

THE WAR OF THE WOODS.

White pine is king. It is still supreme in the northern states, but its power has been weakened by the forays of other woods, especially yellow pine. The war between the northern and southern rivals is to be hereafter waged with increasing zeal on the part of the combatants. It is to be another war between the north and south, though the fight will be along the peaceful lines of commerce. But, though the contest must go on, there is no danger that the northern force will be utterly defeated until the last forest giant shall have been laid low, and that not by the might of the southern foe, but by the hand of its friend, who will give the last mortal blow, instigated by selfish greed. White pine will never be crowded out of the market by its southern competitor. There are those who think otherwise, perhaps, and point to the rapid displacement of white pine in Kansas by the yellow variety as an evidence that such a thing is possible. But conditions in that state are exceptional. There cheapness is greatly in favor of the Arkansas and Texas product. There, also, the demand is mainly for building purposes. In the older sections of the country, where the requirement is more varied on account of manufacturers that consume lumber, white pine holds a place from which it cannot be dislodged so long as a supply can be obtained.

The peculiar advantage of white pine is in its light weight and its softness and easiness of working. There is no other wood that can equal it in these respects. It is also a reliable wood when put in place, on account of its lack of warping tendencies. Now that the struggle is fairly on between the two great lumber woods of the country, it is well enough to take a fair look at them by comparison, with the view of placing each where it properly belongs. Since white pine is the kind that is resisting attack, let us examine its entrenchments for the purpose of seeing whether it can hold its position beyond a possibility of doubt.

There are several conspicuous reasons why white pine will continue to be in large demand in spite of any opposition. The qualities referred to—light weight and softness—render it adaptable to various kinds of manufacture. Beginning with its coarser qualities, what can equal it for packing boxes? Lightness of weight commends it as a material to ship, in which it has a great advantage in the cost of transportation. It also works handily and easily, which is an important consideration in a box factory, where nearly everything is done by machinery or quick manipulation. The profits of box making are small, and depend on cheapness and adaptability of material. White pine also is kind to tools, and the wear and tear of appliances on that account is less when white pine is used than in the employment of any other wood. Furthermore, white pine can be used to the very last and lowest grade board, so that there is no waste, and refuse does not accumulate as in the case of yellow pine. It is frequently remarked in this city that white pine lumber is always salable, even down to and including the foundation sticks; nothing is wasted. This is because the coarser qualities are available in the manufacture of boxes, crates and various other things that use up cheap lumber. Coarse boards are also adaptable to numerous cutting-up purposes, and for building and repairing the poorer class of structures, sheds, etc. In fact the coarser and cheaper the stock the readier it sells in this and all other important white pine markets. The like cannot be said of yellow pine in the present development of the consumptive demand.

When it comes to the medium grades, there is an unrivaled demand for all white pine lumber from four inches wide and upward. It is probable that in the strip trade white pine is to suffer most from competition with southern lumber. For flooring, ceiling and wainscoting, yellow pine is well adapted, and it is now being placed at all northern points at prices that undersell white pine, when the quality of the respective woods is considered. Still white pine has the advantage in some respects for flooring. Where it is to be covered by carpets in the cheaper class of houses, fencing flooring, and No. 2 at that, answers the purpose, and it will be hard work for the yellow pine purveyors to undersell the lower grade of white. In all the populous

centres around the great lakes, where white pine is received by water, or by short railroad hauls, no other cheap strips can entirely crowd it out of market. The sharpest rivalry between the two kinds of strips will be in the select and clear grades. Yellow pine flooring and ceiling, where oil treatment is contemplated, is undoubtedly the better, and will largely take the place of white pine. For siding, white pine will continue to take the lead, on account of its workableness, the ease with which it can be put in place, its freedom from warp, and above all its adaptability to transportation at a low cost. This demand will use up a large portion of the select and clear strips that are likely to be put on the market. Car building will also continue to call for the better grades of strips. Large quantities will also be wanted for house finish.

There are certain adaptabilities of white pine that will use up the upper grades of wide and thick lumber while the supply holds out. There will always be a demand for wide cutting-up lumber. In the east the demand for such stock is always pronounced in comparison with that for other purposes. Thick clears and selects are wanted for pattern making, scroll work, door manufacture, etc. Consumers will continue to use white pine because it is so easy to work. Cypress and Pacific coast cedar and redwood are rivals with white pine in the wood-working industry, but they can never take possession of the demand in the great interior of the country, or on the eastern seaboard.

Thus a few of the special adaptabilities of white pine have been glanced at. Less of this kind of wood will be cut into framing timber, joists and scantling than hitherto. In fact, the supply of dimension in the lake region is now largely Norway, and hemlock is rising into prominence for such purpose. Yellow pine can command the market where freights are not against it. As southern lumber is pushed more and more into recognition throughout the northern states, the tendency will be to saw white pine into boards, in case of coarse logs, and into thick stuff in case the logs run well to clear timber. Yellow pine will make its way in the form of flooring, ceiling and interior finish, and that of timber, joist and scantling where the cost of transportation is not too high. White pine will hold its own in the door factories, the box factories and among wood workers generally. Thus both woods will have their sphere, and the demand for white pine will be sufficient to absorb the supply, while that for southern lumber will steadily increase. The competition will go on, but each will hold positions from which it cannot be dislodged by the other.—*Northwestern Lumberman.*

LAKE ABITTIBI.

