

OTTAWA LETTER.

[Regular correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

TO a measurable extent, at least, all lumbermen live in anxious dread of an outbreak of fire. There is so much material of an inflammable character on a saw mill that only the very greatest precaution prevents many more serious conflagrations than even now take place. It is seldom, however, that in Canada we are called upon to chronicle the destruction of so large an amount of valuable saw mill property, as was the case in the burning of Mr. J. R. Booth's great mill on the Chaudiere, just a week after I had written you my last letter. The mill was known the lumber world over as the largest saw mill on this continent, and undoubtedly one of the most perfectly equipped mills in the world. There does not seem to be any explanation of how the fire occurred; the one unfortunate fact stares its owner and the people of Ottawa in the face, that at least, \$250,000 of property has been destroyed. The mill is a complete wreck. The loss is covered by insurance to the extent of \$143,500, leaving, it is carefully estimated, a net loss over the insurance to be borne by Mr. Booth of at least \$100,000. We in Ottawa, from a citizen's point of view, are hoping that it will not be the case, but it is very much feared that Mr. Booth will not rebuild the mill. About 1000 hands, all told, were employed in connection with this enterprise, representing at least, families of 3,000 persons. No comment is necessary to show how seriously will such a loss of labor fall upon Ottawa. Great disappointment and loss will also come upon many shippers who were depending upon the cut of this mill to enable them to fill their export orders for the United States, South America and other points. The loss too, of the season's cut, will be to Mr. Booth a severe blow.

INDIFFERENT LENGTHS.

A protest has been served by Mr. Frank Stafford on the executors of the estate of James McCready against the sale of timber birth, lot No. 7, range 1, block A, lake expense, which is advertised with other properties for sale by auction at Peter Ryan's big sale in August next. Mr. Stafford claims he is entitled to one-half interest in the profits of this limit under a deed to him from the late James McCready, and that the sale is sought to be made without any intimation to him or to the public of his interests.

John Major, a shantyman from Greenville, while wandering in his sleep some nights ago in his boarding house, fell from a first storey window, some 18 feet, to the sidewalk. He has suffered severe bruises but will likely recover.

Mr. Z. C. Whitney, of Minneapolis, and Mr. E. N. Briggs, of Saginaw, two well-known lumber capitalists, have been in the city. They are reported to represent the advance guard of a monied concern, who purpose erecting a huge mill on the Ottawa and Parry Sound road in the vicinity of Eganville.

The amount of lumber being shipped this year to the United States is falling far short of the shipments of a year ago.

Logs coming down the Gatineau are making slow speed, and the mills which depend upon these for supply may have to close down for want of sufficient logs.

The Railway Committee room of the House of Commons was the scene of a lively discussion a fortnight ago over the bill which proposes to incorporate the French River Boom Co. Proposed incorporators are: Messrs. H. H. Cook, John Walbridge, H. W. Welsh and E. B. Ryckman, of Toronto, and F. W. Geoffrey, of Midland. Capital stock is named at \$50,000, and Toronto is to be headquarters of the company. The privileges asked are to do a general boom business, rafting, towing, shafting and transmitting all lumber, timber and saw logs in the French and Wabnapitae and its tributaries and in Le Boueuf Lake, and to levy and collect reasonable toll dues and charges therefor. The bill was opposed chiefly by Michigan lumbermen, who were represented by Mr. W. R. White, Q. C., of Pembroke. After full argument the committee decided to grant the charter of incorporation, but with certain modifications in order to meet the views of the objectors.

OTTAWA, Can., July 20, 1894.

NEW BRUNSWICK LETTER.

[Regular correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

UMBER exports from St. John for the month of June are placed at \$367,837. The chief items are: Long lumber and lath, \$325,286; shingles, \$22,650; birch timber, \$7,100; pine timber, \$1,725; piling, \$3,789; tan bark, \$2,758.

Shipments to Great Britain are running somewhat light, and is also the case with shipments to the United States.

