

saw logs, it would certainly mean the closing of our markets to the greater portion of our lumber.

The letters from prominent lumbermen printed on another page are worthy of the consideration of the trade. Hon. J. B. Snowball, probably one of the best informed lumbermen in Canada, points out that in many foreign countries there are splendid openings for the extension of the Canadian lumber trade, particularly in manufactured and partially manufactured stock. Instead of our lumber finding a market in the United States, it would be shipped abroad and would replace the lumber which is now shipped from that country to the foreign markets. With the raw material at our door, it seems strange indeed that the United States should export over four times as much lumber to foreign countries as Canada. But two essentials are necessary before any great development can be expected, namely, the investment of considerable capital in manufacturing plant, and a better acquaintance with the requirements of foreign markets.

#### EDITORIAL NOTES.

MANY of the methods adopted by our American cousins for the extension of trade and a better acquaintance of their customers are worthy of the consideration of Canadian lumbermen. We note that arrangements are being completed for an excursion of eastern retail lumbermen to the Pacific coast, with the object of inspecting the timber of that section of country, much of which finds a market in the Eastern States. The party will leave Minneapolis on the 21st of July, and will be entertained by the Puget Sound lumbermen.

It is a significant fact that manufacturers who have felt the sharp edge of competition to the least extent are those whose mills are equipped with improved machinery and appliances. There are manufacturers who are running along year after year with an equipment which may have been considered modern twenty-five years ago, but for which there is no place at the present day. They cannot understand why their neighbor can undersell them in the same market, and under precisely the same conditions, but the secret frequently lies in the adoption of up-to-date machinery, by which the maximum of production is attained at the minimum of cost. During hard times the tendency is no doubt towards a curtailment of expenses, but money spent in cheapening the cost of production is at all times money saved. The live manufacturer is constantly on the watch for new ideas.

THE adoption of an alien labor law by the Canadian government, which at time of writing seems probable, is a step in the right direction. While not in accord with the principle involved, we believe the government of this country is fully justified in taking such action, in view of the unfair treatment which has been accorded Canadians by the United States government. The bill as framed only applies to such countries as shall enact a similar law. So far as the lumber industry is concerned, the bill is certain to be in favor of Canadian workmen, as a very large number of men are brought each year from Michigan to work in the lumber woods in the Georgian Bay district. In the maritime provinces the situation is different, and probably as

many Canadians find employment in the woods of Maine as there are Americans engaged to work on the Canadian side.

THE contention of American manufacturers that lumber was produced in Canada much cheaper than in the United States has been somewhat shattered by a report made by the Labor Commissioner of the United States, showing the cost of production in the two countries. The statistics were compiled from the books and pay rolls of lumber concerns in the Ottawa district on the one hand and in Wisconsin and Minnesota on the other. While the average wages in saw mills in the United States are shown to be \$1.71 per day, and in Canada \$1.41, the average labor cost of one thousand feet is given as 91 cents in the United States and \$1.23 in this country. This discrepancy is accounted for by the improved machinery used in the United States. The cost of logging in Canada is also shown to be greater by \$1.30, making the actual labor cost of producing one thousand feet \$1.60 greater in Canada than in the United States. Add to this the additional price paid in this country for timber limits, and we fail to see wherein American manufacturers have suffered from the alleged "ruinous Canadian competition."

LATE reports received at this office regarding the condition of the lumber and shingle trade of British Columbia are of an encouraging nature, and lend to the belief that manufacturers in that province have entered upon a new and more prosperous era. During recent years of general business depression, probably no section of the Dominion, so far as the lumber trade is concerned, has suffered to a greater extent than British Columbia, where the price obtained for lumber has been very little greater than the actual cost of production. And so with the shingle trade. Some manufacturers ceased operating their mills rather than carry on business without even realizing the interest on the money invested. The wisdom of this action is now proven. The market has become bare of stock, and the demand has increased to a point where it is reasonable to expect that more remunerative prices will be obtained at an early date. The foreign trade for the first four months has shown a marked expansion, and is, we believe, capable of still further development. The efforts to re-organize the lumber combine, for the purpose of controlling the foreign trade, have so far proved unsuccessful.

