

BUFFALO AND TONAWANDA.

(Correspondence of the CANADA LUMBERMAN.)

I am in some doubt whether I can at this writing impart any information that will add to the sum total of knowledge that the Canadian lumberman has of his business. We are of the opinion on this side of the line that he already knows too much. We are sorry about it. Why could he not have remained child-like and mentally undeveloped till we could have gone over there and made off with the best of his season's cut of lumber? It would have added to our regard for him as a neighbor, and would have made our pockets bulge still more than they do.

When the price of lumber, and especially of pine, began to race up the scale, it was found that the western saw mill man on our side was entirely without reason. He wanted about as much for his stock as we in the middle of the trade, geographically, could get from the seaboard consumer. We were at a loss what to do, for to set up prices at the rate they were advancing in the west was to shut off the conservative easterner and reduce the bulk of trade. The result would be also that the east would get into the bad habit of going around us and buying of the producer direct—a fatal fashion.

So it was agreed, each man with himself, that the thing to do was to go over into Canada, take it for granted that the country was mostly asleep, and pick up all the available lumber and shingles before it wakened up. The thing was tried so thoroughly that for a considerable

time every man that came back from the Georgian Bay district reported all the woods full of our lumbermen, looking for stock. Well, they got some, just as they are still getting some here and there at home, but it was not long before the report was that Canadian prices were as high as our own, and it was not of the least use to go there after lumber unless there was danger of the home cut giving out entirely.

Since that time there has been considerable buying of pine in Canada, but unless a lot can be discovered in the back district where the owner doesn't take the papers, or where the particular cut is more exactly adapted to the buyer's wants than any other that he can find, he is about as well off at home. The Canadian lumberman is generally awake these days.

For a time there was considerable buying of shingles in Canada, for they have been scarce here right along, but it is now reported of the Canadian shingle maker, as well as of our own, that it has been found more profitable to make other lumber than shingles, and that a great part of the shingle mills are shut down. This will keep the price of shingles up, especially since it has been found impossible to get a full supply of red cedar shingles for winter. The orders have been sent in for them, but there have been so many calls for cars that only a part of the orders could be filled.

The producer of hemlock is making the largest percentage of profit on his business, supposing that he was making a living before the advance. At old prices hemlock was

wholesaling at less than \$9 here, but the demand soon sent prices up, till the base price is now \$14, with so much prospect of more demand right away that New York city has been advised by authority that it will have to pay \$20 before spring. The price is \$16.50 there now.

There is considerable pine coming down from Georgian Bay this fall, especially to the Holland yard at Black Rock, and the Montgomery's are getting ready to bring down their recent purchase at Midland, though it is not expected that it will all come this fall. For a while the cut in rail rates made by the Grand Trunk considerably demoralized the carrying trade, but that has been fixed up again.

The September meeting of the pine interests here, following the more general meeting in Detroit, again resulted in higher prices, the advance in some cases being \$3, in spite of the already high price all round. Box and mill-cull grades are so scarce that they had to go up with the rest, though they had already been advanced a larger percentage than anything else in pine. The box factories have never done such a rushing trade as they have during the past summer, and they are still very busy, though the biggest customer, the canned-fruit industry, is about out of the rush for the season.

The hardwood dealers are very confident of a continuation of the good prices now enjoyed, especially on account of the general scarcity of stock. They are all buying timber tracts and looking to them closely, but there is no accumu-

lation of stock. Angus McLean, of Hugh McLean & Co., is almost continually at the Indiana mills of the firm of late, urging the cut forward. The Buffalo Hardwood Co. has again sent T. H. Wall to Memphis for the winter, to be on the spot where the oak owned by the company comes in. F. W. Vetter, of the Empire Company, has come back from the company's Arkansas tract for a breathing spell, with the third mill already going up there since he went to the tract in the summer. H. S. James will return to his new tract on the Yazoo delta of Mississippi in a short time. Scatcherd & Son and Taylor & Crave are increasing their operations in the south-west. All are sorry that the nearer by hardwood districts of Canada have given out. T. Sullivan & Co. are lake shippers this season, and are just now rejoicing in the receipt of a big lot of elegant white ash, thick as well as thin, something that is getting to be very hard to find.

The event of the month is the preparation of the Superior Lumber Company to retire from business. This company is an auxiliary of the Keystone Lumber Company, whose mills are at Ashland. Till now a great part of the cut has been sent here for sale, ever since A. P. Strong established the yard at the Tiff Farm, Buffalo, in 1890, but the cut has now been sold in a lump in Chicago, and there is no longer need of the Buffalo yard. The company will close up in the spring, and the yard will no doubt go into other hands, as it is a fine one.

BUFFALO, November 6, 1899.

J. C.

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