



"THE capacity of my mill," said Mr. George Willis-croft, of Georgetown, B.C., "is 25,000 feet; spruce and cedar is my principal cut; ten hours counts a day's work. The equipment of the mill consists of double circular saws, each fifty-two inches in diameter, one twenty-four-inch edger, one Wilkin's balance gang with forty saws to cut half-inch lumber for boxes which is my principal business. I also have three planers and one stenciling machine for stamping box ends. The mill is situated in Big Bay, seven miles south of Port Simpson and 350 miles north of Victoria on the north-west coast of British Columbia. I have a steamer that I use for delivering lumber and towing logs. She carries 90,000 at each load."

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A prominent Quebec lumberman says that large quantities of southern yellow pine are being shipped to England and the continent for shoring up in the coal mines, for which purpose there had hitherto been a good demand for the inferior grades of Canadian white pine timber. The gentleman in question says that the yellow pine now going forward from the southern ports is sold at rates that can hardly pay freight and insurance. In recent numbers of the LUMBERMAN I have reported interviews with various Canadian lumbermen pointing out the extent to which southern pine is coming into competition with Canadian pine. The form of competition cited above is doubtless new to our readers generally. The cut prices at which the lumber is being sold bears out what has been previously stated in this page by Mr. T. Charlton and Mr. H. H. Cook.

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Who does not know Secretary Hill, of the Toronto Industrial Exhibition? In a peculiar manner he possesses that combination of intense activity and executive skill necessary to the important position he holds. I think of him at this time up to his eyes in work, bringing to completion the various plans that the management of the Industrial have made for the forthcoming fair, which is on the boards for September 5 to 17. We always expect big things of this exhibition, but in an especial manner, I am told, have arrangements been completed this year for a programme enlarged in many important particulars over those of previous years. To the manufacturers of the country this exhibition possesses special significance and I believe that they are prepared generally to recognize the place it occupies in helping to publish abroad in substantial and practical manner the resources and possible manufacturing and commercial strength of this Canada of ours. We have just completed the celebration of our twenty-fifth anniversary as a united Dominion. Without indulging in any non-sensical loyalty twaddle: Is not the time opportune to demonstrate by actual deeds the progress the country has made in this quarter of a century so lately closed? The Industrial is a strong helper to this end and for this reason we may all hope that the year 1892 will score the biggest success yet in its history. I have an idea that as Canadians we can afford to be more Canadian than in our every-day custom.

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At no time in the distinguished career of Mr. Gladstone has greater interest centered on the G.O.M. than during the month just closed. Where can history point to another statesman at the advanced age of eighty-three taking the foremost position in one of the greatest political battles that has ever been waged in Great Britain or any other country? And coming out on top too. But I stop here. This page eschews politics, or else, I may run my head, or some other tough substance, against a snag with more points to it than I might enjoy. Lumbermen, however, have a special interest in Mr. Gladstone as a feller of trees whose skill is not to be disputed by the cleverest Canadian woodman. What is the philosophy of tree felling with Mr. Gladstone? Mr. W. T.

Stead, of Review of Reviews fame, gives us a reason. "Think about something he must," says Mr. Stead, "for a mind so active will never doze off into lethargy excepting when he is asleep; and it was this necessity for finding some means of gaining complete mental rest which led him to cultivate the felling of timber. In all other modes of exercise there is room for thinking; cricket, football, riding, driving in almost all of these there are spells during which the mind can forget the immediate object and revert to the subject from which it is necessary to have a complete change. In chopping down a tree, you have not time to think of anything excepting where your next stroke will fall. The whole attention is centered upon the blows of the axe; and as the chips fly this way and that Mr. Gladstone is as profoundly absorbed in laying the axe at the proper angle at the right cleft of the trunk as ever he was in replying to the leader of the Opposition in the course of a critical debate."

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The following talk in regard to American lumber interests in Canada came under my notice in conning a United States lumber journal the other day. I do not suppose that our friends over the way always get hold of the right end of a story. Sometimes I know they do not. But as a piece of lumber gossip which is passing current among American lumbermen I give the following as I find it, without note or comment, just now at any rate: "Michigan men are invading the Georgian Bay and other Canadian points for logs, but log owners over there have caught on, and are asking prices that tagger the mill men on this side. One of them told me that anything in the shape of a pine log is held at \$9 to \$9.50. 'They just seem to have fixed that price on everything,' said he, 'although some lots are worth \$3 and \$4 a thousand more than others.' The Arthur Hill Company, of Saginaw, bought 8,000,000 feet of fine logs at Garden River at \$9.50, and they are now being rafted across and manufactured at Cheboygan. A number of log owners who put in stock last winter for the market, have concluded to manufacture them in Canada, and Michigan men generally are willing to let them, considering the prices asked, holding that there is no money in logs at \$9.50. It costs about \$2 to raft them across the lake, and when the saw bill comes out and other expenses, there is nothing left, as the greater portion of the stock will not bring over \$13.50 to \$13.75 log run. A Saginaw river mill man, who is sawing Canada logs cut from limits owned by his firm, says it does not cut out like Michigan stock, and it brings tears to his eyes as compared with Cass, Tittabawassee and Tobacco river logs that have furnished his mill with timber in seasons past."

