

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Dominion Government having made a grant of \$20,000 towards a Canadian exhibit at the Paris Exposition in 1900, it may interest our readers to know what is being done by other countries. France appropriates half the available space, and has voted over \$10,000,000. Germany has given \$1,250,000, Russia \$900,000, and Great Britain is discussing a proposed grant of \$375,000. In the latter country there is a strong feeling that the proposed appropriation should be considerably increased, otherwise the British display is likely to appear inferior. As to the Dominion grant, we regret that it was not larger, and hope to see the same supplemented by substantial appropriations from each province.

A QUESTION of national interest, and which is gradually reaching the serious stage, is the exportation of hardwood lumber. There are in Canada numerous industries dependent upon hardwood lumber for their raw material, but notwithstanding the duty of two dollars, American dealers have this spring purchased nearly all the available dry stocks of several kinds of hardwoods, with the result that the local consumers have, in addition to being compelled to pay high prices, been threatened with a scarcity of raw material to keep their factories in operation. Owing to the scarcity and consequently high price of elm, the Canadian Furniture Manufacturers' Association recently advanced prices of furniture ten per cent. It is very desirable that the life of Canadian industries should be prolonged, and this action of the Furniture Manufacturers' Association is to be commended, inasmuch as mill men will naturally sell in the best market, and Canadians wanting the lumber must meet the prices of American buyers.

In view of the war which has now been declared between Spain and the United States, by which Cuba will probably gain its independence, some figures of the Canadian trade with the Spanish Indies are interesting. Twenty-five years ago Canada exported to the Spanish West Indies goods to the value of \$1,614,312, the exports being confined to fish and lumber. In 1893 New Brunswick sent sugar boxes to the value of \$573,851, and general lumber to the value of \$189,835. This latter trade has practically died out. We still send a little lumber to the Spanish Indies, but the sugar box trade has gone to the Southern States. For the year ending June 30th, 1897, our sales to that country amounted to only \$93,309 worth of lumber. The trade in lumber is said to be capable of considerable expansion, and with the removal of the Spanish duties, it is probable that more of our lumber could be marketed there. Should Cuba be taken possession of by the United States, which is not altogether improbable, notwithstanding the avowed pledge of Congress that all that is sought is its independence, the Dingley tariff would simply replace the Spanish tariff.

If the charges of careless manufacture made against Canadian lumber by foreign consignees can be substantiated, there is vast room for improvement in the methods employed by some of our mill men. Notwithstanding the warnings that have been given, shipments continue to be

sent to foreign countries in such shape as to greatly injure the prospects of future business. Here is what Mr. J. S. Larke, Commissioner for Australia, says of a recent shipment: "A cargo of lumber from British Columbia, the North Riding, arrived this month. There is a claim on this, as on every cargo that has arrived this year. This timber was of good quality, but the charge is that some of it is badly cut. I did not see the rejected timber, as it had been removed when I visited the ship. I was told that there was a difference of half an inch in the sizes of the ends and centres of some of the sticks. As much of this timber is re-sawn, this irregularity materially affects the value. The battens are said to be of varying thickness. As these battens are used for slate roofs, a varying thickness is liable to break the slates. The British Columbia timber trade to this port must have been a losing one this year, and must continue to be so as long as it is conducted on the present lines. As the steamers are filled with cargo that pays better, they now carry no dressed spruce, and the trade is largely lost." A word to the wise is sufficient.

ARRANGEMENTS are well under way for the holding of what is termed a Greater Britain Exhibition at Earl's Court, London, next year, lasting from May until October. The undertaking, which is under the direction and management of the London Exhibitions, Limited, a company formed in 1894, and having a paid-up capital of £145,000, is receiving the approval and support of the Marquis of Lorne, Sir Charles Tupper, and other distinguished British and Colonial statesmen. The object, which is to bring together the products of the various parts of the British Empire, should commend itself to all who wish for a closer commercial relationship between Great Britain and her colonies. The Canadian government will be asked to grant an appropriation to cover the cost of a Canadian exhibit. Attention is called to the fact that exhibits intended for the Paris Exhibition of 1900 might with advantage and little additional cost be first shown at the London Exhibition. In view of the prevailing sentiment on both sides of the water in favor of closer trade relations, Canada should take advantage of every opportunity to make known her resources.

