

## OTTAWA LETTER.

[Regular correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

THE sensation in lumbering circles the past week has been the unusual rising of the Ottawa river. At this writing it is difficult to tell what the outcome will be. Already the water has reached the highest point in seventeen years, since 1876, the year of the great floods. What is being remarked by those who know Ottawa well is that the increase is not gradual as has sometimes been the case, but the rise is in leaps and bounds. How much further this increase is to continue is the alarming aspect of the case. The fear is that the terrible record of the flood year will be rivalled unless there is a speedy cessation of these rushing, bubbling, troubling waters. Lumber interests are being affected in various ways. A boom of the Upper Ottawa Improvement Company has been carried away, and seventy thousand logs sent adrift. J. R. Booth has been obliged to close down his mill for the reason that the water has risen so high logs can no longer be gotten to the saw. Buell, Hurdman & Co. will likely have to close down if the waters continue to rise. Eddy's dam is in danger of being swept away, though they have taken the precaution of drawing a lot of heavy stone to place there. The water has risen so that the logs separating the government slide for square timber for McKay's mill race and the other slides for logs have become covered, and there is great danger that they may break at any moment. The possibilities of serious trouble are indeed many. It is a case of wait and hope for the best.

## INDIFFERENT LENGTHS.

A quantity of logs, which have lain all winter above the Chaudiere Falls, enclosed in a boom, broke away on Queen's Birthday, and for a time blocked an excursion party by a local steamer. The logs number some hundreds and belonged to the Hawkesbury Lumber Company, with a few the property of Mr. J. R. Booth.

R. G. Dunn & Co., in their latest trade report, uses these words in regard to the lumber situation in Ottawa: "This year's lumber season has opened most auspiciously, extremely large sales at good prices having been already reported, especially in square timber, and the opinion has been expressed that if present prospects are realized it will be one of the most successful seasons on record."

An awkward mishap occurred at W. C. Edwards & Co.'s mill at New Edinburgh a few days ago. Shortly before six o'clock, the hour for stopping work, the endless chain, which is used to haul the logs up from the Ottawa river a height of about fifty feet, broke in the centre, and slid down, falling far out into the river. A good deal of difficulty is being experienced in getting it out again owing to the weight of the chain and the condition of the river with sawdust.

A large cargo of deals calling for the use of six barges belonging to the Ottawa Forwarding Company have gone forward to Montreal, thence to be shipped to the old country. The deals are of fine quality and were sawed last year by Percy & Pattee. As a large carries some 750,000 feet of lumber, it will be seen that nearly 5,000,000 of feet will go by these six barges. Besides this shipment Mr. J. R. Booth was loading a number of cars with dry lumber for the American market.

OTTAWA, Can., May 29, 1893.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA LETTER.

[Regular correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

THE Royal City Planing Mills Co. are at present cutting a cargo of lumber which, without exception, will be the finest ever shipped out of British Columbia. The cargo is destined for France, and the ship which will carry it has been chartered and will arrive in port early in July to load. Every stick will be seasoned and free from knots, sap and shakes—in other words, every piece in the cargo will come under the head of "specially selected." This will be the first export of lumber from British Columbia to the French republic. This company is also making some important shipments to Ontario and Quebec. A recent shipment to Toronto consisted of 21 sticks of lumber 12 inches square and 69 feet long. The timbers were loaded on two cars, and their beauty even in Westminster, where such sights are not rare, attracted considerable attention. Several car-loads of heavy canal timbers are to be shipped to Montreal. Nor do the shipments of this Company end here. They are filling an order for St. John, New Brunswick, of extra large spar timber. Each stick is 22½ x 24 inches, and 70 feet long, all free from knots or flaws. The logs from which these splendid sticks will be made have been cut at the company's logging camp, Mud Bay, and will be brought by rail to Port Kells and towed from there to the city. Several carloads of smaller timbers for the same destination have gone forward during the last few days.

## COAST CHIEFS.

The N. P. steamer Victoria left Victoria for the Orient on 11th inst, taking 350,000 feet of lumber for Yokohama.

The saw mills are all busy and expect to be for some time. Their orders for salmon cases are larger than they have ever been, as a large run of fish is confidently expected.

The continued wet weather is interfering with their getting logs fast enough to keep running, but the last few days have been very fine and it is to be hoped the summer has arrived.

The case of Scott vs. Hastings Saw Mill Co. has been decided against the Plaintiff, and the company absolved from all liability in the matter. I mention this because in a former letter I said that Scott had secured damages.

The shingle business is picking up, and shipments are steadily increasing. Messrs. W. L. Johnson & Co., of Gambler Island, have shipped 1,000,000 feet to Victoria, and 160,000 to Bowmanville, Ont. This firm had 20 carloads sold to a Chicago house, and was commencing to load the first car at Liverpool, when the shingle combine on the United States side of the line went to pieces, and the order was cancelled forthwith. There is a duty of 30 cents per thousand on shingles going into the United States. Were this removed, Mr. Johnson says, the shingle business would soon be booming in British Columbia.

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C., May 22, 1893.

## NEW BRUNSWICK LETTER.

[Regular Correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

RECENT legislation may have an important bearing on the future of the lumber industry of this province. The local legislature, at its late session, passed a bill relating to the leasing of crown timber lands. The term of ten years, the length of the present leases, expires in August. The new bill endeavors to ward off possible speculation in timber lands by providing that a certain average cut must be made by all lessees in respect to all lands held by them. In another section of the bill power is given the governor-in-council to increase at any time the rate of stumpage and mileage on such lands. This is supposed to be a safeguard against possible monopoly. Provision is made in the closing section of the bill for the offering of the leases at public competition, upon condition that they be renewed annually at the pleasure of the government for a term, not exceeding 25 years. In the course of the debate on the bill the leader of the government stated that there were not less than 2,000,000 acres of splendid timber lands still unlicensed and unbroken. With some the opinion prevails that this legislation may lead to a strong lumber combine, and by bidding in the best of the new lands and controlling the leases it would completely shut out small operators. Under the present system of only ten-year leases 1,250,000 acres are held by ten lessees.