#### DOMINION GOVERNMENT TIMBER LANDS.

THE timber lands owned by the Dominion government embrace those in Manitoba, the North-west Territories, and within the railway belt in the province of British Columbia. According to the annual report of the Department of Interior, the timber dues collected in this territory in 1896 amounted to \$69,646.25, being less than the previous year by \$3,504.48. Of the revenue derived from timber, \$18,793.96 was for bonuses, ground rents, royalties and dues on timber cut from lands in the railway belt in the province of British Columbia, being a decrease of \$4,791.96 as compared with the previous year. The total revenue received from timber in Manitoba and the North-west Territories was \$1,128,126.25, and the total revenue from timber within

the railway belt in British Columbia up to the same date \$294,450.55. During the year 34,817,909 feet of lumber were manufactured from timber cut under license. In the Winnipeg agency, which comprises Manitoba and portions of Assiniboia and Saskatchewan, the following quantities of lumber were sold:—

	Feet.
Canadian pine (from Lake of the Woods) . . . . .	42,000,000
Canadian pine (from Fort William) . . . . .	2,000,000
Canadian spruce (manufactured in Manitoba) . . . . .	15,418,185
United States pine and oak . . . . .	11,957,740
British Columbia products (approximately) . . . . .	10,000,000

Following is a comparative statement of the average prices of lumber within the several crown timber agencies during the past twelve years. The cost of this article to the settler has been very much reduced within that time:—

AGENCY	1885 Per M.	1894 Per M.	1895 Per M.	1897 Per M.
Winnipeg . . . . .	\$13.10 to \$25	\$17	\$17 to \$19	\$16.45
Brandon . . . . .	20 to 22	15	15	13.45
Whitmouth . . . . .	11 to 12	10	10	12
Calgary . . . . .	25 to 30	\$ 8 to 16	8 to 16	\$ 8 to \$12
Fort McLeod . . . . .	30	10	10 to 16	13 to 16
Lethbridge . . . . .	9 to 16	10	10 to 16	13 to 16
Prince Albert . . . . .	30 to 45	10 to 25	8 to 25	8 to 25
Edmonton . . . . .	25 to 30	18	13 to 16	11 to 12
British Columbia . . . . .	10	7 to 9	8 to 10	8 to 10

Returns received by the Department give the following quantities of building material as having been manufactured and sold during the year within the five Dominion agencies:—

	Manufactured.	Sold
Sawn lumber . . . . .	34,817,000 feet	32,545,72 feet
Shingles . . . . .	3,615,948 "	3,438,839 "
Laths . . . . .	338,083 "	450,375 "

The areas licensed in the province of Manitoba, the three provisional territorial districts, and on Dominion lands in the province of British Columbia, are as follows:—

	Sq. Miles.
Manitoba . . . . .	658.79
Alberta . . . . .	1,308.15
Assiniboia . . . . .	95.00
Saskatchewan . . . . .	246.54
British Columbia . . . . .	370.03

The figures below show the annual receipts from timber dues since 1873:—

1873 . . . . .	\$ 109 25
1874 . . . . .	2,710 55
1875 . . . . .	2,335 25
1876 . . . . .	387 00
1877 . . . . .	320 00
1878 . . . . .	1,620 00
1879 . . . . .	325 00
1880 . . . . .	25,121 46
1881 . . . . .	32,028 34
1882 . . . . .	58,753 14
1883 . . . . .	90,066 46
1884 . . . . .	147,983 10
1885 . . . . .	87,474 99
1886 . . . . .	64,820 31
1887 . . . . .	65,111 74
1888 . . . . .	94,964 55
1889 . . . . .	90,290 00
1890 . . . . .	84,642 95
1891 . . . . .	102,902 71
1892 . . . . .	106,461 35
1893 . . . . .	105,865 24
1894 . . . . .	81,200 51
1895 . . . . .	74,079 20
1896 . . . . .	61,923 47

A peculiar inquiry, not a little out of the ordinary, was received recently by the American Clay-working Machinery Company, of Bucyrus, from a business man of Saginaw, Mich. The request was for figures on a machine to mix and pug sawdust into shallow blocks, to be used on the market for fire-kindling. The intention was to mix the sawdust with resin and oil, and after a thorough mixing, to pass it to a brick machine to be pressed lightly into blocks about 12x18 in size, and then cut automatically into slabs an inch or two in thickness. The sawdust fire-kindling of this kind is well known on the market, but the trouble has been that the price is too high. The Saginaw man figures that by taking the sawdust of several of the largest mills and handling it in large quantities he will be able to produce a fuel which may not be limited to kindling alone, but may, by making it more compact and lessening the cost of production, come within the realm of possibility as a fuel block.—Ohio State Journal.