

INFORMATION WANTED.

The *Globe* had the following editorial under the heading "Information Wanted Concerning Our Forest Wealth":—

"We have already remarked upon the absence of any definite information as to the extent of our pine lands and the character of the timber standing thereon. We have suggested that an official investigation be held before persons authorized to call for the statistics and other facts necessary to get an accurate idea of the revenue from timber dues hereafter to be received by the Province; to collect information upon practicable methods of forest conservation; to consider how far the very efficient German system of forestry can be introduced here; and generally to take such steps as will tend to bring about a cessation of many extremely wasteful practices on the part of lumberers and the owners of timbered lands.

"Upon a great many important points in forestry there is now a plentiful lack of information. All we know about our forests is contained in the report of the Agricultural Commission. That report is a perfect mine of information concerning the agricultural state of the townships in this Province, and so far as the Commission was concerned in the subject of forestry, its duties were exceedingly well performed. For instance, we learned from that report for the first time that, in the older part of the Province, there are only ten counties in which more than two-thirds of the land has been cleared, and only two counties in which more than three-quarters of the land has been cleared. What we want now is further information in this direction. Especially is it desirable that means be taken to diffuse among the owners of standing timber information concerning its present and prospective value. Hardwood timber, standing in any place where it can be easily won, is becoming very valuable. As respects black birch, the prospect seems to be that it will soon become the most valuable of our forest trees, so rapidly is furniture made from that wood coming into fashion. A word in time might prevent the felling for firewood of many a valuable birch, maple, or oak. It is also desirable to know how far the use of poplar in paper-making is likely to extend, and the extent of the supply of that wood standing within easy reach of the paper mills. In some parts of New England poplar already brings \$8 a cord for paper-making, and wood for these mills is taken from Canada in great quantities. It may be that only accurate information is wanted in order to compel the Yankee paper-makers to pay us a much better price than they do for their raw material. The supply of basswood, and the extent to which that wood is capable of being utilized, would be another interesting point for investigation. There might also be some practical means found of exacting fulfillment of promises made by the railway companies which asked and received aid from Canadian towns on the promise that cordwood should be brought in cheaply. It is too bad that, within a hundred miles of Toronto, and close to a railway aided liberally by the city, the clearings of new settlers should still be burnt in the old wasteful style, simply because the railway does not care to aid in reducing the supply of wood available for its own fuel. But such is the case.

"Then there is a great field for usefulness in the collection and dissemination of intelligence concerning the re-clothing with timber of thousands of acres of land which ought never to have been cleared for agricultural purposes. There is scarcely a township, and in some townships not a farm, which has not some land which could be more profitably put to growing timber than to any other purpose. Bare hill-sides, too poor for orchards, might be put to use growing poplar or some other quick-growing tree, and the planter of the trees might begin to receive his money back in ten years from the first investment. Of young hickories we import hundreds of thousands yearly, from Ohio and elsewhere, that might just as well be grown at home. In some parts of the Province the black walnut might be grown at a profit. In all parts there is something more to be done with timber than is done. A very general desire is arising among the farmers to do something in the way

of tree-planting. What they want is detailed and accurate information as to the best direction in which to bestow their work, and this information could best be obtained in the manner we have indicated."

MAKING IRON COLUMNS SECURE.

So many accidents have occurred at fires to life and property by the sudden giving away of iron columns used for supports to the various floors of buildings, that such columns are looked upon with distrust by firemen, and their use discouraged. When they become heated by fire they are apt to break entirely, thus letting the upper floors fall. It was in consequence of the giving away of the iron columns at the Broadway fire, some time ago, that the floors from cellar to roof fell in and two firemen who were on the roof were hurried to a terrible death in the seething furnace within the building. All large cities are full of buildings whose several floors are supported on iron columns, and, in case of fire, they are quite as likely to collapse as did the one we refer to. Our building laws, which are yet crude and imperfect, permit their use, and, as they are cheaper than most anything that could be used instead, they are still favorites with builders. The very best thing to take the place of iron columns would be columns of brick, but objection is made to them that they take up too much room and are not ornamental.

