

MISCUT LUMBER.

D. H. BLOOMER. St. Louis Lumberman

There is an irresistible temptation latent in the mind of every sawyer to make a "big day's cut," to a certain extent the mill owner shares in this excess of the sawyer, and in many instances he is the prime factor and moving spirit in urging the sawyer to a degree of serious damage to his own credit.

The first and most important duty of the mill superintendent is to determine the exact capacity of his mill; and by this I do not mean how many logs the mill can be made to cut in a given time or how many thousand feet of logs can be run through it in a given time, but how many feet of lumber can be properly manufactured in a given time with reasonable activity under ordinary conditions.

I have applied every form of mathematical calculation known to economic principles, in the manufacture of lumber, to find some tenable excuse for the excess of lumber, up to date I am "still behind the house." Just as soon as you discover that your mill is turning out miscut stock you have also learned that there is something wrong somewhere; it may be with the filer or the sawyer; may be with the carriage or carriage track, or some defect in your equipment; but one thing is certain, the time for investigation is at hand and if you fail to investigate and rectify the evil, you are in the wrong position, and my advice is that you engage in "fishing or 'possum huntin'." So that you will sense the evils of neglect in this important matter, I will do a little illustrating and ask you a few questions that have presented themselves to me in solution at various times in the past. When you are shipping two-inch lumber in the rough and find a plank twenty to thirty inches wide per clear throughout, three inches thick at one end and an inch and a quarter at the other end, do you do with it? Oh! you lay it out and sell it for 1/4. Do you? Well, I have drummed all the domestic markets over pretty thoroughly in the past and I do not know of any one who will take a board for anything better than cull and this represents a decrease of four-fifths in the value of your lumber (when the stock would be 1st and 2nd clear well manufactured), and taking the average lumber product as a basis of calculation, the loss is about twenty to twenty-four dollars per thousand and figuring the decrease in value alone. But about the loss in material and freight in case there is no way at hand to dress it down to a unit before shipment? and if there is how much does the cost of dressing down?

There are so many different kinds of miscut lumber and so many different features of loss on account of waste and distinct material that it would be an impossible task to even begin to mention them all, from the one I have given, you can easily trace the loss and others in case you know anything much about lumber.

And everyone whose methods of manufacture

result in poorly manufactured lumber has some way of excusing the defect, and I know of several who justify it or at least who think that they justify it and let me tell you how they do it.

They figure the cost of production at \$6 per M; this includes timber cutting, log handling, delivery of lumber from the saw mill to the piling yard, also the cost of piling and loading on cars, then they calculate that they can saw 20,000 ft. of well manufactured lumber per day, or by crowding everything to the utmost, 30,000 feet, in which there will be about 5000 feet of miscuts; then the operation proceeds to embrace "six times ten is sixty" (or the full cost of production of the amount of lumber cut in excess of the mill's capacity) to take care of the damage entailed by the rush movement.

Granting this system of computation to be correct in every detail, the management would be radically wrong, but it is not correct because the actual cost of sawing the logs under the mill roof is the only item that can be figured against the destruction of material and let us see how much this really is. I am going to use the prices that have come under my observation at the mills during the past three weeks; in my calculation log cutting per thousand 50c.; hauling to mill, \$2.50; conveying lumber from mill to yard, 30c.; piling, 40c.; loading on cars rough mill run, 60c.; this figures up \$4.30 for the work outside of the sawing and \$4.30 deducted from \$6.00 leaves \$1.70 for you to figure against your loss on miscuts. Look into this matter, "Mr. Rush," and tell me if you find anything wrong with this calculation.

I mentioned that sometimes the filer was to blame for miscut lumber, and sometimes the sawyer, etc., but I have made up my mind that by far the greater amount of mischief lies in crowding your mill above its capacity. You can't cut 100,000 feet of lumber per day with an 80,000 mill; you can't cut 30,000 feet a day with a 20,000, and make merchantable lumber, and it is not good management to do so.

When you take a log that is worth \$10 at one end of your mill and send \$5 worth of lumber made from this same log out at the other end you are on the wrong tack.

I am just a little sorry that I haven't more time to devote to this subject, as it is by all means the most important subject for consideration by the small mill operator in the whole process of production and is being too much neglected by this class everywhere. It should be considered by every mill operator that logs have an intrinsic value that should be enhanced and increased through the medium of labor instead of being decreased and destroyed. I will touch this matter again some future time.

PERSONAL.

It is rumored that the honor of knighthood is to be bestowed upon Mr. J. R. Booth, the enterprising lumberman and railway king of Ottawa. It is universally acknowledged that such an honor is well deserved.

CASUALTIES.

Alex. Miller, working in a sawmill at Ragged Clute, near Shawville, Que., met with an accident by which he lost three fingers.

James Lindsay, millwright in Robert Watt's sawmill at Winton, Ont., was seriously injured by a splinter of wood from the lath machine, the splinter entering deeply into his head through the eye, producing concussion of the brain.

BURNING GREEN SAWDUST.

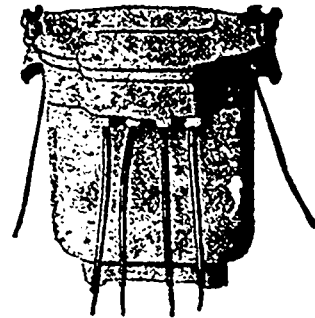
The chief engineer at the Midway Saw Mill, Midway, B. C., writes to the CANADA LUMBERMAN as follows:

"In the August number you have an article on burning green sawdust. I think the party who is having trouble has not got furnace room enough. We had similar trouble. Green sawdust takes large furnace room and combustion chambers, which can only be got by using a Dutch oven or extension furnace. It can be made of a size to burn green sawdust and almost anything else, for elm or similar sawdust. The grate surface should be twice as large as for wood or pine sawdust. I think I saw one of these furnaces illustrated in THE LUMBERMAN last winter."

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