



Who thought for a moment, when the wooden rim for bicycles was in its experimental stage, that the lumber trade would ever be affected by its adoption. Yet the bicycle has become so general that no small quantity of rock elm and maple is required in the manufacture of rims, and I know one dealer in particular who is supplying large quantities of such stock for this special purpose, and I have reason to believe that he is realizing a snug little sum thereby.

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MR. DAVID McLAREN, a leading lumber merchant of Ottawa, who spent the greater part of last winter in England, states that the outlook for the lumber trade across the Atlantic is good. Stocks are lighter than usual at this season, and the demand excellent, with prospects of a continued good consumptive demand. There appears to be a better feeling over there, that manifests itself in increased business generally. Mr. McLaren states that he found a very strong feeling in London in favor of drawing the mother country and her colonies closer together. The expression of loyalty by the colonies during the recent war scare made a strong impression.

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"LUMBER is just now in a transition state," said a keen observer of lumber matters with whom I conversed recently. "A few years ago," he added, "quality was subordinate to quantity, and the mill man endeavored to cut as large a stock as possible with little regard to efficiency. But times are changing, and where a manufacturer formerly cut six or seven million feet, probably nearly all of one length, the wise mill man now prefers to have one million feet, which he cuts to special lengths and sizes to meet the requirements of the market. I must admit, however, that Canadian mill men have been somewhat slow in realizing the necessity for this change, and many of them have not yet learned the advantages to be derived from greater care in the manufacture of stock. In this respect the manufacturer in England is entirely different. There everything is sawed to special lengths. Just to give you an instance of what is required by the English market, at one time a gentleman was taking out a quantity of stock in the Georgian Bay district for that market, and all strips over three feet in length were cut to half-foot sizes and tied up in bundles of 25 each. Of course he got a good price, and could afford to take the trouble. Another point which I might point out," said my informant, "is the necessity for sawing off cull ends of boards. If a board has, say, two feet of cull lumber on the end, it should be sawed off, as the customer to whom it is shipped is obliged to pay freight thereon, while the lumber is of no value whatever. Manufacturers are also experiencing an increasing demand for thin stock, and few have apparatus to manufacture it. When it comes down to $\frac{3}{8}$ inch, it requires a very rigid saw frame to prevent springing."

Mr. C. M. Beecher, of Vancouver, B. C., and one of the leading lumber dealers of the Pacific Coast, visited the eastern provinces last month. Mr. Beecher is a nephew of the late Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. Interviewed by a representative of the press, Mr. Beecher remarked that when he left home no less than fifteen ocean-going vessels were lying in the harbor of Vancouver, loading cargoes of lumber and other western products for foreign ports. "A cable," said he, "from Vancouver to Australia and the Orient would give a wonderful impetus to the lumber trade, as the British Columbia dealers would then be in a position to communicate daily, at a comparatively low rate, with the island continent, and both countries would no doubt be very largely benefitted. I am a firm believer in preferential trade between the colonies themselves as well as with Great Britain. I believe that were such a policy as that outlined by Sir Charles Tupper, now Prime Minister of Canada, carried into effect, that the progress of the Dominion of Canada during the next decade would be far ahead of any material advancement made in the United States during the last fifty years. I have no hesitation in saying that if Australia were to impose a duty of one dollar per thousand on lumber produced outside the colonies, it would start every saw mill in the province of British Columbia, and give new life to the whole of Western Canada; where we now ship fifteen million feet, our yearly export would go to forty million at a single bound, and I need not tell you what this would mean to all branches of trade on the Pacific Coast." Mr. Beecher stated that his firm sell lumber all the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific, three million feet going yearly to one town in Nova Scotia alone. They also purchase machinery from Nova Scotia, which goes to show that interprovincial trade is steadily on the increase.

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WHEN I met Mr. John Gray, lumber merchant, of Toronto, he had just returned from the Nipissing district. He informed me that the water in the rivers in that section was as low as is usual in July, and prospects were not very bright for getting the logs out. While admitting that it was rather discouraging to lumbermen to have their logs hung up after getting them out of the woods, Mr. Gray remarked that ultimately it would be a benefit to the trade. "Some of the mills," he remarked, have large stocks of old lumber on hand, and in some cases the cut of '94, which I think will shortly require to be re-piled, is still at the mills. The trade is very quiet at present, the great trouble being with the lower grades of pine. No. 1 cuts are always marketable, as I believe there is nothing to take the place of white pine for certain purposes. On a recent visit to Philadelphia I found I could sell all the No. 1 grade I could send along, but when it came to culls, spruce and hemlock were being used largely instead. Lumbermen made a great mistake in cutting their limits. Some years ago they went through them and cut all the best pine, leaving the cull trees, and now when the lower grade lumber is manufactured, there is little or no demand. Had they reversed the order of things they would have been millionaires to-day." Mr. Gray is also interested in timber limits, and took occasion to remark upon the low price at which spruce limits could be obtained. A gentle-

man who had recently been offered the option of the purchase of a limit in New Brunswick, estimated that at the price at which the limit was offered, the lumber could be laid down in New York at \$6 per thousand. "And," he added, "there is a considerable advantage in manufacturing spruce deals for the English market, as any cull stock can be utilized in the manufacture of pulp."

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A GENTLEMAN from the west with whom I had the pleasure of an interesting chat recently, was Mr. Wm. Margach, Crown Timber Agent for the Rainy River district, whose headquarters are at Rat Portage. Of the future prosperity of the western country no one is more sanguine than Mr. Margach, and no one, perhaps, is better acquainted with its resources. "The lumbermen of the west," said he, "have experienced a better demand for lumber since the beginning of the year than for the past three or four years, and as our market is entirely in Canada and depends largely on the grain production of the North-west, present indications point to a good year. You are, of course, familiar with the Government system of granting timber licenses. Lumber operators employ scalers to measure the logs after being cut, their measurement being checked by Government officials. It is my duty to see that proper returns are made to the Government. The boundaries of my district are the Ontario boundary line on the west, the United States boundary line on the south, the line between Thunder Bay district and Rainy River on the east, and James Bay on the north. The distance is about 200 miles from east to west, and between 100 and 150 miles from north to south. The timber is pine, spruce and tamarac. In the valley of the Rainy River, which is 80 miles in length, there are to be found immense quantities of spruce. I am quite familiar with the greater part of Ontario, and from my knowledge I believe there is more spruce timber in the Rainy River valley than in all the rest of Ontario. The country offers the best of facilities for the manufacture of pulp, spruce being a natural product of the flat lands, which are about half covered with water, and which means that many water powers are available. There are large rivers, such as the Kaministiquia, the Wabigon and the Eagle, while at the Lake of the Woods the Keewatin Power Company have expended upwards of one million dollars in developing the water power. At Sault Ste Marie, where the finest pulp mill in Ontario has been erected, there are considerable quantities of spruce, but it is only a matter of a little time until it becomes exhausted, and thereafter the Rainy River valley must furnish the supply. The spruce industry is only in its infancy, and the next few years will witness great developments in connection with the utilization of this wood." Mr. Margach remarked that the output of logs in his territory during the past winter had been quite large, in fact considerably in excess of the previous winter. Mining operations, he said, were also quite active, and were resulting in the consumption of no small quantity of lumber.

Canada exports several million dollars' worth more lumber to the United States each year than to Great Britain. The value of Canada's forest products is about \$80,000,000 per annum, of which nearly 70 per cent. goes into local consumption.