

OUR QUEBEC LETTER

From Our Own Correspondent.

DULLNESS OF THE TRADE—MOVEMENTS OF FROH-
NENT LUMBERMEN—THE SUPERVISORSHIP OF
CULLERS—MINING NEWS.

QUEBEC, Jan. 11th.—The extreme inactivity which prevails in the lumber business renders it a difficult matter at this season to compile a very readable or interesting letter on subjects entirely connected with the trade. In face of the very useful and interesting annual statement prepared by Messrs. J. Bell Forsyth & Co., of this city, concerning the season's business in lumber at this port, and the stocks wintering here, which statement has been analyzed in the columns of the CANADA LUMBERMAN, it would be decidedly presumptuous to attempt anything further in this direction.

Quotations it is at present impossible to give, since no transactions have occurred for some weeks back.

Mr. R. R. Dobell, of this city, left town a couple of days ago for Menascota, and will be absent about three weeks.

The firm of Hamilton Bros. & Co., doing business here and at Hawkesbury, Ont., has been dissolved by mutual consent, and the business is now being carried on under the old name and style by the Hon. John Hamilton, of Hawkesbury.

Mr. J. B. Charleson, of this city, has purchased all the standing spruce and pine on Brooks & Tool's lands, at Windsor Mills, in this Province. This, with other lots bought on the same river, makes his purchase of standing spruce and pine foot up to 27,000,000 feet. Both of these lands are quite close to Mr. Charleson's Mills, and in proximity also to a station of the Grand Trunk Railway.

The Arthabaska Timber Co.'s property, consisting of extensive steam and water mills at Arthabaska, with limits, and hitherto the property of the Russel Hotel Co., of this city, has been sold to American operators. The price has not transpired.

The vessels engaged in the lumber trade of Quebec this fall have been, as a rule, singularly unfortunate. Besides those already reported lost, the following over due vessels, of which small hopes are now entertained, are published in the newspapers of this date:—

Bark Pearl of India, Captain Kelly, from Quebec, Sept. 21, from Greenock, 1,256 tons register, loaded by Messrs. R. R. Dobell & Co.

Bark Thomas Lee, Captain Wilson, from Quebec, Oct. 21, from Whitehaven, 390 tons register, loaded by Messrs. R. R. Dobell & Co.

Bark Caprea, Capt. Whittake, from Quebec, Oct. 24, for Newcastle, 735 tons register, loaded by Messrs. R. R. Dobell & Co.

Bark Ella, Capt. Sjoström, from Quebec, Oct. 27, for Dublin, 641 tons register, loaded by Messrs. R. R. Dobell & Co.

Bark Eastern Empire, Capt. Love, from Quebec, Oct. 28, for Greenock, 1,751 tons register, loaded by Messrs. R. R. Dobell & Co.

Bark Matador, Capt. Ewart, from Quebec, Nov. 1, from Limerick, 420 tons register, loaded by Messrs. Wilson & Co.

Bark Roomar, Capt. Morris, from Quebec, Nov. 8, for Plymouth, 1,187 tons register, loaded by Messrs. J. Sharples, Sons & Co.

The appointment of a Supervisor of Cullers for Quebec has not yet been made. There are those who anticipate still that the appointment will be a political one, as it is known that party hacks, possessed of not the slightest business knowledge, are actively canvassing for the position. The trade, generally speaking, however, have reason to hope that the Government will pay some attention to their oft repeated representations and to the law which requires the appointment of a duly licensed culler.

Mineral matters have looked up somewhat of late. New French capital is expected to pour into the Province next year, to be utilized in developing our mines, and in fact a Mr. Fatin, of this city, has recently received from a French company the sum of \$100,000 for a one half interest in a gold mine owned by him in Beauce. It is the intention of a number of speculators, who hold upwards of 100,000 acres of mining lands in the Eastern Townships, to open an office for the exhibition of specimens and sale of lands, in this city.

A UTILITARIAN PROTEST.

Some opposition is being expressed concerning the proposed reservation of a tract of land in Tulare county, California, as a national park. A bill is now pending in congress with this end in view. This reservation will be for the especial purpose of saving the giant trees that grow on the tract from being destroyed. The opponents of the reservation scheme allege that in it there are only two trees of notable size in that locality—the General Grant and Hugh Miller. These stand in a large body of timber, and are seven or eight miles apart. The operators who want to cut this timber, talk as follows:—

"Very few stop to consider that by reserving this large tract considerable money is kept out of circulation. It contains upwards of 15,000 acres of land, with perhaps 300,000,000 feet of timber, of which probably 50,000,000 feet are redwood. *Sequoia*. It is hard to tell where one kind of tree leaves off and the other begins. The tract lies on the south side of King's River, and has so far been untouched, because it was impossible to haul out or get at in any ordinary way. It will require some \$200,000 to utilize the tract, so that cutting and marketing would be of benefit to some persons, of course. Some capitalists had just made arrangements to utilize this tract, and were prepared to spend the above amount of money. The land, as it stands, is represented to be utterly worthless for any small operation, and can never be touched unless done cheaply on a large scale. Of course, as soon as the bill was introduced, the capitalists stopped work. The damage around Lake Tahoe has been exaggerated. Some of the logs have been cut off, but a very large proportion was still left around the shores. One acre out of over 5,000 has been cut off the shores of the lake, and no more. It would be more sensible to create a reservation around that lake than in Tulare county."

