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THE CANADA LUMBERMAN

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A RUMOR has been current in the Quebec press of the discovery of frauds in regard to cutting timber in that Province, and there is talk of an investigation. So far there is nothing to show whether there is any foundation for these reports or whether they are mere election *canards* or even empty gossip.

In the September number of the *Century Magazine* there is an article discussing the question, "Shall we plant Native or Foreign Trees?" The author, who seems to have studied the subject thoroughly, adduces a number of facts and authoritative opinions in support of his contention, that however foreign trees may thrive at first, they fail after a time, either dying or becoming enfeebled and stunted, while native trees from our American forests continue to do well and to flourish.

THE agitation in favor of commercial union with the United States is still proceeding in Canada, and it is a matter in which Canadian lumbermen are naturally much interested. More light will be thrown upon the probable fate of the movement at the next session of the United States Congress, both by their direct action in regard to the matter, and indirectly by the attitude they assume as to the fishery negotiations with which the tariff question and reciprocity may be connected.

ACCORDING to the *Northwestern Lumberman* the pine owners of the northwestern States are somewhat divided in their views as to the effect of the removal of the duties on Canadian lumber through the adoption of commercial union, the general view seeming to be that they will not be injured, prices not being reduced by the influx. The hostility of the eastern Michigan pine-owners has been mitigated by many of them having invested heavily in Georgian Bay pine. Of course if this view is correct the Canadian lumberman would obtain the benefit of the remission of the duty.

THE actual enforcement of the increase of timber land ground rents from \$2 to \$5 a square mile in the Province of Quebec was postponed from September 1st to October 1st some hope being held out that the change would be reconsidered. As yet no indication has been given official of the decision in this matter. Some lumbermen have paid their rent at the higher figure subject to a return of the excess if the old rent is to be maintained. Others have not yet paid but are awaiting developments. The public feeling as to the impolicy and unfairness of the increase has been strengthened by the hesitation of the Quebec administration.

THE *Toronto Globe*, after detailing the destruction caused by bush fires, which it says swallow up far more timber than all our lumbermen put together, besides causing enormous loss to farmers, continues:—

"In most cases fire is the result of carelessness of the settlers themselves, who, regardless of the condition of things, and of the laws governing the setting of fires for clearing land, start fires with a simple regard for their own interests. If each municipality were granted the power to regulate and even prevent the setting out of fire in times of great heat and drought, there is little doubt the annual destruction of property would be lessened. To say nothing of the loss to the settlers of the country, the destruction of the domain, year after year, demands the attention of the Legislature at as early a date as possible."

The suggestion is an excellent one, we think. It should not be passed unnoticed.

FROM our English exchanges we learn that the shipments to that country from Canada, for the seven months recorded this year, exceed those of the same period of last year by over 4,000 standards, and 1885 by close upon 29,000 standards. It is true that the year last mentioned was an exceptional one, but with trade so depressed the large and continuous increase

within the past two years must prove serious to prices in that country. The gossip about white pine being at such a premium is certainly not borne out by the repeated heavy shipments to Great Britain, there being nearly always more of the wood in stock than the market can digest. It is known that in London pine stocks are heavy, yet the shipments were not regulated in any way by the state of the market, the usual spring and summer fleet from Quebec and the lower ports, having gone forward as if the consuming powers of the British trade were inexhaustible.

THE prediction is being realized that Pacific coast lumber would find a market in Eastern cities. It is stated that the Puget sound mills are getting large orders both for lumber and shingles from cities as far east as Council Bluffs. British Columbia is similarly situated, and such shipments of lumber as have been made east got a ready sale. The prairies of the Northwest should furnish a large market for lumber, and as they become better settled no doubt they will. Much depends upon rates. The erection of mills in the eastern part of the province may be in a position to supply the demand to better advantage than those located near the coast. Still, if they can supply the rough lumber cheaper, the manufactured articles, such as sash, doors, blinds, etc., ought to be supplied from New Westminster, Vancouver and other contiguous points.

ALTHOUGH spruce is growing in favor in this country, the *Lumber Trades Journal* of London, while admitting that in comparison with its intrinsic value spruce is sold lower than any of the American woods, does not believe there is any probability of its selling for more in the European markets. This is in consequence of a wood of a similar character which is supplied from the forests of Russia and the north of Europe generally. Spruce deals have always been supplied so cheaply to builders, says the *Lumber Trades Journal*, that the real value of the wood has been underestimated, or, perhaps, overlooked, and it has merits that do not appertain to other descriptions of whitewood. It has great strength, and is, nevertheless, easily worked, and for the construction of ordinary dwelling houses, roofs, and light work it is especially adapted. The principal growth of spruce is in Lower Canada, including New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. There is little spruce west of Quebec and of the Ottawa River in Canada.

