



PUBLISHED  
SEMI-MONTHLY.

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

SUBSCRIPTION  
\$2.00 PER ANNUM

VOL. 5.

PETERBOROUGH, ONT., MAY 15, 1885.

NO. 10.

#### INSPECTION OF LUMBER.

To the Editor of the Canada Lumberman.

SIR,—Considering the importance of the subject it is somewhat surprising that no communications have appeared in your journal regarding the inspection of lumber.

That this is not at all satisfactory, either to buyer or seller, is well known in the trade. Nor has any attempt, so far as the writer is aware, been made to reduce the inspection to something approaching uniformity, both as to the names of the qualities and the grade of lumber constituting these qualities.

As to nomenclature, we certainly do possess names, but it is well known that to one inspector a certain name will imply a grade of lumber differing materially from that which another understands by the same term.

Which one of your readers which has occasion to attend court in a suit but has noticed the widely different definitions given as to what constitutes a mill cull or a pick? The writer has a distinct recollection of the difficulty he had in endeavoring to reconcile the almost diametrically opposite descriptions of what a second in oak consisted, or rather what defects made a piece pass for second.

Is the inspection of lumber based upon the question of supply and demand? Do our inspectors reject lumber when the demand is limited and supply plentiful, which, in a different state of the market, would probably be accepted? Is our inspection regulated by the market to which we are about to ship? If, for home consumption, a light inspection; if, for a foreign market, a close one.

Is our conception of what constitutes any one quality determined by the use to which it is to be put?

Is the culling of lumber regulated by an understanding between the buyer and seller?

Is not the inspection of lumber left to be determined by unforeseen circumstances, such as the rise and fall of the markets, the amount of stock on hand and the probable cut, the failure of the dealer to dispose of a stock bargained for early in the season, or the acceptance of a higher price by seller for his lumber already sold?

In fact, is not the inspection of lumber governed by anything, save by following a standard agreed upon by both manufacturers and dealers?

Who regulates our inspection such as it is? Is it the manufacturer? No. In contracting with the dealer for the disposal of his stock, the manufacturer agrees to leave the culling to the buyer or his inspector.

Does the inspector accept or reject as he pleases, thereby determining the respective qualities? No. He has his instructions from his employer. Then it must be the dealer who regulates the inspection. No. It is the consumer.

Competition, by no means healthy, is at the root of the evil. There are far too many engaged in the trade, many of them not having anything to do, run round and sell on commission. Lumber of a certain quality is sold at a low figure, the next man coming along offers the same quality at a still lower rate, and the dealer instructs his inspector to meet the price by a correspondingly lower grade. The name remains the same, but the quality is either good or bad according to the price.

It is time that both the manufacturer and dealer with capital invested, who have to stand the losses incurred by too zealous commission men, combined and regulated the inspection of lumber as well as other matters belonging to the trade.

Or, if that cannot be done, then let our inspectors (and none are so well qualified as they), form an association, and, so far as the inspection of all kinds of lumber is concerned, both hard and soft woods, determine what shall constitute the numerous qualities. Let his standard, after examination, be agreed upon by both manufacturer and dealer, and be a set of rules to which any dispute can be referred for settlement, so far as such can be done.

LUMBER.

Toronto, May 4th, 1885.

#### PROVINCIAL FORESTRY ASSOCIATION.

The following letter appeared in the Montreal Gazette:

SIR,—I have read with interest the account of the proceedings of the Forestry Association at Quebec, also your editorial on the proposition made there by Mr. S. C. Stevenson, and much as I agree with the objects said to be aimed at by the association—viz., the preservation of our forests and the planting of new ones on taking a view of the matter I am inclined to think the association is not going to work in the most practical way to secure the desired end. I notice that much stress is laid on the observance of Arbor Day and the planting of a few trees by way of ornament by cities and schools. This, of course, cannot go on for ever, nor is it calculated to renew our denuded forests, nor do I conceive it can teach children at school what is required in the way of planting forests, as the trees planted on Arbor Day are always large ones, and even were they procurable, would be too expensive for large plantations, nor would they be desirable. What is required is to get nurserymen to sow large quantities of seed of the best kinds suitable for timber and to transplant them in their nurseries at least once before they are sold for planting, they would then be about 12 or 16 inches high and easily handled. If I remember right the association, when they met in Montreal, proposed to offer some reward to the persons who had planted the largest number of trees on Arbor Day.