Another piece of lumber legislation proposed by the Legislature is a bill admitting of the incorporation of companies for the purpose of clearing out rivers, lakes and streams, to facilitate the driving of logs; such companies to have the right to charge tolls on the lumber drives down the streams cleared by them. The theory is that were the same parties, who might buy up the principle leases, to also control the movement of the logs in the stream, a remarkably strong compact would be made.

ST. JOHN, N.B., May 27th, 1893.

## MICHIGAN LETTER.

[Regular correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

SPECULATION is somewhat active as to the future of prices. There are those who hold to the view that prices have reached the maximum and that it is not unlikely that before long a shrinkage may be expected. In one way it is natural that this view should prevail. Prices for pine have stiffened to so marked a degree in a short space of time that as is the case with a rapid advance in any line of stocks, there is always fear of a rebound sooner or later. And general experience shows that the rebound is almost certain to come, and not unfrequently more sudden than is expected. But there is the contrary fact that stocks continue about as scarce as ever. In fact stocks are just so low that until the new cut comes from the mill, which will be some time yet, shipping interests for the time of the year will fall a good deal below the average. Moreover, the demand keeps up and it is hard to find anyone who does not consider white pine a profitable article of merchandise to hold.

## DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.

It is some time since this lumber centre has been devastated with as destructive a fire as broke out here on 21st inst. A little spark and a strong southwest gale did the work. The spark is said to have started from the chimney of the Briggs & Co.'s factory, on what is known as the Middle ground, and was carried to the dismantled mill plant of Sample & Camp, on the

docks, where there is a number of piles of lumber. Here it found rich food, and in the twinkling of an eye the single spark had grown into a roaring mass of flames, and started on its mad career. Thence the flames leaped to the east side just below Bristol street and north of the City Hall, where are located a large number of buildings, including hose house No. 6, J. E. Winkler's ice houses, eleven residences on Tilden street, and on both sides of Washington avenue down to Holden street were quickly licked up. Then the sparks were carried across the old bayou into the premises of the George F. Cross Lumber Co. The planing mill, lumber in the yard, and a dozen tenement houses melted like snow. Next came the Allington & Curtis Manufacturing Company's extensive plant, and Passot's old soap factory, all of which were wiped out. Here the fire struck Jefferson avenue, and in an hour some of the finest residences in the city were in ashes. The flames made a clean sweep north to Emerson street, where the fire continued eastward, south of and along Emerson street, toward the city limits. It cut a wide swath on Owen, Howard, Sheridan avenues, and other streets east. The Orphan's home succumbed early, but the inmates were all removed to places of safety. The patients were all removed from St. Mary's hospital which was in extreme danger for a time, but was saved. The fury of the gale carried the sparks long distances, and at six o'clock the fire had reached the planing mill factory and lumber yards of E. Germain, which were destroyed, as well as a large number of dwellings in that section of the city. The scenes witnessed during these two hours of wind and flame are beyond the power and pen to adequately portray. The excitement was at fever heat, and in many instances houses caught fire and were destroyed before the occupants were hardly aware they were in danger. The loss is estimated at a million and a half dollars, with an insurance of about one-half. Fully 1,000 men employed in the factories burned are out of employment, and hundreds of families are homeless, as about 300 buildings were burned. Several deaths by burning have taken place.

## BITS OF LUMBER.

Nearly all the mills of the Huron shore are in operation.

The tug Owen, owned by Gilchrist & Fletcher, of Alpena, will tow log rafts from Georgian bay to Alpena.

Alger, Smith & Co. have a crew of men under R. J. Anschutz, of Tawas, looking pine land on the iron range near Duluth.

W. W. Sutherland expects to handle 15,000,000 feet of hardwood lumber this season. Hardwood lumber is in active demand.

Captain Ryerse, of the tug Saugatuck, has contracted to tow 10,000,000 feet of logs from Georgian bay to the Cheboygan Lumber Company's mill, at Cheboygan.

The value of the products of planing mills, sash and door and box factories in Saginaw last year was \$5,210,000, employing 2,300 men, and paying in wages for the year \$812,000.

It is not altogether certain that Ross, Bradley & Co., of Bay City, who were supposed to have completed arrangements to remove to West Bay City, will actually make the change. Certain inducements are being held out to them to remain at the home point.

Sibley & Bearinger have 12,000,000 old logs in the Ojibwa, which were hung up last season, but are now out and will be taken to Cheboygan to be manufactured. They have also 8,000,000 to come from Georgian bay to Tawas, and will probably purchase 10,000,000 to 15,000,000 more.

Lumbering operations have suffered severely from the high state of the water at Menominee. Never in its history has the Menominee river been so high. The logs are piled in one solid jam from 10 to 30 feet high and extend up the river from the upper dam a distance of six and a half miles. In the jam there are 200,000,000 feet of logs.

SAGINAW, Mich., May, 27, 1893.

## SPANISH RIVER.

[Special correspondence CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

ACTIVITY is beginning to show itself in lumber in this district. Logs are coming in fast to the Spanish boom. The water being a good height this spring it is anticipated that all logs will be easily got to the boom. About two hundred million feet are expected to go through the Spanish river boom this season.

The Hull Lumber Co. are building a log railroad on their berth and will operate all summer.

Culter & Savidge, who are operating on the Spanish river, are erecting a sawmill about six miles west of here on the site of the burned mill, which was at one time used by the Bowsell Company.