

LOSSES BY FOREST FIRES.

LOW WATER INJURES BUSINESS—THE WASTE OF MATERIAL IN MANUFACTURING SQUARE TIMBER.

Some very interesting information regarding the lumber trade has been secured. It is upwards of thirty years since the water in the Ottawa river was so low as it is at the present time. Along the banks of the river and its tributaries large quantities of saw logs are tied up, which may only be estimated by hundreds of thousands. The little village of mills at the Chaudiere is almost deserted. The mills have shut down, and disappointed mill owners are forced to cancel remunerative contracts, owing to the scarcity of logs. All the prominent lumbering establishments have been obliged to suspend work, their yards having been cleared of logs, and the idea of getting any further supply down the river this season has been abandoned. It was estimated, during the early part of the present month, that this season's cut for the Ottawa Valley district would reach 367,000,000 feet. The present state of the water will make a material change in this calculation, which will probably fall short at least thirty per cent. of the actual quantity of lumber sawn.

LOSS FROM FOREST FIRES.

The want of water is not the only obstacle which the Ottawa lumbermen have been obliged to encounter of late. The destructive forest fires which have been raging over their extensive timber limits during the past few weeks have laid waste some of the most valuable timber property in the Dominion. The question of the timber supply of the Dominion has frequently received the attention of Parliament, and notwithstanding the precautions which have been taken to enforce the laws for the prevention of forest fires it has been found impossible to lessen the quantity of valuable property which is yearly destroyed in this way. The lowest estimate of the average annual loss through forest fires places it at \$5,000,000 in the Ottawa Valley alone. It was suggested by an expert, who was examined before a committee of the House of Commons, that the appointment of a staff of inspectors of forests would largely reduce the annual loss from this cause. That the country should derive the fullest benefit from the services of such a corps, he said, it would be necessary that these inspectors should be practical foresters, men of education and ample experience in the best training schools of Europe. It would be comparatively easy to secure the services of such a class, who, when once established in this country, could train their assistants. When it is considered that it takes a pine tree 150 years to attain maturity the magnitude of the yearly national loss from this cause is more apparent.

VALUE OF TIMBER LANDS.

An idea may be formed of the value of the timber limits from which the Ottawa district is supplied from the following account of sales which were effected in this city by public auction and properties offered for sale on the 21st inst.:—The Campbell limit of thirty-nine square miles, situated on the Trout Lake branch of the Petowawa river, was first offered *en bloc*. It was started at \$15,000 and was knocked down at \$29,500. A limit of fifty square miles on the Desmoine and Coulange rivers, owned by Sir Francis Hincks, was next offered. This limit was withdrawn, the highest offer being \$110 per square mile.

The Fraser and McDougall limits were then offered, berths 161 and 163 being knocked down at \$99,000; berths 165 and 168, 100 miles square, and berth 166, 50 square miles, for \$59,000 and \$36,000 respectively; berth 167, 50 square miles, for \$15,000. An offer of \$196 per square mile was refused for the Braman limit, 50 miles square, on the Kippawa river. Lake Nipissing limits, berths 23, 43, and 51, 108 square miles, were offered, but withdrawn, the highest bid being \$75,000 for the lot, or \$50,000 for berth 23.

THE FORWARDING TRADE.

While the Millowners will be serious losers as the result of this season's operations, their misfortunes will be shared by the forwarders who carry their lumber to market. Although the volume of this season's business had, up to within a few weeks since, been fully up to the average, the forwarding trade on the whole, has not proved remunerative. Encouraged by

the high freights ruling last year from the Ottawa mills to the American ports, United States bargemen added nearly one hundred new boats to their fleet for this trade. A number of bargemen employed on the Erie Canal withdrew their boats from that route, expecting to find more profitable employment in the Ottawa lumber trade. Their expectations can hardly have been realized. Freights opened in the spring at \$3.75 per thousand from Ottawa to New York and \$3 to Albany. Two weeks later they dropped twenty-five cents per thousand, and about midsummer another decline of twenty-five cents took place. The low rates of coal freights to Montreal and other ports have also proved a serious loss to the boatmen, who last year found profitable employment in taking a cargo of coal on their return trip. There is still another and equally serious drawback against which they have been obliged to contend. The low state of the water in the rivers and canals will not admit of boats being loaded to anything over three feet draft. The small craft have been compelled to lay up for the season, and the larger boats, on account of the small loads they are able to carry, are only barely clearing running expenses. Local forwarders are looking for an advance in freights, yet there does not appear to be any reason at present why their anticipations should be realized. The barge stock was never so large as it has been the present season, in consequence of which the competition has been more active. Quebec freights remain about as they opened in the spring—\$2 per thousand for dry and \$2.10 for green lumber. Freights to Montreal range from \$1.10 to \$1.20 per thousand; to Whitehall \$2.25, and to Burlington \$2 per thousand.

