of the best brook driving in spring by being so narrow and contracted in intellect, that to save one cent and lose one dollar, they fail to have their men on hand before the water rises, and pick the ice out of small streams, instead of waiting for the sun to thaw them out. Providence has smiled on them for the last few years, but by all appearance this year, to their sorrow, Providence will not indulge in too much procrastination, and will leave their lumber in the streams as a warning to take time by the forelock and be always ready. I hope I may be a false prophet, for lumbermen have made money this year, but I fear they will be like a good cow giving milk, kick it over in the drain."

"Rain," said Mr. Andrew McCormick, the well-known lumberman, "is still wanted up the Upper Ottawa and until it comes heavy and soon the lumber industry suffers. On some of the streams in the upper country there is no more water now than there was last fall. All the spring water has run away, and as for the north water, it is of no use for the drive. On some of the drives the lumbermen are talking of discharging their men and leaving the logs where they are for the present year. The streams on the north side of the Ottawa river are much more in need of water than on the south side. I have been over thirty years in the lumber business, but in all that time I never saw such a want of water. What we want is a whole week's rain to swell the rivers and unless that comes before the 10th of June things will get into a bad shape, for the timber and logs will be 'hung up.' The mills will not be seriously affected this year, for there are logs enough in the several booms on the Ottawa river to keep them going, but next spring and summer there might be a scarcity of logs to saw until they are drawn out of the small streams and swept down the Ottawa."

"So much uncertainty is associated with the sale of lumber in the city," remarked Mr. John Donogh, of Donogh & Oliver, "that not only are we not pushing sales, but in some cases we prefer to be without business. Even with firms that are supposed to be in good standing, we are learning by sad experience that they have no more bottom frequently than the man who makes no pretense to be held up with abundance of capital. The curse of business all through is the loose credit system. Gall, Anderson & Co.'s failure is a case in point. Everyone supposed the firm to be in a good position. They were selling lots of lumber, but when the crash came we found they were doing trade as recklessly as many who had gone before them. One can easily understand the temptations to this kind of business. Obligations had to be met, and the man in a corner is ready to sell his lumber to almost anyone, if he can only get paper that the banks will accept. Protected themselves, the banks in too many cases accept this indifferent paper to relieve other paper of no better quality, and only when trouble comes does the trusty lumberman find out the real condition of his customer's estate." The general outlook of the lumber trade, Mr. Donogh considered, was encouraging.

"I can hardly give you any reason why there is no Canadian lumberman's association," said Mr. James Tennant, "not but what there is need for an organization of the kind." We all know why the old cow crossed the road. "Because she crossed the road." And there's no lumberman's association because there's no lumberman's association. I have not been able to discover any better reason in my talks with lumbermen either this month, or at any other time in my calls upon them. "Everyone just now," continued Mr.

Tennant, "is talking about this failure and the other that is occurring in the lumber trade. I need only refer to the assignee's list of liabilities of the most notable failure of the month, Gall, Anderson & Co., to show how widely are the ramifications of this business. Lumbermen, almost from Dan to Beer-Sheba, are to be found represented in that list of \$58,000. It is not to be supposed that a union of lumbermen, no matter how solidly they hold together, is going to banish insolvency. Like the poor, the unfortunate in business will always be with us. But a little more cohesion among members of the trade, a greater amount of confidence, one in the other, would enable us very often to give to one another pointers and suggestions of the conditions of those to whom we are selling stocks that if acted upon would keep our ledgers free of many a bad account."

"A union of local lumbermen," said Mr. Eyer, of Reid & Eyer, Toronto, "is no doubt an end much to be desired. We are working at cross purposes to-day, where, if pulling together and meeting in council occasionally, we could arrive at conclusions that would be generally helpful to the whole trade. But so far as arriving at a uniform price basis, I do not see how that is possible the way trade is broken up in this city. What is needed to get trade into healthy channels is the yard system, where stocks of standard and wantable lumber will be kept. Then there could be an intelligent system of inspection and prices fixed on that inspection. To accomplish this end it is necessary that men with capital embark in the lumber business. They don't do so now and the result is we are almost without a wholesale trade in this city. We have no lack of lumbermen. All a man has to do to-day to get into the lumber business in Toronto is to secure desk room in an office, print some letter heads and envelopes, and announce himself a lumber merchant. He can solicit orders and he can secure from the mills whatever lumber he wants in mixed carloads. When lumber is sold in this way, it is a case of every man for himself, and a basis of inspection is out of the question. I am not going to say that the mills should refuse to sell lumber in this manner. They can hardly do otherwise in the present shape of trade. I do not know of a single mill that pretends to sell its supplies to one concern only; but when trade gets round to that point where the millman will sell only to the wholesaler, leaving him to do the jobbing, the lumber business in this city and the country generally will be in much better form. 'All things come to those who wait,' and we will get where we ought to be—some day. 'The sweet bye and bye' will yet be the lumberman's goal."

