



PUBLISHED  
SEMI-MONTHLY.

The only Newspaper devoted to the Lumber and Timber Industries published in Canada

SUBSCRIPTION  
\$2.00 PER ANNUM

VOL. 6.

PETERBOROUGH, ONT., MARCH 15, 1886.

NO. 6.

#### A TERRIBLE WARNING.

In its issue of Feb. 22nd the Ottawa Free Press tries to frighten those who advocate an increase of the export duty on logs by publishing the following:—

"The people who want to protect the lumber industry of Canada, by increasing, and rigidly enforcing the export duty on logs, have a warning in an incident which comes from St. Lucia, in the West Indies. A correspondent says there is a mountain near the southwestern end of the island called Souffriere, the remains of an old volcano whose crater is full of sulphur. Some years ago two gentlemen from Antigua bought this mountain and set up works for extracting the sulphur. The first year they sent away nearly 600 tons of purified sulphur. But the natives thought they were doing entirely too well for a couple of mere foreigners, so they put an export duty of \$4 a ton on sulphur and so put an end to the business, and from that time the sulphur mine has lain idle. A heavy export duty on logs would probably have the same lamentable effect in this country as happened in the illustration given of another export duty."

This warning does not warn. It would not be considered a calamity by many in this country if the business of exporting logs did cease entirely. It will be noticed that the foreigners who exported the sulphur from St. Lucia purified it before exporting it—they manufactured it. But the United States dealers who export logs do not manufacture them and they, through the operation of the United States import duty on lumber, are given an advantage over Canadian dealers. An export duty on sawn lumber would be analogous to the action of the natives of St. Lucia, and it would be suicidal, but an export duty on logs is different and would be beneficial to the lumber business and to the country.

#### LUMBER TRADE IN NEW YORK.

A reporter of the New York Herald has been among the dealers of the metropolis and reports the outlook for the lumber trade this spring as decidedly bright. Although the business has been generally dull throughout the winter, there have been many firms who have done a good trade, and an improvement in the business of all is now becoming noticeable. As long as the weather remains cold and inclement the masons and carpenters cannot do their work and building has to be abandoned, and for this reason a depression in business during the winter months is expected by all lumbermen. At present the stock of all kinds of lumber and timber in the markets is smaller than it has been for some years, and in view of the good demand and brisk building outlook there is every prospect of an active season ahead.

To be impressed with a sense of the extent of New York's lumber trade one has only to walk down Eleventh Avenue, from Forty-second street to Fourteenth street. He will find lumber yards all along, on both sides of the way, and lofty piles of lumber meet the eye in every direction. These woods are of all kinds and come from all parts of the country. From the common Maine spruce, which is properly timber and not lumber, to the finest mahogany and rosewood, all kinds of lumber are to be had at all kinds of prices.

#### WHAT MR. ATCHISON SAYS.

At the foot of West Twenty-first street is the establishment of the New York Lumber Auction Company (limited), and here a Herald reporter stopped the other afternoon to inquire about the present state of the trade. Mr. Atchison, the general manager of the company, was in his office adjoining the yard.

"The spring trade is just opening," he said, "and the prospects are very good. New York is a good lumber market, but it is not an attractive one, and this is due to its system, or rather lack of system, concerning the rules of inspection. There are no determined rules. Each dealer has his own, and the lumber, when it arrives from the south and west, may be inspected leniently and fairly, or the inspection may be rigid and 'cut-throat,' according as the dealer chooses. This renders the shipper very suspicious about sending his lumber here. It may be appraised at half the value it would elsewhere receive, and dealers often do not sell by the same rules upon which they buy. To avoid all this we have published a list of set rules of inspection, by which we both sell and buy, and this gives the shippers and manufacturers a confidence in our market. The best lumber is brought to New York and the highest prices obtained here, but the consumers suffer

"There is another peculiarity about the New York trade," continued Mr. Atchison, "and that is the number of lumber firms which deal only in special woods. By purchasing large quantities of one kind of wood they obtain it for a low price and are enabled to sell dearer. I tell you, some of our dealers are called cutthroats in the west, and would not escape lynching if they went there."

Mr. L. E. Jones, the secretary and treasurer of the company, entered while Mr. Atchison was talking, and assented to what he said, adding an account of the Boston system, where there is a surveyor general and a fixed rule of inspection by which all lumber is both sold and bought. Much good lumber that comes here is sent west first to be inspected.

