

THE CANADIAN LUMBER INDUSTRY.

THERE was a time when, to quote the language of a certain class of Englishmen, Canada was known as a "blawsted wooden country." The imputation, though made in cynicism, had much evidence behind it, for in the early history of the country the forests of Canada extended in an almost unbroken stretch from the Atlantic ocean to the head of Lake Superior—a distance of 2,000 miles.

The Dominion of Canada has an area of not less than 3,456,383 sq. miles; that is, it is 439,783 sq. miles larger than the United States, if Alaska be excepted, and almost as large as the whole continent of Europe, which has 3,756,002 sq. miles. This territory is divided into provinces as follows: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, and British Columbia, all of which are rich (in some measure at least) in forest wealth. The total population of Canada, according to the census of 1891, is 4,833,230.

Next to agricultural pursuits, in which 56 per cent. of the population are engaged, lumber is the most important industry of the Dominion. There is an invested capital in the business of nearly \$100,000,000, and an annual wage-list of over \$30,000,000, with an output valued at almost \$110,000,000. Of saw mills and wood-working establishments there are about 6,000, giving employment during the season to not less than 15,000 men.

The value of forest products, calculated from the census returns of 1891, is given by Mr. Geo. Johnson, government statistician, as \$80,071,415. For the fiscal year 1890-91 the imports of wood articles amounted to \$3,132,516, while for the same period the exports were \$27,207,547, leaving for consumption in Canada \$55,996,384, or a value of \$15.50 per head. The census returns show an aggregate of 2,015,073,072 cu. ft. as the total cut of the year. About 30 per cent. of this is exported, leaving 1,431,551,150 cu. ft. for the annual home consumption. This is equal to 296.2 cu. ft. per head of the population, the estimate of Mr. B. E. Fernow for the United States being 350 cu. ft. per head.

As each of the provinces of Canada has an individuality of its own, geographically and physically, so has each its own individuality as a lumber centre. Canada's reputation as a "wooden country" rests primarily on the fame of its white pine (*Pinus strobus*) in the province of Ontario. It is improbable that any one has learned anything of the lumber history of this country without having obtained a knowledge of the immense pine resources of the Ottawa valley and the Georgian Bay districts. Ontario is spoken of as the great white-pine field of the Dominion, just as Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota go into history as the great white-pine states of the American Union.

The ownership of Canadian forests is, for the most part, invested in the provincial governments, and in Ontario, in particular, the management thereof constitutes the most important department of government. The department of crown lands, which has the administration of the timber resources of the province, is the great money-making department of Ontario, and political opponents oftentimes inquire where the revenue of Ontario will come from when its forest products are exhausted? This department has been for many years under the control of Hon. A. S. Hardy, commissioner of crown lands, a gentleman whose name is frequently mentioned as the probable successor to the present premier, Sir Oliver Mowat.

The regulations respecting timber limits in Ontario are of importance to every one interested in this industry. Among other things they provide as follows:

That the commissioner of crown lands, before granting any license for new timber berths (not including the lands) in the unsurveyed territory, shall, as far as practicable, cause the section of country where it is intended to allot such berths to be run into townships, and each township, when so surveyed, shall constitute a timber berth, but the commissioner may cause such townships to be subdivided into as many timber berths as he may think proper.

The berths or limits, when so surveyed and set off, and all new berths or limits in surveyed territory, shall be explored and valued, and then offered for sale by public auction at the upset price fixed by such valuation, at such time and place, and on such conditions

and by such officer as the commissioner shall direct by public notice for that purpose, and shall be sold to the highest bidder for cash at the time of sale.

All lumber licenses are to expire on the 30th of April next after the date thereof, and all renewals are to be applied for and issued before the 1st of July following the expiration of the last preceding license, in default whereof the right to renewal shall cease and the berth or berths shall be treated as forfeited.

No renewal of any license shall be granted unless or until the ground-rent and all costs of survey and all dues to the crown on timber, saw logs, or other lumber cut under and by virtue of any license other than the last preceding, shall have been first paid.

All timber berths or limits shall be subject to an annual ground rent of \$3 a square mile, payable only in advance before the issuing of any original license or renewal.

All timber, saw logs, wood, or other lumber cut under any license that may be hereafter granted shall be subject to the payment of the following crown dues: red and white pine timber, per cu. ft., \$0.02; red and white pine saw logs and boom timber, per standard of 200 ft. board measure, \$0.20.

Operating under these regulations, which are closely enforced by the government, the cut of white pine and Norway pine lumber in Ontario amounts to about 700,000,000 feet a year; taking the figures for the year ending June, 1893, the cut was 677,525,000 feet.

It is somewhat difficult to estimate the pine timber area of Ontario. A return of the government of Ontario, brought down in 1893, says:

No estimate has been made of the quantity of pine timber standing upon the whole crown domain. There is a great stretch of territory lying north of the 48th parallel of latitude and the northern limit of Ontario and between 85th west longitude and the easterly limit of the disputed territory, in respect of which no estimate has been made at all, containing 89,000 sq. miles or thereabouts, much of which, it is known, is pine bearing, but other portions are not, and as to some other parts there is no information. What has been done is to take certain areas known to be pine bearing and apply a reasonable estimate to them, as follows:

