



IN THE March LUMBERMAN a Montreal correspondent asked for information concerning mahogany, chestnut and vencers. As a result of enquiries made at the time we replied that these woods were nearly all imported. I was glad to learn from Mr. H. S. Lusty, lumberman, of Rodney, Ont., with whom I had a conversation a few days ago, that in Elgin Co., in which Rodney is located, that they have there an abundance of chestnut, and that Mr. Lusty handles it in large quantities.

James McBain Reid, Sec'y and manager of the Bradley, Morris & Reid company of Hamilton, has been two years in Canada, and obtained his lumber experience across the border. He does not think Canadians are quite as slow as they are charged with being but thinks they follow beaten paths too much, and are too well satisfied with what was good enough for their fathers, or what seems good enough for their neighbors. He would like to see better rates secured over American roads to Canadian centres, as a means of enlarging trade between the two countries.

"Less lumber is to be found on the piling grounds in the vicinity of Gravenhurst this year," said Mr. Jas. Tennant of this city, who had just returned from a trip in that section of country, "than for ten years back. Only two mills are running, and with these the cut is light. Reason of this? you ask. For one thing timber in that immediate neighborhood is becoming pretty well thinned out. The G.T.R. have had a share in shaping matters thus. For two or three years shippers in the north could not get cars from the railway to move their stocks. Stocks began to accumulate eating up interest until manufacturers became wearied cutting up only to store in their yards. Consequence was, they stopped. To-day we can get all the cars we want. I saw twenty or thirty cars on a siding when I was north a week ago waiting to be used, but no use for them. It is a case of chickens coming home to roost and the Grand Trunk knows it. My impression is that the principal mills in the Georgian Bay district will close down early this season. If so, this fact, along with the Ottawa strike, should stiffen prices.

At not unfrequent intervals I have given in this page the opinions of Canadian lumbermen on the duty question. One important purpose of the page is to cultivate a free expression of opinion on trade matters. We will get nearer the truth on any question by gathering all the information we can touching it; when the proper time comes we can do the sifting. We are going to hear this time from an American lumberman, Henry Moiles, Jr. of the firm of Laing & Moiles, of Saginaw, Mich. In a chat with a reporter of the Saginaw *Journal* he said. Previous to the enactment of the McKinley law there was an export duty of \$3 placed on logs by the Canadian government, and a United States import duty of \$2 on lumber. The provisions of the McKinley bill took \$1 off the duty from the American tax providing the Canadian government took off the entire export duty, and of course the dollar remaining is ample to pay the tow bills on the logs coming here. The result has been that the Canadian government has taken their duty off of logs, and they are being sent over to this country where the manufacture of salt and the sale of slabs, etc., makes it possible to compete with the Canadian mills in a way most disastrous to them, the towing being only 90 cents or \$1 per thousand. The consequence has been that these Canadian mills have lost the manufacture of an immense quantity of lumber in the Georgian Bay country and all along that district, and men are working for very small wages, in many cases for their board. There are laborers engaged in shoveling coal from the holds of vessels at Algoma Mills for 75 cents per day, where

last year they received \$3 per day. This state of affairs is, of course, due to the McKinley bill and logs coming here from Canada free. The fact that Americans can go from here over there and buy logs in such immense numbers and ship them in here has raised a howl on that side that is bound to have its effect. The Canadians have already made an appeal to their premier in regard to the matter, and he has told them that there will soon be a meeting of American and Canadian commissioners at Washington, and if the duty is not then taken off the lumber they would be obliged to take some action to protect themselves, and would surely do so. It looks as if the result will be that the entire import duty will be taken off by the American government as that is what the Canadian people demand. This will leave both logs and lumber on the same footing, and entirely free. If the duty is not removed the chances are that it will go back to \$3 per thousand where it was before.

One of the events of the month in lumber circles is the unfortunate strike among the millmen of the Ottawa district. I say unfortunate, for there never was a strike, be it big or little, of short duration, or long continued, that did not bring hurt upon all concerned, and on many others not concerned, nor in any way responsible for the act. But I am not going to enter into a discussion of the question of strikes right here. My anxiety has been to lay hold of some one from Ottawa, who could speak from personal knowledge and observation of the strike. I questioned one gentleman, who is a resident of the capital, and well posted on lumber questions in regard to a despatch that appeared in the Toronto dailies, saying that the mill owners had decided to close down for the season and that the strikers were leaving in large numbers for the States where work was being offered them. He said: "This report" very probably originated in the fact that the mill owners had remarked that they might have to resort to closing down for the season and some two or three men, who have shantied in the American forests, for the last three or four years, had gone over to occupy the same positions again this season." What will be the effect of the strike on the lumber trade, assuming the dead-lock to continue? "As nearly all of last season's lumber has been shipped," was the reply, "and the cut at Ottawa has been very much smaller this year, than other years, Pierce & Co.'s mill being shut down, the E. B. Eddy Co. having gone out of the lumber business, Jas. McLaren & Co. and Cassler Lumber Co.'s mills being destroyed by fire, the late reconstructed, only having commenced sawing again about six weeks ago, Buel, Orr & Hurdman's sawing delayed for want of logs, so that now should all have to close down it will make lumber very scarce, which means an advance in prices all round."

