

A BIG JAM.

30,000,000 FEET OF LOGS IN ONE JAM.

On the morning of May 22nd, there was considerable anxiety all along the Miramichi in reference to the probable effect of the freshet in the South West boom, which is the great receptacle of the lumber obtained on that branch of the river. There were about twenty million feet of logs in the boom in the morning, and the main river and Kenous drives were coming along at such a rate as to make it plainly apparent that it would be necessary to jam the river. The lessee of the boom, Jas. Robinson, Esq., decided that the point of danger was reached, and he made the jam at Bryanton's shore. This was early in the forenoon. By half-past three ten millions feet of logs had run into the jam, when the accumulated mass bore so heavily on the boom and jam piers that the tops were swept off half a dozen of the latter, the boom was broken and the ten millions feet composing the jam left the twenty millions below it in the part of the boom which still held good and went on the run down stream at the rate of about four miles an hour. Persons who have lived on the river for a long time and have seen other breaks in the South-west boom say they never saw such a run of logs at one time before, and it seemed to them that a great loss was inevitable.

It happened that Messrs. R. A. & S. Stewart had completed the telephonic communication only the day before between their office in Newcastle and that of Mr. Andrew Morrison, surveyor, at Parker's just opposite the boom, so the condition of things as they transpired was made known in Newcastle. Messages were also sent through Mr. Miller's telephone at Derby via Newcastle to Chatham, and little time was lost in making preparations to save the property now afloat.

The steamer *Andover*, with her owner, R. R. Call, Esq., on board, had started on Saturday forenoon on her regular trip up-river, but was prevented by the jam from proceeding to Indian Town. As it was known she was to be at the Hemlock Extract Factory wharf for some time, word was sent down, as soon as the danger of a break was seen, requesting that she be held ready for the emergency, and this was soon followed by the announcement of the break, carried by a man on horseback, and a call for both the *Andover* and *Derby*. Steam was got up on the latter, while the *Andover* proceeded up stream, meeting with and passing the logs, which her stern wheel enabled her to do, until the boom just below the rafting ground was reached. This had been unshackled by men of Mr. Robinson's rafting crew, who were working it down stream and the *Andover*, taking in tow, proceeded down the river. Much difficulty was experienced in running with the necessary speed down stream, for the logs were very thick and water was to be seen only here and there. The raftsmen who had got on board the steamer, as well as the hands belonging to the latter, were kept busy with their pike-poles shoving logs clear of the bow, and all witnessed the race between the logs and the *Andover* for the South-West Railway bridge were gratified to see that the boat must win. They were properly anxious over the matter for unless the boom could be stretched across the river against the ice-breakers of the bridge the ten millions which had broken the boom as well as an additional twenty millions or more following would nearly all be lost. Fortunately the *Andover* got clear of the running logs and reached the railway bridge two miles in advance of them, so that before they came down the latter steamer, assisted by the *Derby*, stretched the boom across the spans, although it fell short of reaching each shore. It was made fast and the shore spans were also secured as well as the facilities at hand admitted of, when the mass of logs was borne down upon it by the current. This was a time of the greatest anxiety, for the shore ends of the boom at each side of the river let the logs slip through. The daring boom men, under Mr. George Parker, Mr. Robinson's foreman, were equal to the emergency, and a dozen of them ventured out on the moving mass of logs under the south span with the heavy lines, which they made fast to the logs in the second span of the bridge and around the base of the pier. The representative of the *Advance* who was present on

the steamer *St. George*, which had run up from Chatham, describes the work done at this juncture as most hazardous as well as difficult. Our readers can imagine for themselves a mass of logs moving through a two-hundred feet span of a bridge as through a sluice, with the current running as fast as a man might walk, and a few men carrying a heavy six or eight inch line across from shore to pier, stepping and springing from log to log and then running back and down stream to clear the line as its hight was caught by the running lumber. Although some gallant fellow missed his footing or was obliged to let himself go down in his desire to clear the line, he would "up and at it again," while the on-looker wondered at the practised self-possession of these splendid men and the tenacity and pluck with which they hung to a task which few men are ever called on to perform—a task involving great physical endurance, special knowledge and experience and a length of purpose which is a noble characteristic wherever found.

