



PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST EACH MONTH BY
ARTHUR G. MORTIMER.

OFFICE:

75 CANADA LIFE ASSURANCE BUILDING,
TORONTO, ONTARIO.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:

One Copy one Year, in Advance, \$1.00

One Copy six months, in Advance, 50

Foreign Subscriptions \$1.25 a Year.

Advertising Rates Furnished on Application.

POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL MORALITY.

It should be possible for a citizen of the Dominion to express an opinion on the revelations at Ottawa, made during the present session of Parliament, and in doing so not to have laid at his door the charge of partizanship. And yet the thoughts of our people, and many of the thinking people, are so honeycombed with partyism, that it is difficult to write or speak on political corruption, and not have a party interpretation placed on one's words.

Neither political party can afford to throw the first stone at the other, for unfortunately the scandals that fill the air, and which in too many instances have developed into hard realities, have not been confined to either political party. The one act does not in any way off-set the other, though here the disposition is to work the "saw off" method, which is a demoralizing method, however applied. We say that it is unfortunate, that this demoralization has been general in its character, because it reveals under methods of conducting the business of the country that the more unscrupulous of politicians have always said were common to both parties, but which the better citizens had hoped had not obtained so strong and sure a foothold on Canadian soil. Now it will be good manners to say less, for a time at any rate, of the purity of Canadian politics in contrast with those of other countries.

We are not encouraged in history, either ancient or modern, to expect the best ensample of things moral, from those who sit in high places. Yet the people will look to those who rule over them for suggestions as to right ways of acting and living; and there is more than a grain of wisdom in the old saw, 'like father, like son, like master-like servant'. The truly loyal citizen, for he only is loyal who is loyal to truth, must regret with deep and sincere poignancy, that in the politics of this country the ideal set by those in high places has been of this demoralizing character.

The question has a commercial side, that should come home with force to businessmen. The revelations referred to have shown to what extent dishonesty—for this is the Anglo-Saxon of the matter—has been practised, not alone by the men placed in positions of honor by their country, but by the employee who has been engaged by these men to do certain work, and been paid to do it. We know how any business man would have dealt with these people had they been in their employ and been guilty of like offences. But the point we aim at is this: Mercantile business, however it may be with politics, is built upon the one foundation stone of confidence, one in the other. It is not capital that gives strength to business; it is the confidence that business men have in one another—in their ability, their judgment, their energy, and above all their honesty. When this confidence is shaken down comes the whole fabric, like a house of cards. Men in the employ of the government of the country cannot accept presents from contractors, commissions and bonuses from those to whom they have given government orders, and do this thing continuously without these influences being felt in the regular channels of commerce. Employees, those who are not servants of the government, but servants, it may be, of some large lumber company, will be tempted and influenced by the example set them, to abuse the trust placed in them, for their own personal gain. Speculation, em-

bezzlement and breach of trusts are not unknown quantities in the commercial world to-day. Happily they are the exception—though unhappily not as exceptional, as they should be—but once set moving and the evil will spread like a prairie fire.

This is a view of the matter, that business men cannot afford to ignore; and while the LUMBERMAN takes the broad view, that as citizens we should each and all rise in our strength and 'lend a hand' to whosoever is honestly desirous to purify the political atmosphere, it insists with every emphasis on stamping out this business dishonesty, because of the general hurtful influence it must create in commercial circles everywhere.

FREE TRADE IN LUMBER.

IN our correspondent's column we publish a letter from a well-known citizen of Algoma, in which he makes several direct enquiries relative to the question of free trade in lumber. In the early months of the year when lumber circles were agitated on this question, we devoted considerable space to the subject. A reference to the files of THE LUMBERMAN, by our correspondent, or any other reader interested, will furnish, in a large measure, an answer to the enquiries now made. Then it was supposed, that the question would come before Parliament at its first session, and on that account it took rank as a live question of the day. Parliament has since met, and we have had the announcement of the Premier that the matter will not be introduced in the House until another session; that it is likely to be a factor in the reciprocity negotiations with the United States' government in October next.