E. B. Borron, Esq., Stipendary Magistrate, in his recent report on that part of the basin of Hudson's Bay belonging to the Province of Ontario, in regard to the cultivation of forests in the vicinity of Lake Abittibi says:

"Whatever else this northern part of the Province may be valuable for, no one who has ever visited it or read the reports of others who have, can entertain any reasonable doubt as to its fitness at all events to grow trees. These trees may not be exactly everything that we could wish either in respect of kind or quality, but in the view of rapidly increasing population and consumption of timber on this continent, of the equally rapid destruction of its forests, and of the inadequacy of the efforts made to replace them, nothing can be more certain than that in the near future any kind of timber whatever that this vast territory may be capable, spontaneously or otherwise, of producing, will be required and become of more or less economic importance. In order to obtain the best results, however, the judicious and timely invention of man is indispensably necessary. A judicious expenditure in the drainage of lakes, marshes and swamps, if not also of muskegs, in promoting the growth of the more important trees and plants and at the same time in repressing the growth of those of least value, in the prevention of bush fires, where certain to be hurtful, and in the cautious employment of fire where likely to be beneficial, as it sometimes undoubtedly is, such an expenditure (however large) would, I verily believe, in due time be returned to the Province many fold, in the vastly

increased extent of our forests and the better quality of the timber obtained.

Unfortunately, though it is easy to persuade peoples and legislatures to launch out in expenditures, the benefits anticipated from which are immediate, it is almost hopeless to expect them to do so if the returns, however large, are distant or tend to the advantage chiefly, if not wholly, of posterity. It might not be amiss, however, to remember that while drawing so largely on the patrimony that has descended to us in the matter of timber it may not be either unfair or unwise to make some such provision as I have suggested for the future, even if the benefits anticipated should fall chiefly to the share of the children or grandchildren the present generation. I know a few instances in which the borrowing of money necessary and its prudent and economical expenditure would be, I shall not say as justifiable, but commendable, or which would be fraught with greater benefits and advantages to them, even if they should have, ultimately, to pay both the principal and the interest.

Which are the Hardwoods?

With the majority of lumbermen the term hardwood includes every thing except white pine, and is accepted in that sense generally by the trade, though in reality there are two or three woods, such as buckeye and Southern white lynn, that are softer than white pine. Some writer, we know not who, says: "The relative hardness of woods is calculated by the hickory which is the toughest. Estimating this at 100, we get for pignut hickory 96, white oak 84, white ash 77, dogwood 75, scrub oak 73, white hazel 72, apple tree 70, red oak 69, white beech 65, black walnut 65, black birch 62, yellow and black oak 60, hard maple 56, white elm 58, red cedar 56, cherry 55, yellow pine 54, chestnut 52, yellow poplar 51, butternut and white birch 43, and white pine 35."

According to this formula woods possessing a degree of hardness equal to only about 40 per cent., or less than that of hickory, shall not be classed as hardwoods. Such woods are, however, limited in quantity, and are not of sufficient importance to justify a classification, and the trade will continue to construct hard wood to mean every thing except white pine.

They Got Here.

Deputy Sheriff Jones, of Detour, arrived in Sault Ste Marie, in a hurry early last month, and in conversation stated that Moiles Brothers of that place, who are largely engaged in lumbering in the vicinity, had packed up their goods to leave for Canada. Hurd & Hovenstein, of Buffalo, held a mortgage of \$45,000 on the mill of the firm, and it was due in a few days. About this time the tug Dowling, loading two vessels from Saginaw, landed at Detour presumably for a cargo of lumber but at night a hundred men concealed in the boats came ashore and began removing all the machinery of the mill and movable property on board. At noon all was loaded except the boiler, and the workmen began tearing down the mill. The Sheriff received notice to stop the operations at any cost, but no authority was sent. The telephone and telegraph wires were cut in three places, and there was no communication with Detour. At midnight all was loaded, and the tug and vessels were soon on their way to Spanish River, Canada, where the firm has lately purchased a site.

Blasting Holes to Plant Trees.

"Few people elsewhere in the world may ever have heard of blasting holes to plant shade or fruit trees," said a cultivator the other day, "yet the practice is common here and shows good results. In most places there is found sufficient top soil for that purpose, but as land has become valuable, people have cast about for means to utilize lands where the coarse sand rock comes too near the surface for successful tree planting. A blast, well put in, creates a pocket for broken rock mixed with top soil, which furnishes a basin to hold moisture as well as a deeper and cooler hold for the roots. It is yet too early to say what will be the ultimate results of such planting, but in a climate like ours, where a superfluity of rainfall is not likely to occur, it will no doubt be successful."—*San Diego, Cal., Union.*