	Sq. Miles.
West of the Ottawa River and north-west of the limits sold in 1872 between 80 and 85 west longitude, and extending north to the 48th parallel of latitude.	24,000
Between Ottawa Agency and sale of 1881 in the Nipissing District.	410
	24,410
	Feet.
To this area an average of 1,000,000 ft. B. M. to the mile was applied.	24,410,000,000
Carl. DeLans, late deputy minister of the interior, estimated the timber in the disputed territory at	26,000,000,000
	50,410,000,000
There is now subject to license in Ontario about 20,000 sq. miles, which has been estimated to contain 500,000 ft. to the mile, equalling	10,000,000,000
	60,410,000,000
VALUE.	
The bonus value of 50,410,000,000 ft. at \$1.50 a thousand equals.	\$ 75,615,000
The dues upon this at \$1 a thousand.	50,410,000
	\$ 126,025,000
Add for duty on 10,000,000,000 ft., estimated on licensed lands at \$1 a thousand.	10,000,000
Making a total of.	\$136,025,000

White pine limits in Ontario, though scattered through many hands, are largely held by the big lumbermen of the province, and of late years a very considerable part has gone into the possession of United States lumbermen.

Mr. J. R. Booth, of Ottawa, has obtained fame as the largest lumberman in the world. He is an extensive owner of timber limits, and until a little more than a year ago operated what was generally conceded to be the largest saw mill in the world. This was destroyed by fire some twelve months since. Messrs. Gilmour & Co., of Trenton, hold a very prominent position as owners of timber limits, as well as saw millers. At the government sale of limits, two years ago, this firm was a heavy purchaser, paying the largest price for a timber limit ever known in Ontario. Among other large owners may be named: The Bronson & Weston Co., of which Hon. E. H. Bronson, a member of the Ontario government, is principal; W. C. Edwards & Co., Buell, Hurdman & Co., Robert Thomson & Co., The Georgian Bay Lumber Co., and The Muskoka Mill and Lumber Co.

When, three years ago, the duty on lumber going into the United States was reduced from \$2 a thousand to \$1 a thousand, a great stimulus was given to the lumber

industry, and there followed one of the best years that Canadian lumbermen had enjoyed for a long time. But this reduction in the duty on sawn lumber carried with it the free export of lumber in the logs into the United States, and this immediately built up an immense business in the shipment of logs by raft from the Georgian Bay shores to those of Michigan. These shipments have grown, until in the last year something like 400,000,000 ft. of logs were exported from the Georgian Bay shores to Michigan mills.

When the Wilson tariff became a law, conditions again changed, and the Ontario holdings of United States lumbermen again increased. To-day a large extent of the timber limits of Ontario is in the hands of J. W. Howry & Sons, J. T. Hurst, Albert Park, A. T. Bliss, General Alger, Saginaw Salt and Lumber Co., and other well known Michigan lumbermen.

To what extent the change in the lumber tariff will induce American holders of Canadian lumber to build mills in Canada is a moot question. All lumber being free, it is as easy to ship the sawn lumber as that in the log, and this being the case, it is contended that United States lumbermen will find it an advantage to own mills near the limits, cut their logs there, and ship the lumber to their own country. It is known that J. W. Howry & Sons, who will this season rank among the largest operators in Ontario, have erected, or come into possession of, large saw mills in the province. At Midland a large mill is cutting entirely for an American concern, and along the Arnprior, Ottawa and Parry Sound Railway, 140 miles from Ottawa, the St. Anthony Lumber Co., owned by F. C. Whitney, of Minneapolis, and other American lumbermen, has built one of the largest mills on the continent.

There are problems in connection with the Wilson tariff that may change the complexion of affairs. A change in government in the United States might lead to a reversion of free lumber, though the manner in which investments are being made in Canadian limits by United States lumbermen, who ought to understand the situation, does not give much force to this theory. Again, the question has been raised, only within the present season, whether dressed lumber, which is exempt from duty, includes flooring and other lumber that is matched and grooved. The board of general appraisers of the United States has ruled against this rendering, and, if the ruling is sustained, it will be a barrier to the establishment of planing mills in Canada. But, on the whole, there is reason to believe that free lumber has come to stay, and that it will, aside from an exception or two, operate in the interests both of Canadian lumbermen and of their congeners in the United States.

While white pine holds the lead among the woods grown in Ontario, there are other timbers possessing good commercial value. Some years ago Ontario was rich in many of the most useful hardwoods; there was hardly a county in the province that did not contain a good supply of maple, elm, ash, beech and birch. But to-day these woods, though fairly abundant, are to be found only in small quantities. The extent to which the forests have been depleted of some of the most valuable hardwoods gives to advocates of forest protection a most forcible text. The late clerk of forestry for the province of Ontario, Mr. R. W. Phipps, has pointed out, in way of illustration, that in Kent county oak that sold 15 and 20 years ago at \$4.50 per thousand feet, could now be marketed at \$25 per thousand, and walnut, which then brought only \$14 per thousand feet, would to-day command \$100.

Crossing the border line to the older province of Quebec, we are brought face to face with lumber conditions of a different character. The chief lumber riches of Quebec, as also those of New Brunswick, consist of spruce. And whereas Ontario finds its principal and natural market for its forest products in the United States, Quebec's shipments are chiefly to Great Britain. There are several large concerns that look solely to the United Kingdom for their market. The area under license in Quebec, according to the statement of the Hon. J. K. Ward, one of the oldest and most intelligent lumbermen of the province, is 48,000 miles, producing of spruce and pine logs 6,170,000 ft., equalling 683,000,000 ft. B. C.; of pine, spruce and birch timber, 18,500,000