This is the immediate position of the question—it is not to-day in practical politics. Approaching it as a question of the future, though it may be the near future, and referring to our correspondent's letter, we may say, speaking broadly, that we believe that the consensus of opinion among lumbermen, is that entire free trade in lumber with the United States would be helpful to the general interests of the trade in both countries. At present, if it is not paradoxical to say so, this free trade is only partial. Our logs go into the States free, but our lumber, though not taxed as high as before, still has the impost of one dollar placed on it. This fact no doubt operates to a measurable extent, and more particularly in some localities than others, against the manufacture of lumber in our own country. It would seem likely, that if there were entire free trade with the United States, that the American lumbermen, who become purchasers of our logs, would prefer to manufacture their lumber at the mills adjoining where the logs would be cut and ship in this shape to their own side of the lines. It has already been shown in these columns that the shipping rates by vessel from the North Shore are sufficiently favorable to the shipper in that locality to influence him to do this. It will strike the average man as an unbusiness like method to take the logs away from the mills, that are at their door, so to speak, when these logs, before being marketable, have to be made into lumber: providing the duty in the case of both logs and lumber was removed.

We think of one influence that might operate against this course; the American lumberman is in many cases owner of his own mills on his own side of the lines; it pays him best to keep these mills running; he has local interests to serve, and he would be willing to pay the expenses of towing the logs to his own mills.

Facts are clear that at present our logs are, in no small number, going across the border. This spring the Midland and North Shore Lumber Company sold their limits to an American firm, Merrill & Ring of Saginaw, Mich., \$225,000 being, we believe, the sum paid, and this winter the new owners will cut a considerable amount of timber, and in the spring they are more than likely to tow this product to the States, there to be manufactured into lumber. The people, along the north shore of the Georgian Bay naturally feel grieved at this condition of affairs. But until we have free trade in lumber, it is difficult to suggest a remedy. Fortunately the conditions are local and not general. Get away from that particular section of the Georgian Bay, marked on the one side by Sault Ste.

Marie and on the other by Parry Sound, and we find our lumbermen sending the manufactured lumber by rail into the States, and not shipping logs.

This has to be remembered in discussing the question of free trade in lumber: we have not the whole "say." Friend McKinley has to be considered. Senator Flint warns us, that when making a bargain with the Yank watch which way he holds the stick he is whittling. If he whittles inward to himself he is making the best of the bargain. If he whittles outward some one else is getting the bargain. We have to remember the whittling stick and the whittler in this matter.

WORKING UNITEDLY.

TWO events of recent occurrence in the lumber trade serve as practical illustrations of the advantages to be attained by united effort on the part of the members of this trade. Our reference is, in the first instance, to the labor boycott in the city of New York, when, in May last the Lumber Handlers and Lumber Truck Drivers' Association of that city endeavored to force the lumber dealers to come to their terms. Without going into particulars, it is enough to say that the end sought was, as in all like cases, to obtain better terms from their employers, and failing to accomplish this by more amicable methods, the objectionable resort of a strike and boycott was employed. This step was resented with vigor by the Lumber Trade Association, and with complete success. There were features of the strike, that furnish suggestive matter for an article on the relations of employee to employer, and of working men to workingmen's unions; but our purpose here in referring to the matter is simply to show to the lumber trade, that there is only one way of meeting a difficulty and that is by all pulling together. The end to have been attained might have been any other than meeting an employees strike; it might have been to accomplish some reform or meet a difficulty within their own ranks; whether one or the other, if the trade had been divided success could not have been expected.

A more recent illustration comes from the lumber trade of England; not a fight this time with labour, but a battle in Parliament with the railway operators of the "tight little island." Elsewhere we give particulars of the trouble, and for this reason do not need to particularize here. The outcome is asked: not entire success; and it would appear, for the reason, that the trade were not throughout the battle acting as a united body. It is true that when, within the past few months, the gravity of the situation was realized, they quickly got close together and worked as one man. Back in 1889, however, when it was known that the trouble was upon them, and then it was that their forces should have been brought together, and careful thought, the outcome of concerted action, have been given to the question, the trade, to borrow the words of an English lumber contemporary, were found at "sixes and sevens." It is pleasing to know that even at the eleventh hour, something has been accomplished.

No question is before the Canadian trade to-day to stir up the fires of enthusiasm that usually seem needed to bring any body of men of any particular class together. Were a question of this kind to assert itself are the trade ready to meet it? And after all, are there not matters that call for "talking over" together? All through the past season there has been an undercurrent of dissatisfaction among the trade, because of the tendency to cut prices and otherwise to draw away from safe and careful methods of doing business. We do not say, these are crying evils of the trade, but they are of sufficient importance to call for a little consideration; and no better time than the present could be found. The country is on the eve of the most prosperous fall's business that has greeted the people of Canada for many years. The lumber trades will certainly reap the gain that will come from the country's splendid harvest. How far the profits of this extra trade will be theirs will depend on what plans they shall adopt to secure these profits.

We are impressed with the thought, that it would be a good thing for the lumbermen of this province to get together in convention early this fall and talk over trade matters. Why not?