The new mill of G. T. Prescott, at West River, is about ready to commence work.

A pest of flies has compelled the engineering party who started out to survey Muskoka Co. limits at the head of the Estigouche to postpone their work until September.

Kinney & Co., of Albert county, have assigned, with liabilities

of \$4,000. The trouble has been caused through inability to get their logs out.

A small saw mill of E. B. Betts, of Wentworth, has been burned. Loss about \$1,000, insurance \$200.

St. JOHN, N. B., July 15, 1894.

BRITISH COLUMBIA LETTER.

[Regular correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

AT this late day I do not need to say how much suffering and difficulty to everyone has occurred through the terrible floods that visited us a short time since. It will not be easily estimated what has been the loss to the lumber industry, and it becomes a serious question what it will mean to lumbering in this province if there should be a repetition of a water deluge anything approaching the scale of this one. One of the greatest sufferers among the lumbermen by the late flood is Knight Bros., of Popocatepec, who had logs, lumber, shingle bolts and several cords of excelsior wood carried away.

COAST CHIEFS.

The Burrard Inlet Red Cedar Lumber Co. are using band saws in their sawing, turning out good work.

A recent addition to the plant of the Brunette Saw Mill Co. is a timber planer capable of dressing a stick of timber 36x16 inches on all four sides by once passing through.

William Munsey, of the Shawnigan Lake River Co., has gone to Japan for a trip.

The Hastings Mill Co. is buying up large quantities of logs, which have already run into several millions of feet, in the Puget Sound district.

Among the last arrivals at B. C. ports is the ship Drammen, 1,347 tons, from Honolulu, and will load at Hastings mill for Queenstown, U. K. The British ship, Verejean, 1824 tons, from Shanghai, is under charter to load at Hastings mill for Alexandria, Egypt. Among other vessels loading lumber at these ports for foreign points are: At Moodyville mill—Am. schr. Wm. Bowden, 727 tons, for Sydney; Ital. bark Elisa, 915 tons, for Valparaiso; Br. ship Burrowdale, 1,197 tons, for Valparaiso for orders. At Hastings mill—Br. schr. Grace Haivar, 1,750 tons, for Queenstown for orders; Am. bark Olympic, 1,412, for Callao direct; Nic. bark Don Carlos, 694 tons, for Noumea, New Caledonia; Br. bark Villalta, 866 tons, for Adelaide. Am. bark Southern Chief, 1,219 tons, for Santa Rosalia. At Sayward mill, Victoria—Br. ship Benmore, 1,460 tons, for Adelaide. At Vesuvius Bay—Am. ship Guardian, 1,073 tons, for Santa Rosalia.

NEW WESTMINSTER B. C., July 17, 1894.

MICHIGAN LETTER.

[Regular correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

WHAT branch of trade has not felt the hurtful effects of the great railway tie-up? Here in Michigan the yard trade on the river has had much to contend against on this account. Fortunately, perhaps, in one way, trade has not been so rushing that lumbermen felt that they had lost a great deal, and so they take the matter philosophically. At the same time the annoyance is provoking, and even though shipping business is small, there is a loss.

We have reached the end of the first six months of the year and we must go back a good many years to find a period that for downright dullness will compare with it. To borrow an expression from a contemporary, trading has been practically little better than in wheelbarrow lots and the man who was so fortunate as to sell an occasional car lot has had to put about a dozen different grades in each car. We have all talked so long about nearing the end of this kind of thing and been fooled, that for my part I am disposed to go out of the prophecy business.

BITS OF LUMBER.

\$100,000 was the sum paid not long since by Sibley & Bearinger for a tract of timber in Minnesota, which they have since sold for \$180,000. Who says there is not money even to-day in lumber?

It is believed that Mr. R. G. Peters, of Manistee, who suffered financial embarrassment lately, will be able to pull through, pay everybody, and have a surplus.

A committee consisting of S. O. Fisher, A. M. Switzer and S. Eddy, is to visit Washington with a view of influencing legislation against the final passing of the Wilson Bill, making dressed lumber free. It is not thought by many that the mission will be a success.