There are two sides to this question. If the general government has a right to the land, and can legally reserve the Tulare tract for the purpose of preserving the great trees, no private interests have much to offer against it. If the district is well timbered, so much the better; there will be one forest on the continent that will be saved to future generations, in all its primeval grandeur and beauty, untouched by the destroying lumberman. If forest preservation, by government interference, is to make headway at all, it might as well begin in Tulare county, California, as anywhere else.—*North-western Lumberman*.

THAT MERCER TIMBER MUDDLE.

If we have republished criticisms on Mr. Wm. Mercer's account of the Spanish River country, we think it only fair to give the other side of the story, from the *Lumberman's Gazette*:—

By courtesy to Wm. Mercer, we publish the following communication, addressed to this paper. Still we are at a loss to understand by what manner of reasoning he is brought to the conclusion that we have used his name in any sense which savors of an untruthful connection, and Mr. Mercer fails to explain the method by which he reached such a conclusion. We distinctly set forth in our former article that we had very serious doubts that Mr. Mercer had ever made the statements attributed to him by the Chicago papers. Further than this, Mr. Mercer fully corroborates nearly every statement in our former article, not only as regards himself, but also sustains the views expressed by us in relation to Mr. Little, the Canadian, who scourged him so mercilessly. In regard to Mr. Mercer's strictures on the Chicago reporter, we have nothing to say further than that we are now fully satisfied that the representative of that paper misrepresented him.

With regard to the secrecy enjoined by the parties who employed Mr. Mercer, and the pledge thereto, Mr. Mercer's memory must be somewhat short, as by his own statement he divulged the business inside of forty-eight hours after returning from his trip; he has no right, therefore, to find fault with those parties if they do accuse him of a breach of confidence:

DEAR SIR.—As some one has sent me a copy of the *Lumberman's Gazette*, in which I see you are using my name in a very free way, and in

by no means a truthful connection, I may say that the *Press* and a Chicago paper seem to have it all their own way, and contain statements that are quite new to me and in fact were never heard of before by me. But not having had an opportunity to see or hear what has been said in the matter, I will state the facts and you can judge how far they agree with the statements made.

When leaving Bay City for Canada on the expedition named, the caution was given to say nothing about the object of the journey. This is the usual custom in all such cases, but they only extend to the time in which the would be purchaser has the refusal of the land, and are never meant to extend over a whole province, nor to a period of a man's natural life. If I had imagined that the gentleman had the least idea of purchasing the whole of Canada lying between the Georgian Bay and the North Pole, I might have been more cautious, but I considered that after the land was bought it was of little consequence making a secret of it, if indeed any secret were necessary at any time, the land having been advertised for sale in the Canadian paper for several years back, and had been inspected by several Michigan lumber firms before we ever saw it. On my arrival in Bay City I found telegrams awaiting me that I had to leave for Chicago immediately; and being in Chicago next day, and while waiting for a train, I called at a friend's office, and the subject of the Canada Pacific came up, in which the Chicago people are interested as a diverting line for "northwest" freight. A gentleman came in and was introduced, but I did not catch the name (he turning out, however, to be a reporter of one of the Chicago dailies). I made the remark in the course of conversation that the Canada Pacific never could compete with our lines of railroads on this side of the lakes, simply because the road ran through several hundred miles of country that had no local traffic or freight to support it, and consequently had to charge all expenses to "through freight" from the great "northwest," while ours had every few miles along the lakes immense quantities of freight to carry that would share the general expense and make these roads able to compete successfully with any road that can be built. Whether I am right or wrong in this has nothing to do with the question. The question was asked if there was nothing to carry in that section through which the C. P. R. runs. I said I had just come from the country north of the Georgian Bay, and with the exception of a tract of pine on Sable river, and as the Indians reported, also on the Spanish river some distance up, I saw nothing for a railroad to carry, and as these rivers were good streams to drive, I thought all the timber would come out that way. That was the substance of the whole conversation, which I claim was utterly private and not meant for publication in any way, and could not be distorted into an absurd claim of discovering a country that has been settled by whites over 100 years ago; and the Hudson Bay Company have a station near the mouth of the Spanish river that may have been there longer than that for all I know. Now if you read the article in question, you will find that the industrious scribe of the Chicago paper does not state that I made these enormous figures about the pine. That is all his own work from whole cloth, and must have been done on the principle of the natural philosopher, on being given the tooth of a mastodon, will construct the whole animal for you, even to giving you the length of its tail and the kinks thereof. I disclaim any such ability, and as you, Mr. Editor (I refer to Mr. Bennett), have known me ever since you were a boy, you can answer as well as anybody for my veracity.