A NEW OUTLET.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Province of Ontario some little time since called the attention of Canadian mill owners to the opening up of a new outlet for the product of their mills, by which they may escape the duty of \$2 per thousand feet which meets them on shipments to the United States, and which, he says renders it almost, if not altogether impossible, for them to compete with lumber from Michigan. The outlet he refers to is the shipment of inch and inch and a quarter sawn lumber direct from the mills at Ottawa, viz., the North Shore Railway to Quebec, thence by vessel to Glasgow. The experiment was tried and proved fairly remunerative. Hitherto the produce of Canadian saw mills shipped to Europe has been in the form of deals only.

WASTE IN SQUARE PINE.

To the great loss annually sustained from the waste of valuable material in the manufacture of square and waney pine, the commissioner has given special attention. The suggestions he offers for its remedy are well worthy of its consideration. He estimates that one fourth of every tree cut into square or waney timber is lost to the wealth of the country. When the tree is cut down it is lined off for squaring, and the "round" outside the lines is beaten off on the four sides. From the portion of the tree thus thrown to waste the best class of clear lumber is obtained when taken in the round to a saw mill. There is also the upper portion of the tree, which is cast away when the tree is made into square timber, but which would be sawn into lumber (of lower grade) if the round log were taken to the mill.

The estimated loss to the Province of Ontario from waste in cutting square pine, from 1868 to 1877, both years inclusive, was placed at \$3,577,500. The circulation is as follows:—Total quantity taken from public and private lands during the ten years, 119,239,420 cubic feet; waste, one-fourth of each tree, equal to one-third of the total mentioned, namely, 39,750,140 cubic feet, or say in round numbers 477,000,000 feet board measure, which may be valued one-half at \$10 per thousand feet, and one-half at \$5 per thousand, representing relatively the prime timber from the upper part of the tree, average value say \$7.50 per thousand, which gives the total loss for ten years as mentioned above, or equal to an annual loss of \$357,750.

The word character comes from a term which means to engrave upon or to cut in. In selecting pens it is advisable to see that the name of Esterbrook is stamped on them.

THE SUPERVISORSHIP OF CULLERS.

The *Montreal Gazette* says:—We print in another column a letter from Quebec on the subject of the supervisorship of cullers, the position having been rendered vacant by the death of Mr. Quinn, who for many years filled that office. It raises a question of very considerable importance, namely, whether an office like that of Supervisor of Cullers, which from the nature of the business is located in Quebec, is to be considered as an ordinary political appointment in the hands of the member representing the constituency and supporting the administration of the day. Our own opinion is that it does not come within this class. It is not like a clerkship in the Post Office or Custom House or Excise Department, which may fairly be said, under the system that prevails in this country, to be within the gift of the local representatives. It is an office which has to do with the trade of the whole Dominion. The Supervisor of Cullers at Quebec is the Supervisor of Cullers for Canada, and under these circumstances it would, we think, be most unfortunate if the position were considered to be the gift of the member for Quebec. As a matter of fact, the lumbermen of the Ottawa and the St. Maurice have infinitely more to do with the Cullers' office, and are infinitely more interested in the manner in which the Supervisor performs his duty, than are the people of Quebec themselves, excluding, of course, the timber merchants, who may be said to have an equal interest. Under these circumstances we cannot help thinking the Government would act most wisely if they considered the views of the trade rather than the views of a supporter, who happens to represent the city of Quebec, in making the appointment.

THE VANDAL IN THE FOREST.

KENTUCKY'S GREAT TREE MEASURING FIFTY SIX FEET AT THE BASE—SLAUGHTERED!

What vandal hands cut down that pine,
That forest monarch tree!
That battled for life five hundred years,
Away in Kentucky?

Some timber butcher sure it was,
Who in his sordid strife,
Counted only on what logs he'd make,
By taking that monarch's life.

A soulless crowd from Vanceburg too,
Assembled there to see
Him wield the axe, and not one cried,
O! woodman spare that tree.

But shouts of frantic joy they gave,
When bowed its cloud capped head,
And its giant trunk in thunder crashed
Upon an earthly bed.

Their children, if half civilized,
Will sure in after years,
Make pilgrimages to its stump,
And water it with tears.

And when, in the long lapse of time,
Its heart is in decay,
They'll make a flower bed of its core,
When those Goths have passed away.

J. L.,
A Lumberman.

Cote St. Antoine, Montreal, October, 1881.