THE American Forestry Congress held its sixth annual session last month at Springfield, Illinois. A number of papers were read on different subjects connected with the preservation and reproduction of forests. A memorial was prepared to the United States Congress in favor of a bill providing among other things for the appointment of a forestry Commissioner with a salary of \$5000, to have the care, management and control of the public forest lands, and four assistant commissioners with salaries of \$3000. Mr. Fernow, the corresponding secretary of the Forestry Congress, who is also chief of the forestry division of the United States department of agriculture, urged arguments based on statistics to show that the cost of an organization would be amply repaid by the prevention of fires alone. He would have the government make accurate surveys of wooded lands and withdraw them from settlement, and then employ a trained staff to protect the forests. The Hon. Mr. Joly, of Quebec, was elected one of the vice-presidents.

THE Gilmour-Paradis *embroglio* in its various manifestations is still unsettled, though some progress has been made in various directions. A decision has been given in favor of Father Paradis and the settlers, but Messrs. Gilmour intend to carry the case to the Privy Council, where it is reported that Mr. Mercier will intervene against them on the part of the Province. Mr. Tache, the Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands, has reported officially that in a conference with Father Paradis and Messrs. Gilmour he proposed that for the timbered lots in dispute those better adapted for cultivation should be substituted, and made a personal, unofficial offer to propose that the Government should assume the costs. Father Paradis declined to consent to this arrangement. The charge of forgeries seems to

have fallen through, the cheque endorsed by Father Paradis being produced and being in reality payable to his order. Messrs. Gilmour's counsel has obtained a verdict giving him damages for an attack made upon him in a journal for acting against a priest.

AT a meeting of the creditors of Messrs. R. A. and J. Stewart held in London, recently, the following scheme was proposed:—The bankrupts to undertake to pay the sum of £70,000, the payments to extend over a period of five years, conditional on their (the bankrupts) obtaining their immediate discharge. No security was offered. This would mean about 5/- in the £ unsecured. Some of the creditors agreed to accept the scheme, but considerable opposition prevailed, and many refused to sign. After a certain amount of excitement and discussion the meeting terminated.

A RECENT report by M. Fabre, the agent of the Dominion of Canada at Paris, speaks hopefully of the prospects of closer commercial relations with France, and expatiates on the great advantages which we would derive. He shows that if we were placed, as we are not now, on the footing of "the most favored nation," the duties on goods exported by us to France would be greatly reduced. He especially mentions flooring, boards, battens and other partially manufactured timber as gaining by this reduction so much as to stimulate the trade. For instance, he shows that the duties on flooring deals, planed and grooved planks, &c., would be reduced 25 per cent., on iron hooped casks, empty or in staves, 60 per cent., and on wooden hooped casks removed altogether, and so with other goods. He argues that a considerable demand would be created for such goods. France, he says, would grant us this proposition in return for a reduction of our duty on light wines.

A RETURN to Parliament as to timber licenses in the disputed territory give little hope of the termination of the present conflict of authorities, so annoying to the lumbermen and mill owners of the district, till the litigation in regard to this matter ends in a final judicial decision. The present dispute is as to the rights of the Province or Dominion in view of the extinction of the Inland title. The rival authorities seem more anxious as to the maintenance of their respective claims than for the interests of those who have invested their capital and whose operations are impeded and rendered uncertain by this dispute. Why should there be any difficulty at arriving at a provisional agreement for joint action, with an understanding to abide by the decision when given, the successful party confirming titles and receiving any moneys that have been paid; At present it seems that it is the Dominion that is willing to make such a provisional arrangement so as to relieve those interested from their dubious position, while the Province appears to hesitate, probably from the fear of prejudicing its claim.

Bradstreet's, usually well informed in all trade matters, speaks of the increased export duty on saw logs as having succeeded in its objects of retaliation for the duty on our lumber, and frustrating those Michigan lumbermen, who, while enjoying this protection, bought pine lands in Canada, in order to get a cheap supply of logs. This importation of logs has, it says, now been abandoned, and it mentions a concern, which, owning one billion of Canadian pine, put in twelve million feet of logs last winter, in order to tow them to Tawas and Saginaw, a project which has been abandoned. This is satisfactory and it is still more satisfactory to learn that these logs, sold to a Boston concern, are being sawn at Midland. According to the same authority other lumbermen from the States are withdrawing from these attempts to carry off Canadian logs. *Bradstreet's*, as might be expected, is better informed as to the real position of affairs than many who are laying down the law with more confidence than knowledge. It places the responsibility, on the right shoulders by remarking "meanwhile the Canadian government is ready to permit free exportation of logs whenever the United States allows free importation of lumber." And until the United States sees fit to accept our standing offer, the export duty, which seems to work as was intended, will be retained.