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Whether the middleman is a desirable quantity in the lumber trade of the country is a question that has been discussed at some length in these columns during the past two months. And whether ye editor in handling this subject has reached a final conclusion himself I am not so sure. It's a many sided question, and a good deal can be said pro and con. Ottawa lumbermen are facing it just now in practical fashion inasmuch that the millowners have disposed of the products of their several mills altogether to the middleman and when a buyer visits the capital he can deal with no one else. One Ottawa buyer interviewed on the question said: "For several years past the lumbermen have been selling very largely to the middlemen each year more and more of the total cut, but this season literally everything in the better grades has gone into their hands, and every year from this out such will likely continue to be the case. In selling to the middlemen the lumbermen are sure of ready cash, and save themselves the bother of selling in small quantities with all the bookkeeping that goes along with it. Of course it is to their advantage to do business that way, but it necessarily follows that the consumers have to pay higher rates, as they have to stand the middlemen's expenses and profits. The increase in price is due to scarcity. White pine, especially dry stuff, is very scarce both in the States and Canada and as a consequence the price has gone up with those who hold it. The South American market is this year better than for years back, and what with the demand from there and the scarcity, prices are more likely to increase than go down. In my opinion the present prices will

never fall again, even though the demand becomes less, for the reason that white pine is year by year growing less plentiful in the woods." A prominent middleman claims while consumers might in some cases pay more than if dealing at the mills, the "middle" business as now conducted is better for the lumber trade in every way. For instance fully \$50,000 is spent yearly in Ottawa by the middlemen in office and other salaries, while no less money is circulated by the millmen as a result of the "middling." In some cases the cost of lumber to consumers in the States is lessened, as they can buy from the middlemen there at the same comparative rates as they could from the lumbermen here, and at the same time save their railway fare and other expenses to and from Ottawa.

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It does not appear that the agitation for free lumber with United States lumbermen is likely to reach, in the near future, any further than the arena of public and personal debate, inside and outside of legislative halls, and of the various lumber organizations of the neighboring republic. This, however, is a preliminary condition of every great reform; and when the question is intelligently threshed out in this manner there is reason to expect that it may take a formative shape in legislation. The opposition to a free lumber measure, that prevails in some lumber sections of the States, more strongly than others, has been indicated at different times in these columns. I give here an interview with Representative Stout, of Michigan, who does not entertain the fears expressed by others that free lumber would mean the ruination of the United States lumber industry. Said he: "Our forests are fast disappearing. If we can save them by admitting Canadian lumber free, it would seem wise to do so. The individual holdings in my State are numerous. Ten persons own so much of Michigan hard timber and pine that if it were placed on either side of the 4,000 miles of Michigan railways it would so bound the line of vision, that a stranger would think that he was traveling through an impenetrable forest. One person holds enough timber to make a line two miles wide, the longest diameter of the state. So far as these holdings are pine they have added the first cost every year to the value, and many of them double their first cost each year for thirty years." Mr. Stout said that the pine holdings of Michigan are worth more than the improved farms. "Yet, every year," said he, "protests are offered here against taking off the tax on lumber. When, in 1871, a committee of Chicago builders and sufferers from the most disastrous fire on record came to ask for free material to erect their city, another committee, in Pullman sleepers and buffet cars, followed to ask that lumber should not be free, and it succeeded. I have always thought that whatever entered into the construction of the home should be free. Were I to suggest the best means of conserving the safety of the state I would find its strongest bulwarks in the home. No man who sleeps under his own roof can fail to have a previous interest in the good order and safety of the state. And what shall we say when the government, for any purpose whatever, proposes offering the paltry protective tax of \$1 on lumber? The committee which the lumber convention appointed to seek a hearing before the Ways and Means Committee of the House, protesting against taking the tax of \$1 per thousand from lumber, was composed of men who draw bank cheques every month running into the tens of thousands of dollars. They declare that the lumber interests will suffer if the tax on Canadian lumber is removed. Suffer what? It's large profits may be slightly reduced. If it is now \$5 per thousand feet, it may be only \$4, if Canadian lumber is made free. What a pity if a class which has made the most colossal fortunes of the century should have these profits slightly reduced!" He said that there is scarcely an acre of uncut pine in Michigan or Wisconsin which cost \$1.25 an acre in 1885, which has not increased in value 100 per cent. per annum on that first cost for thirty seven years up to now, "and much of it," said he, "double that amount." "And yet the poor pine land holder must be protected against Canadian lumber. What effrontery!"

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