Regarding the merits or demerits of the strike, whichever way you like, I have the views of an Ottawa gentleman with which every one may not agree. But as LUMBERMAN readers know this kind of thing is rather enjoyed in this particular page. The *ELI* page is free parliament where any one and every one may express their opinions on any question of interest to lumbermen. Sometimes I have to get after correspondents myself and give them a piece of my mind; and to any reader who feels like doing the same thing, we say come right on friend; you'll have every show in this page. The correspondent writes: "My impression is that the mill owners will give in to the demands of the men, perhaps not all they ask but they will make concessions. The men are not making any unjust demands, the most of the lumbermen would be willing to give them what they ask only they don't like the means adopted to get it. Perhaps those most directly affected by the strike are the exporters who have vessels waiting at Montreal or Quebec for loads; and of course it means probably a loss in circulation in this city of three or four thousand dollars daily. The effect on the lumber trade itself may not amount to much, although it means just that much lumber less to ship this fall, which along with the shortage in the season's cut may have the effect of increasing the price of lumber. I don't think the mill owners have any intention of closing their mills as they are anxious to cut for the balance of the season. As to men leaving for the States; I don't think very many

have left as yet although quite a number go over there for the winter and return in the spring. This occurs every year."

Somebody has been "stuffing" the *Northwestern Lumberman*, of Chicago, regarding Canadian lumber. I give the paragraph: "A dealer in this city who is conversant with the eastern trade estimates that the Canadians this year have captured the sale of 100,000,000 feet of the American trade through the operation of the new tariff and the favor that has been shown Canadian shippers by reduced rates on the Grand Trunk and its York state connections. The loss has been especially felt at Tonawanda and Buffalo, and by the hemlock operators in Pennsylvania. The Canadian mills had accumulated a great surplus of coarse stock that could not successfully compete with lumber on this side under the old tariff. Since the reduction of \$1 a thousand in the duty, lumber from the other side has flowed in freely, the Grand Trunk through rate regulation greatly helping in the process. The Canadians have thus been able to work off their accumulation doubtless to great satisfaction to themselves, but to the disgust of dealers and manufacturers at the east end of Lake Erie. In gathering stocks there they necessarily accumulate a large percentage of low grade common lumber, and depend on the eastern state trade as a means of getting rid of it. It was consequently a serious matter for Canadians to come in with their 100,000,000 feet as a competition. The hemlock interest of Pennsylvania has suffered in proportion to the territory affected. In this instance the American operators know that the reduced tariff has cost them money. One concern estimates that its direct loss this year from the cause indicated is \$15,000. The only way to even up the difference is to go to Canada for logs and lumber, and that is being done to an increasing extent." The *Montreal Trade Review* and the *Monetary Times*, Toronto have both copied the item; the latter however, with the comment, "that the estimate by the Chicago dealer is, without doubt, a gross exaggeration," adding enquiries made in this city show "that no more than 10,000,000 feet additional lumber has been moved over the Grand Trunk Railway into the United States this season as compared with former years." I took occasion in my intercourse with leading lumbermen in the city to show them the paragraph. "A hundred million is a big figure," said Mr. John Donogh. "It means a season's output of at least eight of our large mills. No such quantity was shipped from Canada. It is to be remembered that the drop in the G.T.R. rates was only temporary and made for the purpose of moving off the quantities of lumber that had been allowed to accumulate for want of sufficient cars previously. In the spring of the year, just as soon as navigation opened, the rates went up again. A maximum figure would be 10,000,000 or 12,000,000 feet." "With my knowledge of the shipments to the States" said Mr. Jas. Tennant, "I would say 10,000,000 feet would be outside figures. The Chicago journal was well filled up when 100,000,000 feet was talked to them." Our contemporary the *Monetary Times*, winds up its reference to the question in these words: "The dullness of trade frequently leads to magnified statements of this kind. The quantity of both 1889 and 1890 sawn lumber in the mill yards is proof of the inaccuracy of the statement. The coarser grades of lumber which found market in the States did not go over the Grand Trunk, but over the Canada Atlantic Railway, and by water. The lower rates on these routes may have moved a larger quantity from that district; but from the west shipments have not been much in excess of former years. The increased distributing trade direct from the mills both in Michigan and Canada, and which continued throughout the whole year, is affecting central distributing points such as Buffalo, Tonawanda, Albany and Troy, more than any change in the tariff, or reduction in rate of freights."

Give fools their gold and knaves their power;

Let fortunes bubbles rise and fall;

Who sows a field or trains a flower,

Or plants a tree, is more than all.