Many experiments have been tried with a view to making iron columns fireproof, or at least sufficiently so to be able to stand a small fire in their neighborhood without bending, and thus bringing the entire building to the ground in ruins, long before it would be destroyed by the fire alone. Casing the columns with wood, asbestos, brickwork, etc., has been tried, and some of the methods have been described in the *Journal*. Recently two more suggestions have been made. One is to inclose the columns in rings of terra cotta, put on over the top when the column is set up. These would act as a shield to keep off the heat till the fire could be subdued. The plan is simple and inexpensive, and has the added advantage of giving opportunity to make the columns highly ornamental, as terra cotta readily lends itself to decorative treatment.

The second plan is to fill the columns with water. To do this the plates or castings, usually placed between the columns where they stand one over the other, have holes or openings of some kind, so that there is a free communication from column to column, from the bottom to the top of the building. Where columns are already erected, short pipes are used to connect them at each floor. The uppermost column is also provided with a small escape-pipe, passing through the roof to the open air. At the base of each tier of columns a pipe is connected with the street mains, so that all the columns may be filled with water, either permanently or on emergency. When thus filled with water and provided with an escape for the expansion of the water or steam, the columns would stand unharmed until every floor was burned out. Were the columns also hollow and filled with water in the same manner, both girders and columns would undoubtedly stand intact, even after all the floors and the roof had fallen in, and they could be used again in rebuilding. The system has the merit of cheapness and ease of application, and is patented in this country. We have little confidence, however, in iron columns under the conditions incident to a great fire, and the sooner their use is prohibited by law the better it will be for the public.—*Firemen's Journal*.

A Will and a Way to Execute.

We are in receipt of THE CANADA LUMBERMAN, now transferred to the proprietorship of Toker & Co., and published semi-monthly at Peterborough, Ont. As its title indicates, it is devoted to the lumber and timber interests of the Dominion, and promises to advocate all measures tending to the advantage of the trade it represents, and to furnish full and reliable reports upon the condition of the Canadian market, statistics, etc. Its introductory is written as if there was a will and a way to execute behind the promises made, which must place the journal in full rank with others of its kind.—*New York Real Estate Record*.

BURLINGTON, VT., INSPECTION.

Although doing a large business in lumber the extensive market of Burlington has no systematized method of inspection. Steps are, however, in progress looking to that end, and probably before long rules and regulations regarding inspection will be adopted by the dealers in that section. While each lumberman now has an inspector of his own, a variety of customs prevail, notwithstanding an endeavor on the part of all toward uniformity.

The grades recognized in the Burlington market are as follows: Selects, Shelving, Second Shelving, Pickings, Shippers, Box, and Mill Culls.

These gradings apply to wide lumber from eight inches and upward.

Strips twelve feet long and upward are classed as 1st Quality, 2nd Quality, 3rd Quality and Box.

Under twelve feet in length the classes of seconds and thirds are combined as one, while all unfit for this grade go into a still lower grade of 3rd Quality or into a new grade of Box.

Spruce is divided into three grades, namely: Clear, No. 1 and No. 2.

Selects. Comprise the finer grades of lumber, and include all fair widths approaching to the upper grades of other markets, and suited to all the finer finishing purposes, for which the timber is adapted.

Shelving. Includes ten, twelve and fourteen-inch stock, and is classed as first and second shelving, as to relative quality and adaptability to the purpose indicated; first quality ranks about seven dollars per thousand below selects, while the second quality is from five to seven dollars below the first. In both qualities more or less knots and sap will be allowed, not affecting the board for the purpose from which it derives its name.

Pickings. A grade of lumber of any width, suited to one side finishing, embracing sap boards, and generally such lumber as while from width not fitted for shelving, is more defective than selects, yet filling a position which must otherwise be occupied by selects. As in other markets, it may be called the cream of the common. It is relatively in price about twelve dollars below selects.

Shippers. Are of diversified widths, without shake or case knots, and free from large coarse knots, comprising the best of the common after the picks are removed.

Box. Comprises a grade poorer than shippers, yet taking the run of the common, in all fairly sound and merchantable lumber. In price it is from two to three dollars below shippers.

The grades of shelving (first and second) Pickings, Shippers and Box are, one and all, selections from Common, made with reference to adaptability to the uses indicated by their designations.

Mill Culls. Are the poorest grade of lumber adapted to any utility, or recognised as merchantable, and bear the same description as the same grade in other markets.—*Lumberman's Hand-Book*.

AVERAGE WEIGHTS OF LUMBER.