Success rewarded the efforts of the workers at the two shore spans, and just as the run was stopped, after letting, perhaps, about a million feet through, there was snapping and crashing at the third pier from the north shore of the river, caused by the boom breaking because of the mass of logs forcing it across the angular end of the granite ice-breaker there. As the broken boom ends and some logs drifted down from the direction of the pier where the break occurred, it was feared that the drift would escape, but the mass of logs above simply crushed in together, and not more than a hundred pieces escaped before the jam became self-sustaining. Similar breaks occurred afterwards, but the danger was practically over when the shore spans were made safe.

Of course much remained to be done after this in the way of prevention. Additional lines and hawsers had to be secured, and they were supplied by our merchants and others who had them, the *St. George* having taken up two and the *Andover* being run down to Newcastle and Chatham during the evening for more. The men worked all night and part of Sunday, when the jam was pronounced safe and the freshet had begun to fall off.

The logs which ran through under the bridge on Saturday—perhaps a million feet in all—were caught by temporary and other booms and by men in boats at points along the south side of the river, only about one hundred pieces going out to sea. The schooner *Claymore*, Captain Marquis, arrived on Sunday, and we base this estimate of total loss on report which he brought in. It will therefore be seen that the loss is trifling. Indeed the loss of logs on the Miramichi this spring has been unusually small, as compared with other seasons, and had it not been for the break of Saturday not a log would have been lost, a most unusual circumstance, due to the ice having melted instead of running out.

A meeting of the Directors of the Boom Company was held. All the parties interested in the logs were allowed to be present and take a part in the proceedings. After an exchange of opinions and suggestions, it was agreed that Mr. Robinson, lessee of the boom, proceed and raft out the jam at the bridge, with all possible dispatch. To facilitate his work the logs are to be rafted—in what is known as mixed rafts—for a fortnight, and deliveries are to be made to owners, in proportion to the logs they may have in the drift, a strict account of all to be kept, and any person receiving more logs of his neighbor than the latter receives belonging to him, is to return the same quantity to him or payment at the rate of \$7 per thousand therefor, and two-thirds of that rate for undersized logs within a fortnight after the drift account is closed.

On Sunday, Monday, and the Queen's Birthday, the South-west Boom was visited by hundreds of people who had never witnessed such a jam of logs before in their lives and may never again see a similar one—there being now 30,000,000 feet in the jam.—*Miramichi Advance*.

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STRIKES.

A recent number of the *Northwestern Lumberman* contained an article on the above subject from which we take the following sensible remarks:—

