



WHEN the millenium is finally ushered in we may expect, possibly, to learn that railroad freight rates are framed on something like an equitable basis, and shippers will no longer have cause to complain. It seems to be one constant fight to come anywhere nearly keeping the railroads up to their printed contracts, much less an unwritten law of fairness and decency that ought to influence business corporations of all kinds, even railroads. Dropping into the office of J. G. Cane & Co., a few days ago, I enquired if there were any disturbing elements in the trade these days, and was glad to learn that, on the whole, peace and quietness reigned. The lumber shark was still abroad, but even he was keeping under cover at present. "But it is hard work for us," said a representative of this concern, "to keep the railways in tow. We have just had to foot a bill of \$23, excess in charges of two cars of lumber we shipped a few days ago to a customer. A clause in the lumber freight schedule reads: "Minimum weight 30,000 pounds per car, unless the marked capacity of car be less, in which case the marked capacity, (but not less than 24,000 lbs.) will be charged, and must not be exceeded. Should it be impracticable to load certain descriptions of light lumber up to 30,000 pounds to the car, then the actual weight only will be charged for, but not less than 24,000 pounds." The shipment under complaint was basswood, and we lived up to the strict letter of the words I have quoted, but it did not save us from the excess in charges that I tell of. Of course we made our complaint, but the only satisfaction we could get was a case of play-off by the agent here on some local agent. The blame was shifted from one to another. In the meantime our bank account was \$23 less, the profit on that shipment of lumber was \$23 short, and I am free to tell you that profits on lumber these days will not stand any such a shaving as that."

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When I called upon Mr. J. H. Eyer, lumberman, the other day, I learned that he had returned a short time since from Fenelon Falls and that district. He had been inspecting some of the stock of Howry & Sons, this concern, like mill men generally, being quite ready to find a wholesaler who would help to place their stock this season. Mr. Eyer expressed himself as much pleased with the splendid mill that the Howry people have erected at that point, or rather the substantial improvements that they have made in the plant this year. They have put in some of the very best saw mill machinery and calculate on cutting some 200,000 feet per day. They have also erected and are fitting up in fine style a planing mill, and will not only ship lumber, but also dressed stock. This firm are large operators, and are evidently going to make the most possible out of the timber limits that they control in Canada. It was pleasing to learn of this enterprise, especially the development in the line of the planing mill business. I have been interested in watching how free trade in lumber would effect this department of lumbering. There seemed to be little doubt but that we might expect a growth in saw mill business, for even with lumbermen who own mills in Saginaw, it was apparent that to many of them it would be an advantage to cut their stock on the spot and ship the sawn lumber, rather than the logs. No one was sure, however, just how far the trade in dressed stock would shape. I am free to confess that it has not grown as it seems to me it might grow, and yet this step by Howry & Sons may be a straw showing which way the wind blows. A number of large United States concerns are now operating mills, and it only needs to be demonstrated to them, as probably Howry & Sons may demonstrate, that a well-equipped planing mill will prove a valuable adjunct to a saw mill, to make sure of a number being erected. At any rate, lumbermen, I know, will watch this innovation, if I may so call it.

The other day I came across an item in a local paper telling the story of a Maine man, who had eyes on what might be termed some scrub maple, in York County, N. B. He believed there was money in this rag end of the forest, and it is now stated that inside of two years he got out of that piece of territory 2,000,000 maple last blocks and made \$12,000. I hear also of some cute Yankees who have made a fair amount of money out of some discarded hemlock logs. And I think the story has been told before in these columns, of the old lumberman, who bought up a lot of walnut stumps in a section of the United States, converted them into lumber, and with walnut a valuable commodity, he was well rewarded for his foresight and labor. There are lots of such opportunities, I am convinced, all over the country, to the man who uses his eyes, and knows something of the conditions of the lumber market. And the time is coming when we will be glad to place a market value on these remnants of the forest. I am always interested in facts of this kind also, as illustrating the wisdom of being careful of little things. In the primitive days of lumbering, all one had to do was to get into the forest and pick the choice timbers, and money was easily made, but those days have gone by. As I have been going over lately some of the government blue books, telling of the patches of timber that are to be found scattered, and scattered widely I must admit, in various parts of the province, I feel like saying to readers of these pages, keep your eyes skinned. There is money in these corners of the lumber vineyard. Away up in our northern country, and to some extent through some of the counties that to-day are pretty well settled, there is money to be made out of lumber by the man who will go about it in a thrifty, prudent, persistent manner, and is not afraid of work. I am not making any charge for this pointer, save the publisher's one of \$1 a year for the LUMBERMAN, weekly and monthly editions at that, but a pointer it is, and worth a good deal to somebody.

