

CORRESPONDENCE.

Editor Canada Lumbermen:

Thank you very much for considering my opinion relative to inspection, and a standard of inspection of sufficient value to merit the attention of your constituency. I am certainly unchanged regarding the desirability of some uniform system which if it cannot be international, should at least be national, and I imagine that the Dominion lumbermen have not thoroughly considered the question as a body, or they would have the determination to establish a standard from a feeling of very pride. If we, as a body, would recall the fact that we have more capital invested in our trade than the combined banks many times over, and that our operations extend from almost pole to pole, it perhaps would be possible to lead us to determine proper rules for the guidance of our trade in the way of inspection. Of the utility of such a system I need scarcely refer to, the results following would be:

- (i) The cessation of private interpretations of grades.
- (ii) The acceptance of a properly considered code of rules.
- (iii) The stoppage in a great measure of disputes contingent upon the acceptance of an intelligible standard.

A break in the methods which we have hitherto pursued, is made by the Lumber Section of the Board of Trade. They have gotten out a thoroughly digested system, not by any means perfect, but yet one that will bear comparison in a superlative degree with the rules of other chief centres, it is to be had on application free, let all get a copy and endeavour to guide themselves thereby; and another suggestion is, where they find any fault, let the fault-finder connect himself with the board, and by his vote and intelligence endeavour to remedy the evils complained of, but in the meantime the lumbermen of the Dominion should endeavour to get away from the old order of things and strive to conform as much as possible with the proposed regulations. Let us have system and we will have order. Give us order and we will have respect, and having respect we can settle down to the remedy of other grievances.

M.

Toronto, July 14th, 1890.

EXCHANGE ECHOES.

Northwestern Lumberman.

There is a good deal of talk about felling trees by electricity, but no authoritative information is furnished upon the subject. It has been asserted that the scheme has proved successful in foreign countries, and that it would be tried by American lumbermen. Really very little is known about the matter. If trees can be felled by electric wires more economically and with more safety than in the ordinary way the plan should come in vogue. But the accidents and deaths that occur in connection with telephone and electric lighting lines suggest that any electrical system that could be introduced into the woods for bringing down trees would have its drawback. The falling tree or limb would be likely to continue doing its deadly work unless everybody could get entirely out of range before the electrical spark performed its mission.

Exchange.

When a man is engaged in depicting the wonderful advantages of his locality in a timbered region, the forests are always vast and "practically inexhaustible," but when he is on another tack and is telling how rapidly the lumber barons are destroying the forests, they become reduced to a beggarly supply that will be wiped away in a few years. Metaphors and generalities neither denude the forests nor render their ultimate consumption impossible.

Winnipeg Commercial.

In the quest of duty on lumber it was shown before the Senate committee that the influence of the Northwestern States was greater than many people supposed. The influence of those States have for some years put forth in favor of a freer exchange of natural products with Canada, but in the Senate particularly they have as a rule been unable to cope with this antagonistic New England element. That the Northwest is gaining in power was manifest, when the proposed reduction of duty of the McKinley bill of 50 cents a thousand feet was increased by the Senate to \$1, thus making the duty on imported lumber \$1 a M. This, if it becomes law, will be quite a step towards the wiping out of lumber duties altogether. If our Canadian Government will take action on the reciprocity clause of our tariff act, as the duties are lowered in the United States, the day is not far distant when lumber duties in both countries will be arrangements of the past. Some lumbermen may take a shortsighted view of this matter of abolishing lumber tariff, but any loss they might sustain, by having to compete without tariff protection with United States manufacturers, would be more than made up by the opening up of United States markets to themselves.

Mississippi Valley Lumberman.

Wm. Gillis is an Oshkosh lumberman 75 years of age who has spent sixty winters in the woods and is still a hale and hearty man. He is described as a native of New Brunswick. He began to work in the woods when only fifteen years of age and his first experience as a pinery hand was in the forests of Maine. Twenty-five years ago he left the New England state to try his fortune in the west and the first season he was in Wisconsin was spent in the employ of Nels Carter who was a predecessor of Ripley & Mead, in the owner ship of what is now known as the Stanhillber & Amos plant. Since that time he has worked for almost every lumberman who has had a camp on the Wolf. Last winter he was in the employ of L. O. Rumery. He walked at least seventy miles a week and sometimes double that distance. If nothing prevents, Mr. Gillis will next winter, for his sixty-first season, go to the pinery. He is tall and still erect with not a wrinkle to mar his pleasant features, and with his dyed hair as black as it was the day he was twenty, it is almost a tax upon one's credulity to believe that Mr. Gillis is in reality an old man. He hasn't missed a winter in the woods since he began lumbering and works on the drive every spring.

Northwestern Lumberman.

A communication from T. W. Hotchkiss on a subject important to hardwood lumbermen is printed elsewhere in this paper. Mr. Hotchkiss, since his retirement from the United States consulship at Ottawa, Can., has returned to his first love, the lumber business. But what news has been received through official sources from his old stamping ground since he left it? Who is so wise as to attempt to tell how many feet of lumber has been exported from Canada into the United States during the past year? Who has been made aware that the present consul has paid any attention to the lumber industry, notwithstanding that industry is so prominent, and questions concerning it have kept thousands of people on both sides of the line in a state of fermentation? These questions can be answered in but one way. This state of things, in prospective, was what the lumber journals feared when they were working for the reappointment of Mr. Hotchkiss. They knew that his work as consul has been peerless, made so by his thorough understanding of the lumber business, and his intelligence to grapple with the questions therewith connected. Mr. Blaine was fully aware of the character of Mr. Hotchkiss' work, and knew there was no politics in the efforts of the lumbermen to have him retained as consul: that such retention was purely for the good of a great industry. It was shown that the political views of nearly all the editors of the lumber journals who labored for the reappointment of the gentleman were not in accord with his. But that there was no politics in the movement is plainly what sounded its death knell. It is the healer who must be rewarded. The competent, painstaking worker who does not shout for party at the top of his voice can go to shoel for all the political managers care.