Startling Waste.

One reason why the cabinet woods of the country are scarcer and dearer yearly is given in the editorial correspondence of the *Industrial World*. The gentleman has been spying out the land, and in the course of much interesting information says:—"The unaccountable waste of timber is startling, if not appalling. While economists, and all thoughtful men in the older states, are gravely discussing the problem of the coming timber famine, the good natured, easy going farmers of Henry county (and all Missouri) are splitting magnificent walnut, butternut, cherry and mulberry trees into common rails for the enclosure of \$8, \$12 and \$20 lands, cutting them into logs for cabins, hovels, and pig troughs, and even into common cord-wood, to sell on the market in competition with cheap coals. Still worse, many a woodland farmer girdles scores of valuable trees (even the stumps of which will be gathered for the coming markets), burns them in the now clearings side by side with the baser woods, and wonders the while that he must pay enormous prices for solid walnut furniture from factories a thousand miles away." Where are all the timber buyers?

Wood-Preserving Process.

A new wood-preserving process has been invented in France by M. Jacques. He first impregnates the timber thoroughly with a simple solution of soap, mixed with an acid—preferably phonic acid. This causes the fermentation, in a few days, within the wood, of a fatty acid, which is insoluble in water, and impregnates the remotest fibres. The reaction of the acid on the soap does not take place until a portion of the water has evaporated. It is claimed that more perfect impregnation can be had this way than with creosote, and there is no danger of the washing out of the preservative from the exposed surfaces, as when sulphate of copper is used. The government commission on technical railroad operation in France is said to favor this process.

Wood Drying.

M. Rens, of Stettin, renders wood perfectly dry and insensible to humidity and atmospheric variations. The wood is subjected to the action of oxygen which has been heated and acted upon by an electric current. The apparatus consists of a retort for the production of oxygen by any of the known methods, and of a kier which can be heated, and in which the boards are placed to be dried. Vacuum is produced in the kier, oxygen introduced, and after heating several times an electric current is allowed to pass through.

ADAM BOYLE, of Battledford, has hit on a new way of raising potatoes. Being pressed for time in the spring, he dug holes in the sand and dropped in the cuttings, covering them lightly with earth. This was all the attention they received, and now he is taking up a heavy crop of large and fine looking potatoes. If the Indians ever learn this system of potato culture, made easy, remarks the *Herald*, it will enable them to give their hoes a rest during the hot days of summer.

LIVERPOOL STOCKS.

We take from the *Timber Trades Journal* the following Comparative Table showing Stock of Timber and Deals in Liverpool on Sept. 30th, 1880 and 1881, and also the Consumption for the month of September, 1880 and 1881:—

	Stock, Sept. 30th, 1880.	Stock, Sept. 30th, 1881.	Consumption for the month of Sept. 1880.	Consumption for the month of Sept. 1881.
Quebec Square Pine	535,000 ft.	600,000 ft.	256,000 ft.	439,000 ft.
Waney Board	364,000 "	131,000 "		2,000 "
St. John Pine	10,000 "	27,000 "	13,000 "	0,000 "
Other Ports Pine	67,000 "	43,000 "	14,000 "	0,000 "
Pitch Pine, hewn	708,000 "	364,000 "	144,000 "	200,000 "
sawn	467,000 "	137,000 "	103,000 "	238,000 "
planks	82,000 "	18,000 "	11,000 "	30,000 "
Red Pine	52,000 "	25,000 "	1,000 "	56,000 "
Dantzic, &c. Fir	69,000 "	222,000 "	43,600 "	33,000 "
Sweden and Norway Fir	5,000 "	4,000 "		2,000 "
Oak, Canadian	482,000 "	306,000 "	143,000 "	209,000 "
Planks	148,000 "		22,000 "	
Baltic	75,000 "	39,000 "	4,000 "	7,000 "
Elm	49,000 "	36,000 "	25,000 "	20,000 "
Ash	22,000 "	4,000 "	14,000 "	9,000 "
Birch	149,000 "	186,000 "	47,000 "	63,000 "
Greenheart	33,000 "	67,000 "	4,000 "	4,000 "
East India Teak	27,000 "	20,000 "	10,000 "	8,900 "
Quebec Pine Deals	10,249 stds.	6,177 stds.	3,132 stds.	1,423 stds.
N. B. & S. S. Spruce Deals	16,211 "	24,821 "		
Pine	888 "	1,481 "	6,151 "	10,552 "
Baltic Deals	4,172 "	3,214 "	968 "	2,228 "
Boards	283 "	707 "	61 "	87 "
Flooring Boards	2,183 "	3,014 "	611 "	283 "