Notably in politics and religion there are men who ignore the fact that other men were born with brains, and seem to think that the Almighty has placed a special brand of superiority upon them, thereby giving them the supreme right to rule others, and to think for others. A marked specimen of this egotism has been on exhibition in the United States senate, and it does not take a long hunt to find it in the pulpit. This same disposition is manifest in nearly every business and profession. Men who imagine they were born to lead and not to work, are constantly engaged in the formation and direction of various unions, taking advantage of every ripple of dissatisfaction, sowing the seeds of discontent where before there was contentment, and all the while keeping their eyes straight on offices and high salaries. A while ago a gentleman in an eastern town made a wager with a friend that he could get a certain number of names to a petition praying that a covering be built over the sun dial on the public square. Such a petition, it would seem, would be the last one to be signed, for the dial, if not a necessity, was at least a curiosity, and one of the old landmarks of the park. No one in a sober moment, uninfluenced, would think of covering the dial, and under ordinary circumstances would call the covering of it an unheard-of and dastardly piece of business; but specious arguments changed these latent views, and the gentleman returned with the required number of signatures and claimed the wager. The leaders of the unions understand this trait in human nature, and make capital of it. They are aware of the susceptibility of the average mind, and set themselves at work to make the most of it. They care little whether their followers recline at night on comfortable beds or in the alley, so long as their dues are regularly paid. They call themselves the workingman's friends, but they are the syphons that draw from the workingman's pockets his money. This is not always so, maybe, but it often is. The necessity of unions is a question which has been often discussed pro and con, and one that cannot be settled with a few strokes of the pen. But common sense dictates that when a man of the character described above is at the head of a union, the members of it should look upon him as a barnacle that should be removed from the bottom of the ship in which they sail. And it is a pertinent question for every workingman to ask himself, Is it right than any man, or men, should dictate to me where I am to work, and what wages I am to receive? Answered in the affirmative, it follows that a man does not best know his own needs, and is not at liberty to follow out his desires. The folly of submitting to such dictation was forcibly illustrated by the action of the striking switchmen in this city a few days ago. They asked for more money to buy food and pay rent with, then formed into line and hired a band of several pieces to escort them through the streets. The request and the act were paradoxical in nature. But they said they did it in order that the citizens of Chicago might see that they were an orderly lot of men. Of course, at that time, they were orderly. They had advertised that they would be orderly, and no one expected them to be otherwise. But a while after that, when they were hurling brick-bats and coupling pins at the heads of men who were employed in their places, and who were innocently striving to earn an honest living, it might truthfully be said that they were not orderly. Had not these disgraceful proceedings been checked by the police, ere this their high-handed outrages would have been such that all the bands in the city would be unable to foot them into good repute.

Do strikes pay? It is a matter of history that generally they do not—that is, they do not pay the strikers, and could the loss to manufacturers and corporations be known it would be an argument against them that could not be appealed from. To ascertain how much the strikes this spring have cost this city in dollars and cents would involve intricate and profound calculations. But, of course, this is of no moment to the men who strike, for they go coolly and deli-

berately at work to occasion these losses. When they are losers themselves it does not serve to teach them better. Last summer the job members of the typographical union struck for an advance of \$3 per week. The result was that many of them were idle in the streets during the remainder of the summer. In such cases there is, in addition, a prospective loss, that is liable in the future to assume tangible forms. There is such a thing as competence and stability receiving a suitable reward. There is a feeling that is possessed by business men that they do not care to keep employed, longer than really necessary, men who are unreliable and who, at any moment, do not hesitate to peril the business that their labor should sustain and make more valuable. There is an indisposition on the part of business men to avoid giving employment to men of such character. Money is not all the capital a man can have. The man who is competent, industrious and reliable is wanted for all he is worth by somebody. If he stands ready to cripple the business that not only feeds his employer but himself, he should not wonder if he is not wanted.

It is singular that there are so many men who think that in the matter of employment there is but one party to the bargain. They forget, or seem to forget, that one man is not obliged to employ another any more than one man is obliged to work for another. Labor is a marketable article, and capital cannot buy it unless it is willing to be bought. Those workmen are ill-advised who rant about the desire of capital to crush and belittle them; if they were not so advised they would appreciate that capital and labor are dependent, one upon the other. If a man is thoroughly imbued with the idea that capital is his enemy, let him keep away from it. Let him paddle his own canoe. In this free country no man is obliged to work for a tyrant; and the country is large enough for the exercise of any skill or talent that a man may possess.

There is no law, legal or moral, that prevents a man from asking for higher wages, or quitting work, so long as there is no contract verbal or written that binds him to continue longer. Thus far it is the privilege of employees to go; farther than that it is the right of employers to say they shall not go. A striker has no more right to attempt to undermine the business of his former employer, because the latter refuses to pay a higher price for the labor he buys, than the employer has to undermine the house in which the laborer lives, because the latter will not work for a certain sum. A striker has no right to bulldoze or what is worse, as is often done, physically injure a man who is willing to take a vacated place at the wages formerly paid. There is a law written in the statute books of several states, making riotous conduct a penal offence, and there is a growing desire on the part of order-loving people at large that the construction of the law should include the unruly element considered in this article, and a growing disposition on the part of many magistrates of the law to so construe it.

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