HOME AND FOREIGN TRADE REVIEW.

Office of CANADA LUMBERMAN, }
July 31st, 1890. }

Owing to the English market being enormously overstocked, the overproduction of timber in the Baltic as well as in Canada, the depressed state of finances coupled with the revolutionary disturbances in South America, together with the uncertainty attending the outcome of the McKinley tariff bill, the lumber trade in general is remarkably dull, with the exception of British Columbia where the lumber trade is booming. The condition of trade in the Ottawa Valley is exceedingly slack as compared with the same period of last year. Large numbers of hands are out of employment, as the mills are not running their full capacity, owing to their piling grounds being well stocked, and this in the face of a light foreign demand. As to the square timber trade, the bottom has fallen out of it. A production of fully 50 per cent. over that of last year, with little or no demand for it has given the lumbermen a great set back, and as a consequence the banks will of necessity have to carry them along until there is an increased demand, and this will add materially to the cost of the product. It is the opinion of many well-informed lumbermen that the cut of square timber next season will be very small.

At Quebec trade may be said to be in *statu quo*, as there is not much timber lying there, as that was mostly shipped in the spring, and as to the new stuff going there, there is positively no market for it. Usually Quebec ships largely to Liverpool, but the market there is flooded with lumber, and there are few buyers. The merchants are overstocked, the demand continues about the same, but the supplies are excessive.

Trade in the United States is picking up some, and their will probably be an increased demand from that quarter during the fall, whether the McKinley tariff bill

passes or not. If it should pass even in its present shape, it is not likely that it will come into operation before next spring.

Following is a comparative statement of timber masts, bowsprits, spars, staves, &c., measured and culled at Quebec to date:

	1888.	1889.	1890.
Waney White Pine....	646,029	1,292,245	1,214,745
White Pine....	191,485	2,016,547	1,039,977
Red Pine....	262,474	381,548	38,610
Oak.....	558,578	616,299	454,067
Elm.....	125,519	527,634	381,603
Ash.....	71,300	204,203	63,181
Basswood.....		415	373
Butternut....	419	1,158	1,540
Tamarac....	1,324	5,635	3,686
Birch & Maple	123,432	334,063	151,701
Masts & Bowsprits....			
Spars.....		33 pieces	
Std. Staves...	189,227	40,802	
W. I. Staves...	180,729	55,432	
Brl. Staves...	11,435	0,110	

FOREIGN.

Business at London continues fairly active, and although there has been no upward movement in prices there has been no indication of a relapse. The disparity, however, between the prices asked privately and those realized at auction are very great. There has been a brisker movement in the hardwood trade. American walnut, so far as prices are concerned, appears to hold its own. Logs realized at public sale prices ranging from 2s. 1d. to 3s. 9d. per ft. cube, planks 3s. to 4s. 4d. per ft. cube.

At Liverpool a very encouraging feature in the market is the continued good demand by actual consumers, in addition to which good inquiries are more numerous. There is no change to note in the prices of hardwoods. Although in the very height of the import, sales are extremely difficult to make, especially at remunerative prices.

Messrs. Denny, Mott & Dickson in their wood market circular for July report:—

CANADIAN TIMBER.—Yellow Pine. The demand has been very small during the half-year, owing to the lack of shipbuilding orders; at the same time the market is bare of good square timber, and there is only one parcel of some 150 loads of really first-class Waney Pine on hand.

The Quebec shippers have effected but few forward contracts for the new season's goods; and there is no encouragement for speculation as it is very doubtful whether the c.i.f. cost would be realized.

OAK.—The market has been quiet, and there is still a certain quantity of first-class timber on hand.

ELM.—The market is quite bare, and although the demand is dull, a moderate supply of the new season's wood should do well.

Disappointed as Quebec shippers may be, any imprudent action on their part in sending forward unwanted supplies of either pine, oak or other timber would be suicidal policy. If a revival in the shipbuilding demand is near at hand the Autumn shipment, from Quebec can be augmented accordingly.

BRITISH BOARD OF TRADE RETURNS.

According to the Board of Trade for June, the quantities of sawn goods imported, during the month, amount to 500,013 loads, as compared with 563,698 loads during June of last year, and the quantities of hewn goods of 190,229 loads, as against 179,733 loads, an increase in hewn goods of 10,496 loads, but an important decrease in sawn goods of 63,685 loads. There are very heavy decreases in the importation of sawn goods from the Baltic ports. Sweden and Norway sent over during the month very moderate quantities, while Russia shows a decrease of 25,150 loads in the importation of manufactured wood goods. Large increases are noted from other countries.

The *Timber Trades Journal* says satisfactory as the government figures are, however, we cannot accept them as an index to the turn likely to be taken by wood prices for better or for worse as the autumn comes on. The timber trade, we know by experience, can be active and prices rising when the general trade of the country is essentially bad. Apart from the report before us, which represents the prosperous half of the year, when the weather was fine and the harvest prospects good, with the political atmosphere clear, there is the present time with its overclouded aspect to be considered. Just now the indications are none too favorable. Dearer money is not unlikely, and the trade of the country, though fairly good, lacks the animation which inspired it last year. Any superfluity of importation over that of 1888 in this connection cannot be regarded in any other light than as prejudicial to unremunerative prices. We may be on the eve of a great depression, but of a sudden turn the other way there is no probability.