The above facts are all there is to the matter. Only I must say that, had the member of the firm purchasing the land, who is well known as a professing Christian gentleman, remembered that there was such a thing as "Christian charity," he might have waited before he imputed such motives to me as he has, and if any blame attaches to me, it is in having alluded inadvertently to the subject at all in the company of strangers.

I can't conclude without thanking the Chicago gentleman for my "brevet rank," but as I find every second man here owns the title, I beg to

hand it back to him again, unneeded, as I have never used it.

As for Mr. Little, of Montreal, I have known him for 30 years, and during that time he has written poetry and lumber statistics in large quantities. And if his knowledge of Canada is equal to that of Michigan, as shown by his published statements regarding the supply of Michigan pine playing out every four or five years, I don't think he is in a position to contradict any figures made by anyone.

This is a long article, Mr. Editor, but as you have printed longer ones in regard to me, I think I am entitled to the insertion of this.

WILLIAM MERCER.

Jerseyville, Ill., Dec. 31st, 1881.

QUEEN vs MCFARLANE & MCFARLANE.

OTTAWA, Jan. 14.—The Supreme Court met at 11 a.m. In the Case of the Merchants' Bank of Canada, appellants, and The Queen, respondent, Mr. Bethune, Q.C., was heard in reply on behalf of the appellants. Judgment was reserved.

The case of The Queen (defendant), appellant, and Joan McFarlane and Duncan McFarlane, (suppliants), respondents, was then proceeded with. Mr. Lash, Q.C., appeared for appellant, and Mr. Bethune, Q.C., and Mr. McIntyre for respondents. The suppliants' petition of right claims payment of certain losses sustained by them, arising from the breaking of a boom at the mouth of the Madawaska River, owned by the Dominion Government as a public work, and constructed for the purpose of facilitating the transmission of saw logs down the Ottawa River. The suppliants were carrying on lumber operations on the Madawaska River, and certain timber and logs owned by them passed into the Government boom at the mouth of the Madawaska. The suppliants charge that the boom-master, by reason of the unskillful and negligent manner in which he performed his duty, allowed a larger quantity of timber and logs than the boom was capable of holding to pass into it, in consequence of which the boom broke, and the timber and logs of the suppliants floated out. That some of the logs were lost, and the suppliants were put to expense in recovering the others. The petition also alleges that the boom was negligently and unskillfully constructed. The petition prays that Her Majesty may be held liable for the losses sustained by them by reason of the unskillful and improper conduct of the boom-master.

To this petition the Attorney-General for Canada demurred for several reasons, among which are:—That no liability on the part of Her Majesty exists towards the suppliants in the premises, the Crown not being liable for the negligence of its servants. That no contract with the suppliants on the part of Her Majesty is shown, and a petition of right does not lie to recover damages not arising under contract with the Crown. That no liability on the part of Her Majesty exists by reason of the insufficiency of the boom or the want of care in the selection or employment of the slide-master, and that Her Majesty is not liable for the negligence of the persons having charge of such works.

The demurrer was argued before Mr. Justice Henry, and judgment given thereon in favour of the suppliants. From this judgment Her Majesty appealed to the Supreme Court. The case was argued, and judgment reserved. This being the last appeal on the list, the Court rose.

Here in Our Own Territory.

It can almost be asserted that St. Jacobs Oil works wonders. Shortly before the New Year, when I visited my family in Mitchell I found my son Edward, a lad little more than ten years old, very sick. He suffered with rheumatism, and so terribly, that he was perfectly stiff in his limbs, could not possibly walk and had to be carried from place to place. At once I sent for some St. Jacobs Oil, used it according to directions, and in a few days could see evidence of considerable improvement. On the tenth of this month I again visited my family and was astonished to find him well and hearty. He once more has fresh color in his face and can go to school again. Whenever the old trouble threatens to return relief is immediately secured by the use of the celebrated St. Jacobs Oil. From sheer joy over this result I cannot withhold recommending St. Jacobs Oil to suffering humanity as a true benefactor. Charles Metzendorf, office of the *Volksfreund*, German paper of Stratford, Ont.