The following table shows the average obtained in the actual shipment from Chicago of 20,000,000 feet of pine lumber, during an entire season:

	Pounds.
1, 1½ and 1½-inch surfaced 1 side	2,102
The same, surfaced 2 sides	2,068
2-inch surfaced 1 side	2,200
White pine flooring, dressed and matched	1,890
Hard pine flooring	2,364
Ship lap, 8-inch	1,711
Ship lap, 10-inch	1,725
Ship lap, 12-inch	1,855
White pine, ¾-inch ceiling	756
Hard pine, ¾-inch ceiling	950
Siding	805
Piece stuff, rough	2,500
Piece stuff, surfaced one side and one edge	2,210
Thin clear, surfaced one side	1,350
2 ceiling	1,120
Rough boards	2,524
Hard pine fence	2,010
4 inch flooring, dressed and matched	1,703
6 inch flooring	2,433
Pine shingles	249
Cedar shingles	203
Dry lath	502

LUMBERING IN MANITOBA.

The Emerson International of March 25th, says that James Carney, of Carney & Watson, visited the firm's logging camp up the river, near Acton, last Friday, and returned home on Monday, accompanied by his partner, Mr. Watson, who has gone to Winnipeg on business. Things are reported as booming at the camp, and a large number of oak logs are being got out. The firm expect their saw mill machinery about the 15th or 20th of April, and will rush the erection of the mill so as to commence sawing early in the season. The firm expects to handle half a million feet of logs and 30,000 feet of piles during the coming season. They propose to do their share in helping along the Emerson business boom. The boys are enterprising, and deserve to do well in their saw mill enterprise, as no doubt they will, as the farmers of Southern Manitoba have scarcely yet begun to provide themselves with comfortable barns and granaries, and will require an immense amount of lumber of the class that the Emerson steam saw mill will turn out, to say nothing of the demand for oak timber which will be made by various municipalities for bridges and culverts. By the time that trade has been satisfied the Red Lake Indian Reserve will have been opened up, and Messrs. Carney & Watson can then turn their attention to pine lumber, the logs for which will be brought down the Red Lake and Red Rivers. Emerson will then not only support one mill, but a dozen. Messrs. Carney & Watson's mill will be located on the river bank north of Park street.

THE SHIP BUILDING SEASON.

Owing to several causes, the season for ship-building has not opened with as good promise as ship builders anticipated it would last fall. Freight rates are so low that there is little encouragement to builders to commence building yards, and if there is not an advance soon, most of the yards which are busy now will remain idle after the vessels at present building are got off. Ship timber is very dear also, and there seems to be no prospect of a fall in price, owing, it is said, to the scarceness of it. The scarceness was caused by many men who formerly were engaged in getting out ship timber going into the woods to get out logs, in view of the unusual activity in that branch of business.—*St. John, N.B., Globe*.

Hudson's Bay as a Possible Outlet for the North-west.

During the past summer the engineers of the Nelson River Railway Company have surveyed a railway route between Norway House at the outlet of Lake Winnipeg and Fort Churchill on the Hudson's Bay. The distance between these places is about three hundred and fifty miles. The surveyed route first follows the course of the Nelson River for a distance of nearly one hundred miles over a level country. The next part of the road is over a broken rocky country, where the Nelson River has a descent of nearly seven hundred feet to the lower plateau, where the country again becomes level, and continues so to Hudson's Bay. Upon entering this rocky range the surveyed route leaves the Nelson River, taking a more northerly course toward the valley of the Churchill River, which is reached at its entrance on the lower plateau, and continues to follow the course of the river to its outlet in Hudson's Bay. The estimated cost for building the road-bed is ten thousand dollars a mile on the plateau and seventeen thousand a mile through the rocky portion of the route, or an average of twelve thousand dollars per mile along the whole route.

It is claimed that by this route it will be possible to transport grain from the Saskatchewan Valley to Liverpool for less than it will cost to carry it to Montreal by the proposed railway north of Lake Superior.

Professor Bell, of the Canadian Geological Survey, who sailed from Fort York, Hudson's Bay, and passed through Hudson's Straits in the latter part of last September, says that sailing vessels have sometimes considerable difficulty as a delay in getting through, but steamships can make the voyage at any time between the first of May and November, as the straits are nearly one hundred miles wide in the narrowest part, and the channel is not obstructed by ice.