CONSUMPTION OF LUMBER IN THE MANUFACTURE OF PIANOS.

WITH the object of learning the quantity of lumber consumed in the manufacture of pianos in Canada, and the extent to which foreign woods were being used, a letter was addressed by the publisher of the CANADA LUMBERMAN to each manufacturer, asking for the necessary information. Of the forty or more piano manufacturers throughout the Dominion only ten responded to our inquiries. From the data furnished, however, a fair estimate of the total consumption may be made.

According to the figures given, there were consumed by these ten manufacturers during the year 1897 in the neighborhood of 3,000,000 feet of all kinds of lumber. Of this amount about 400,000 feet was whitewood from the United States, 350,000 feet mahogany and walnut, and the balance chiefly Canadian woods. Allowing a proportionate consumption by the Canadian manufacturers who did not respond, it gives a

total of 12,000,000 feet of lumber consumed annually in the manufacture of pianos in Canada, 1,600,000 feet being whitewood and 1,450,000 feet mahogany and walnut. Nearly all the Canadian woods are used to a more or less extent.

It would appear that whitewood is not now used as extensively in the manufacture of pianos as in former years, owing to the growing desire to patronize home industries. The following extracts from six letters received will doubtless be read with interest:

"In reply to your favor re. lumber, we would say that we now use very little whitewood in our factory, having substituted therefor mostly birch and basswood."

"All our cases being veneered, we have little use for whitewood. Ash is cheaper and a better wood to veneer on."

"In reply to your favor of the 11th inst., would say, the only American woods we use now are whitewood and walnut, and we are using less of the whitewood than formerly, and use almost exclusively the Canadian lumber."

"Replying to your inquiry regarding prospects of American manufacturers selling certain kinds of lumber in Canada, we beg to say that the policy of this concern is to buy nothing from the Americans that we can do without. We have cast about for substitutes for whitewood, and are now using none of it, having succeeded in getting a substitute that serves even a better purpose, and in the lumber or wood line we are now buying nothing outside of Canada except the foreign fancy wood veneers. The principle we go on in this respect is that our finished product is shut out of their country by a high tariff, and their finished product in the way of lumber we will not accept. This may be retaliation of a puny kind, but it is our way of looking at the matter, and we are the parties who are 'paying the piper' and have a right to indulge in our fancy for this kind of thing. We follow the same policy for all other kinds of supplies."

"We may say that during the past few years we have adopted the use of whitewood very largely in place of pine; that is, in the better qualities of pine. We found it difficult to secure a quality of pine that was free from defects, consequently we commenced the use of whitewood, and have found it a very satisfactory kind of wood for our manufacturing, as it is absolutely free from shake and other defects, and we have also found that a good quality of whitewood can be delivered here, freight paid, quality considered, at a less figure than we can procure pine for, and I have no doubt that even where parties have been using pine, if they were to test the use of whitewood for the same purposes for which they use pine, they would at once see the advantages and economy in the use of whitewood."

"About the only lumber I get from the United States is walnut, usually culls and rejects, as the better grades are in so great demand for European trade that it puts the price beyond the reach of piano and organ manufacturers, especially at the price the goods have to be sold at. I have been quite successful in the cheaper grades of goods in substituting birch for walnut. With good stain it is difficult to detect the difference. I use but little whitewood to veneer on; basswood answers as well, and what is still better is the fine grained soft ash, which takes the glue better and is less liable to warp if properly dried. Whitewood is largely used to make a cheap grade of case work to stain, but to my mind soft maple is superior, as it takes the stain better and the wood is less affected by the weather. There is a good demand for whitewood cut from 1 1/2" to 1/4" thick, and glued up in three thicknesses, the centre with grain crossways. The demand for this kind of lumber is increasing, and if an enterprise of this kind should be started to cut basswood, cutting it around the log to dimension sizes and gluing it up all ready for use, putting the price where it could be used to advantage, the demand would be great. I am aware that basswood is cut in that way to some extent in Canada at present, but not to the extent to make the price so low that it can be used to advantage; in fact, it pays better to send to the United States and get whitewood, where whitewood is worth from \$25 to \$40 per M, while basswood can be had here at \$10. Quarter-cut oak is in good demand, and the consumption will be greatly increased."