Mr. Edward Jack tells in the N. Y. Lumber Trade Journal of the manufacture of lasts in the province of New Brunswick. On the banks of the St. John river and its tributaries large bodies of beech and maple of excellent quality are found and are utilized in the manufacture of last blocks. The chief operator is Mr. Ora Gilpatrick, of Danforth, Maine. His operations are carried on upon the Keswick river, about 30 miles from the city of Fredericton. The valley of this river is traversed by the Canadian Pacific railway (New Brunswick division), which gives a ready means of transportation to the cities of the United States. Mr. Gilpatrick employs about 75 hands. His camps are distant on an average from the Canadian Pacific railway about five miles. The plan of operations is as follows: After the camps are built and clears in the woods and roads made to the maple ridges, the trees on which have been previously examined, the choppers proceed to cut down such trees as they judge suitable for their purposes. No logs less than 10 inches at the top end are made use of. After the tree has been cut down the log is hauled to a large vacant space in the forest which had been cleared in the autumn, and which is known as the "yard." Here they are piled in rows or tiers. At each yard there is a portable engine of about 12-horsepower, which drives a drag saw for the purpose of cutting the logs into lengths of from 10 to 15 inches. As these lengths are sawn they are removed by the marker, who has a pattern for the shape of the block. This he marks on the end of the section, which is then passed on to the "chippers," whose duty it is to split the section and roughly chip the

blocks according to the pattern above referred to. When this is done they pass into the hands of the "sorter," who places each block into its proper division, that is to say, as misses', women's, men's and boys' lasts. After having been thus assorted they are hauled on sleds to the drying sheds on the line of the railway. These are nearly open sheds, roofed over so as to keep off any rain which may fall. In the drying shed each kind of block is placed by itself. Blocks for rubber work are forwarded "green." They are kiln-dried before use. Those to be made use of for the manufacture of leather boots or shoes are allowed to remain in the drying sheds until the month of September. Eastern maple is much better for last purposes than that growing in the western states, the wood of which is of a much softer character.

The lumber firm of J. & T. Charlton are well known both in our own country and the United States. They are Canadians, and the senior member, Mr. John Charlton, has for years been a representative for Norfolk in the House of Commons, and one of the ablest members of the Liberal party. The firm are large operators at Little Current, and interested in timber limits in the northern section of the province. They also carry on a business at Tonawanda, N.Y., as sawmill owners and lumbermen. A week ago I had a chat with Mr. T. Charlton, who is the resident member of the firm at Tonawanda. "Southern pine," said Mr. Charlton, "is coming into competition with Canadian pine on the American side of the border. A considerable quantity is finding its way to New York. In some respects Southern pine is better than Canadian pine. I think the advantage is with the former for flooring and outside sheeting. The pick qualities are better than anything we can get in Canada; some of it is as hard as oak. Southern pine affects Norway. We have not bought any Norway for years. I am inclined to think that it was the intention of the author of the McKinley Bill to have included Norway under the one dollar duty; but not being a practical lumberman he was not aware that Norway and white pine were two different woods. The South is rich in timber and prices will keep down for years." Replying to an interruption from the interviewer, Mr. Charlton said "that any additional cost in freight, because of distance, was offset by the price. The genuine lumberman in the South has a rather hard road to travel; with the poor workmen, who have only their earnings to depend upon, the position is aggravatingly tough. It is a common matter for a man to get hold of a sawmill for a season. He engages his workmen and starts cutting, paying them just as little on account of wages as it is possible, putting them off with one excuse and another until he gets near the end of the season. In the meantime he has been shipping out his lumber. The men are informed that this is in the hands of New York dealers, who have not yet paid for it, and he presumably starts off to look after his account. In the words of a popular ballad: 'But he never came back again,' and the men are done out of their season's wages. Next year a new proprietor comes to occupy the mill, and, as a new man, he is taken to be an honest man, the workmen learning when too late to help themselves, that they have once more been deceived. You can understand how difficult it is for the honest, reputable lumberman of the South to meet the class of competition that is part and parcel of these methods. The unprincipled adventurer, paying little or almost nothing for his labor, cuts under the other every time, so that to-day legitimate lumbering is not profitable in the South." Touching the tariff question Mr. Charlton said he would certainly like to see free lumber, but he doubted very much if it was coming. "Just now there is more election talk than real business going. I certainly think that the considerable influx of Canadian lumber into the United States during the past year has affected the price of American lumber. It has been an additional element of competition."

A strong delegation of lumbermen waited on the Quebec Government and urged a modification of the practice imposed by the late Government of granting special permits to third parties in territory already licensed. The Government promises the matter serious attention.