Large quantities of Canadian logs are coming across to this side, the weather being quite favorable for rafting. A raft from Georgian Bay, making the fifth this season, and containing 4,000,000 logs, has reached Alpena. Shipments of lumber from Alpena up to July 1st, show a falling off of 3,154,000 feet, compared with the same period of 1893.

During June there was shipped from Cheboygan 13,088,103

feet of lumber, 1,301,300 lath, 1,500,000 shingles, 47,500 cedar ties and 26,790 posts. There was received 6,700,385 ft of Canadian logs.

SAGINAW, Mich., July 18, 1894.

"BOTTLING UP STEAM."

ANOTHER matter revealed frequently by the recording-gauge chart is the practice indulged in by many attendants, of "bottling up steam." Its time of most frequent occurrence is a few moments before starting time in the morning and at noon, and in some cases just before clearing fires. Of course it is the simple outgrowth of ignorance concerning the limited amount of steam in quantity they can so bottle up, and the very small service it can render, compared with the injury which the practice, when persisted in, ultimately does the boiler. Aside from this objection, the habit is exceedingly pernicious, because only a few moments, neglect would cause the pressure to accumulate to the point at which the safety-valve is supposed to open; and then, if it happens to be inoperative, an accident is almost certain to follow. No excuse should be taken in any shape, under any kind of reasoning, for "bottling up steam." If the generating capacity of the boiler is not equal to the current demand, it cannot be helped by simply bottling it up: in fact, it has been my experience that where the recorded line has been extremely crooked upon the first introduction of the recorder, the effect of such introduction has been to cause a much more uniform line from day to day, until the nearest approach to uniformity had been reached, consistent with the vicissitudes of the demands for steam. A steam-user once apologized for the appearance of his record, saying that the steam was drawn from the boiler at irregular periods by persons in the mill, and consequently the firemen could not carry any very regular line; that this use of steam was different from that in most places, etc. Noticing, apparently, my incredulity, he asked if I disagreed with him. My reply was: "Do you suppose that the steam necessarily falls as low as this record indicates?" In other words I called his attention to the fact, that, where a fireman is on the keen lookout for his boiler pressure and water level, he will readily detect the pointer-hand of his gauge the moment it begins to rise or fall, and govern himself accordingly. For instance, if he sees the hand indicating that the pressure is falling he will avail himself of the opportunity to slow down his feed, and perhaps open his damper wider, and if his fires are in prime condition, withhold fresh coal for a few moments; then when the onslaught upon his boiler has ceased, and the hand of his gauge is stationary, or starts to move upward, he will at once set about to replenish his coal and water, and so have his conditions favorable in a few moments for another attack upon his steam supply. When his steam is raising, he can afford to feed and to fire, and his thought should be to have everything in prime condition while he had surplus power and opportunity. Then he will not be caught so badly when these extreme attacks were made upon him. These extreme fluctuations, then, are largely due to the fact of his being unprepared to meet such emergencies; becoming alarmed when his steam has fallen 20 or 30 pounds, he attempts to get up by replenishing his needy fire with coal, which only tends for the time being to reduce the pressure still more, until it has become capable of delivering its gases, ready for combustion.

After this little explanation the proprietor shook his head, and said he had never thought of it in that light, and that he would have to call John to him and have a talk with him. Now, the result of this was, that from that time on, the man's record never fluctuated in the same manner again, and the average steam line maintained was one which showed constant firing frequently in small quantities, and keeping himself in shape to meet these emergencies. Undoubtedly the man had to work a little harder at first, but afterwards it was easier when he properly understood the matter and manipulated his fires accordingly. The suggestion from the proprietor was exceedingly valuable. It resulted in teaching his man, and in mutual regard between them afterwards, because it showed that the man was capable of being taught, and willing to be, and that the proprietor had evidence of resulting fidelity. The dissemination of knowledge among firemen can certainly do no harm.