#### AMONG THE SPECIALISTS.

On the corner of Eleventh Avenue and Twenty-first street the yards of Bell Brothers, who deal only in common spruce, or timber. In response to the reporter's question a member

of the firm said that the prospect for the spring trade was never better. At the present time of year the wholesale price per cargo is from \$15 to \$18, which is a better showing than that of last year. The spruce comes mainly from Maine and the provinces, and at present the freights are high.

Three blocks above, on Eleventh Avenue, is the large establishment of Eben Peck, who who deals exclusively in yellow pine wood. Mr. Peck was out when the reporter called, but one of his associates gave the necessary information. Some of the wood comes from Georgia, but the most of it from Florida. It is used for all building purposes, but principally for flooring, ceiling and wainscoting and all inside house trimmings. Its popularity has greatly increased in the last few years. In spite of its being the dull season for building and all masons' work the yellow pine is fair and prospects alluring.

With the specialists who deal in the fine, or hardwoods, such as mahogany, rosewood, and all cabinet woods, success is dependent upon different circumstances. They have little to do with the ordinary lumber interests, as they cater to an entirely different class—the furnisher, not the builder. Their woods, besides, are many of them foreign, the mahogany coming from Mexico and the West Indies, and some of the other woods from Africa. The cherry and oak woods are in great demand now, and there is a steady call for mahogany. Mr. J. T. Williams said to the reporter that his business fluctuated with that of Wall street.

#### PINES AND POPLARS.

Mr. George F. Norton, of the firm of Norton & Christman, spoke of his present business and future prospects with complacency. The freights were high, something like \$12 per M feet on hardwoods from the south. "One feature of the season," said Mr. Norton, "is the the large demand for whitewood which is coming more and more to take the place of pine. What is called white wood is really yellow poplar. It holds paint well and it stains better than any other wood, and hence is much used for weather boarding in fences and all exterior walls and planking. It is also largely used for coach panelling. Pine is becoming scarcer every day and the same quality of poplar is much less expensive. Desirable lumber is always saleable, and there is always a market for it in New York at a fair price. It is a rare thing to find a good firm with a yard full of dry lumber."

In Mr. Norton's office was Mr. Norcross, a southern manufacturer of lumber, who has come on here to build up a trade for his firm. Mr. Norcross has been very successful, and spoke of the excellent condition of the trade. In spite of the severest inspection he said that New York got the finest lumber and Boston the next best. The poorest lumber is sent

to Philadelphia, Baltimore and the South. "Lumber," he said, "is a staple product and prices do not vary much. I do not know of any business which can show as small a record of failures"

Mr. George M. Grant, of the firm of George M. Grant & Brother, cabinet and building lumber merchants, was next seen by the reporter. Mr. Grant deals largely in white pine from Michigan and some parts of Pennsylvania, and in all the other fine and rough woods with the exception of spruce. He said that the weather was disadvantageous at present, but that business was not bad and the spring prospect was very good. Mr. Grant's manner was not enthusiastic, but his haste testified that his business was beginning to feel the influence of spring already.

#### LUMBER AND LABOR.

Making his way up the mud-swamped Avenue the reporter next called at the large lumber yards of Messrs. Crano & Clark. Mr. Clark was walking about the yard, and the reporter tackled him and walked with him.

"Well," said Mr. Clark, "trade with the builders, I should say, has been good this winter; but with the manufacturers, those who grow and saw lumber in preparation for the market, it has been dull. In our own case, the business of this year shows a marked increase over that of last year, and this in the general field, as we keep both hardwoods for furniture and pine, hemlock and spruce for building. And speaking of building reminds me of a very important matter. Very many more people would build if only the price of labor was fixed. The trouble is not with the lumber but with labor. Now, I read in the papers the other day that the painters and framers had agreed upon a fixed price and a fixed number of working hours. If this is so, it will prove a very good thing and indicates a very good tendency. In my opinion it is lack of confidence in the laborer that makes the men hold off from building. They fear strikes when their houses are half finished. If they could be certain of getting the labor at a price fixed beforehand and not subject to change, the building trade would receive a great impetus. It is not the highness of the price which deters them at present, but its uncertainty. As it is, the prospect for the spring is first rate."

A HALIFAX paper states that Messrs. I. H. Mathers & Co. have contracted with mill owners between Weymouth and Ohio for from 5,000,000 to 7,000,000 feet of spruce deals, &c., to be carried over the Western Countries Railway and shipped from Yarmouth to Great Britain.

The Beaumont Lumber Company, of Texas, recently received 1,500 logs that measured two to the 1,000 feet.