What we want is wholesale planting such as is done in the old country, and if any reward is to be held out, let it be to the party who has successfully planted the largest number of acres in any one season. What better place could be had for this than some districts of the eastern townships where the country has been completely bared of trees? If a good wide belt were planted between some of the farms it would improve the country and afford shelter to the farm building and stock of which they are at present destitute. I merely mention this district, for if my suggestion were carried out it would let farmers see what could be done and what a benefit it would be to farmers. But there is no scarcity of land which wants planting. The trouble seems to be to get people to make it their business to do so, and plantations, after all, if properly attended to, do not take so very long before they begin to yield a return for the cost.

The idea of giving children a taste for arboriculture is very good in its way, but if we want to see our forests renewed on a large scale it should be commenced at once, as every year is of importance considering the great demand, which is now making on our standing forests and the difficulty and time required to replace them. We should all take to ourselves the advice which the Laird of Dumbiedikes gave to his son:

"Aye, be stickin' in a tree; it's growin' when ye're sleepin'."

Yours, &c.,

THOMAS McNAB.

Montreal, 15th April, 1885.

#### A NEW INDUSTRY

There is now in process of construction in Bullman City a plant for the manufacture of what is called terra cotta lumber, although why the word lumber is used in this connection is not plain, neither the fact that it is capable of being cut with a saw nor the fact that sawdust is an agent in its construction entitling it to such a classification.

By one of those happy ideas which seem more the result of accident than design it occurred to the inventor that common brick clay might be rendered light, porous, elastic to a certain extent, and capable of being worked with cutting tools by mixing wet clay with an equal bulk of sawdust, molding it into certain forms after the manner practiced in the manufacture of brick and afterwards subjecting the mixture to a sufficiently high temperature to entirely consume the sawdust. The final step in the process, that of baking the clay for the purpose of hardening it and at the same time consuming the sawdust, causes a curious change in the conditions of the original substance. The gaseous products of combustion evolved from the burning sawdust produces an effect on the clay very similar to that produced in dough by

the effect of yeast, the gases expand the clay around each particle of sawdust and finally force their way out of it, leaving it in porous condition resembling more than anything else well raised and baked bread, excepting that the pores or cells in the clay are more regular in size, the size of these pores depending upon the size of the particles of sawdust. By varying the proportions of sawdust in the clay a substance of any degree of porosity or solidity may be obtained from a substance almost as dense as common brick to one as light as wood.

As originally made the mixture of clay and sawdust was molded into long blocks or logs and afterwards sawed and cut into the shapes desired, which was probably the reason for its being called lumber, but this crude method soon gave place to the better one of molding the mixture at once into the desired form thus avoiding an unnecessary amount of work.

The porous brick slab or tile, which results from this process, has desirable qualities as a material for building purposes. As ordinarily made its weight, compared with a common brick, is 8 to 20. It is a non-conductor of heat. Nails can be driven through it without cracking it, and it resists all changes of temperature without disintegration. In addition to these advantages its porous surface and cellular structure enables plaster cement to adhere to its surface with great tenacity without cracking; a manifest advantage for either outside or inside work.

By the use of this material the interior of dwellings may be rendered absolutely fire proof at very little additional cost over the ordinary method of construction. Slabs or planks of the material can be nailed to the sides and ceiling of a room, furnishing an even surface for the after application of plaster, and the floor may if desired be covered with a coat of asphalt on which, while hot, ornamental wood flooring may be placed, making one of the best possible floors.

The low cost of manufacture enables this substance to compete successfully with common brick as a material for house building, and it seems capable of adapting itself to a great variety of purposes not here enumerated.

The clay which is used in the manufacture of this porous terra cotta has heretofore been a refuse material not available either for the manufacture of fire or common bricks and is exceedingly abundant in many localities, and the other material or agent (sawdust) used in the manufacture is also a waste substance; there is no reason, therefore, why it cannot be produced so cheaply as to bring it into general use and thus form the basis for a large industry. We are glad to note that it furnishes a means of utilizing a waste product of the lumber business which has been a nuisance to the mill owner.—Northwestern Lumberman.