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So large a quantity of lumber is used in car building it is a matter of importance to learn that in the United States, at least, there is likely to be an active season in that department of manufacture. The National Car and Locomotive Builder, in one item, records an order for 9,100 freight cars, box, platform and tank. And the New York Central has itself given an order for 3,000 box cars. Take the possibilities in Canada. Including sidings and double tracks, there are about 18,590 miles of railway. Mr. Geo. Johnson, government statistician, figures out the possibilities of lumber consumption in this one direction, as follows: At 3,000 ties to the mile, the ties required number 55,770,000. Assuming the life of a tie to be seven years, the number needed every year is about 8,000,000 for renewals, and allowing 300 miles for new roads every year a million more for this purpose, or about 9,000,000 ties a year. Supposing that 50 cubic feet of ties can be obtained from an acre of forest then 3,340,000 acres will be required to supply the consumption of young and thrifty trees needed for the 18,590 miles, and 530,000 acres for each year's demands. With various parts of the country pushing for the particular class of lumber indigenous to their section, it seems likely that woods that have not hitherto been used in car construction, will, in the future, be given a place. Three hundred refrigerator cars are to be built by a Chicago establishment and the statement is made that these will be constructed entirely of Douglas fir and Washington spruce, except the bunkers, draw heads, and break beams. The object of this is said to be because of the lighter weight of these woods for an equal strength. Where cars are pulled a long distance, and over roads where extra motive power is required the matter of weight becomes an important consideration. If Douglas fir should be largely used for car building it will mean a good deal to the lumber interests of British Columbia.

J. R. Booth's mill at the Chaudiere, has commenced work with a full gang of men to operate saws.

The Bronson & Weston Lumber Co., Ottawa, Ont., has voluntarily adopted the ten-hour day for their mills when work is commenced, without reduction of wages, and the other lumber concerns, it is expected, will follow suit.

INTERNATIONAL LUMBER MATTERS.

(Special correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.)

IT was quite generally conceded by lumber handlers, both in this country and Canada, that the abolition of the duty on manufactured lumber from the Dominion would almost, if not entirely, do away with the export of logs into the United States. This assumption, however, does not appear to be in keeping with reports recently to hand from different points throughout the State of Michigan. The shipments of lumber to United States ports, especially from the Georgian Bay district of Ontario, since the introduction of the Wilson bill, have not been by any means equal to expectations; and if the information we have on the subject be correct, very large quantities of logs will be rafted the present season from Canadian limits. It is said that Alger, Smith & Co. will raft 50,000,000 feet of logs to Detroit and Ecorse, and probably 20,000,000 feet from Georgian Bay to their Cheboygan mills. Brownlee & Co. will take over 3,000,000 feet from Georgian Bay and 2,000,000 feet from Cheboygan to their mills at River Rouge. The Delta Lumber Co. has purchased the Moffatt mill and will raft 4,000,000 feet from Georgian Bay and vicinity and 12,000,000 feet from Manistique.

These are only a few instances of what may be expected in the way of log export across the border, all of which goes to show that free lumber is not sufficient incentive for the Michigan lumber kings, either to keep their mills idle or to remove them to the log, in place of the log to the mill.

Dealers throughout New York State seem to be pretty generally of the opinion that free lumber is to their interest, but much dissatisfaction is expressed with that section of the Wilson bill which permits planed and grooved lumber to be admitted free. In both Buffalo and Tonawanda, for instance, the trade of the planing mills is stagnant, and several mills are shut down entirely. While this state of affairs would appear to open a field for Canadian lumbermen to put in planing machinery and ship their stocks dressed, the uncertainty as to how long the present privileges will be granted them would, of necessity, make the expenditure a risky one. It looks very much as if the next Presidential election will place the reins of power in other hands, and in such an event it is pretty safe to conjecture that a duty will again be placed on lumber in a manufactured state.

The National Wholesale Lumber Dealers' Association is the title of a new organization, with headquarters in New York. The object of this Association is to endeavor to carry into effect an organized effort to keep each department or branch of the lumber trade in its proper channel. It is contended that to properly, legitimately and profitably pass lumber from the log into the hands of the consumer, there should be but four divisions of the trade—manufacturer, wholesaler, retailer and consumer. Best results are experienced by all when trade is kept in its proper channels, and this condition is accomplished only in the ratio in which each division of trade recognizes and protects the rights and legitimate markets of the divisions other than its own. The wholesale trade, which seems to be honorably striving to protect the retailer, has the right to ask of all manufacturers that they refrain from selling to or soliciting the trade of any retail dealer or consumer. It is contended, and justly so, that the manufacturers' legitimate trade is with the wholesaler. When they sell to the retailer they are disturbing the natural conditions of trade and taking away from the wholesaler that much trade which is legitimately his.

That both the manufacturer in the United States and Canada has been too often guilty of doing business in the manner referred to is a well-known fact and the wholesale trade has been aroused to concerted action to do away with an evil which they claim is jeopardizing their business interests.

Brief interviews with representative lumbermen in Buffalo seem to indicate a steadily improving state of trade. Building operations in business localities will be on a more extensive scale than for years past.

In reply to an enquiry touching the hardwood market, the President of the Buffalo Hardwood Lumber Co. made the statement that their volume of business for the month of March this year exceeded that of any one month during eight years. There was an apparent shortage of red oak and quartered white oak, and the demand for these woods was on the increase. Canadian manufacturers holding such stocks will find it to their interest to note the fact.

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Place Bros., Stoney Creek, Ont., are building a new sash, blind and door factory at that place.

Ward & Steele, contractors, of Prescott, Ont., contemplate building a new planing mill this spring.

The Ontario Steam Logger Co., Toronto, Ont., are applying for incorporation with a capital stock of \$250,000 to manufacture snow traction engines for the hauling of saw-logs, etc.