

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters are invited from our readers on matters of practical and timely interest to the lumber trades. To secure insertion all communications must be accompanied with name and address of writer, not necessarily for publication. The publisher will not hold himself responsible for opinions of corespondents.

"ONE LEADER."

BARRIE, ONT., Nov. 25th, 1896.

To the Editor of the CANADA LUMBERMAN:

DEAR SIR,—Now that McKinley has been elected, and gold declared to be the leading metal, from every nation and point of compass is heralded the news of general satisfaction and restoration of confidence; resulting already in furnishing employment to over one hundred and fifty thousand of idle artisans. The election has developed that the people only require one metal as a leader—and that is gold. This decision is, I believe, in accordance with the original Designer from the creation up to the end of time—that there should be only one leader in anything, whether of nations or societies, mineral, agricultural, forest, or any other product—only one leader of its class can successfully exist. And the moment two leaders are given equal power, the seed of discontent is planted, the growth of which will in time be destroyed by its superior. White pine, like gold, is the leader.

With gold as a foundation for all obligations, coupled with a permanent advance in mineral lands, wheat and all other agricultural products, a reason is furnished to anticipate an increased demand for the goods supplied by the manufacturer which will set in motion the wheels of commerce, the effect of which cannot be otherwise than beneficial to the lumbering industry. But as to the general revival of trade advancing the price of lumber, say one dollar per M feet mill run, this will largely depend upon the lumbermen themselves and the banks that supply the funds. If the lumbermen produce an excessive quantity in the future, as they have in the past, and then force it upon the market (as many will)—two million feet when only one million is required—then I fail to see that the result in price will follow beyond a moderate advance over dull time prices. With the competition that exists from whitewood, pine timber, flooring, ceiling, box lumber and shingles from the Southern States, and cedar, redwood, Douglas fir and shingles from British Columbia and Washington territory, and the manufacturers of these exercising the same fault of forcing double the quantity upon the market that is required, the result will be in order—to find their gain. It would require a one stamp gold mill with latest improvements, also a lightning calculator with a powerful magnifying glass, to discover a small speck of profit—after paying interest, insurance, and depreciation of property and expense of manufacturing, which is the smallest, most economical and hardest earned of all.

The moment there is a permanent advance in lumber or grain the railroad companies claim they have a "title deed" to it from the Crown, and advance the rate accordingly—they claim it is fair to allow you to hold the "title deed" to the ground, and they a "deed" to the profits therefrom, as they do not want the earth, only results—for which they "draw" to secure.

There is no doubt but that the retail yards in the United States are all carrying small stocks, but the demand corresponds with the amount of

small stock carried. Now, where is the lumber if not in the retail yard? You will find millions upon millions at Buffalo, Tonawanda, Chicago and other wholesale yards, and at the mills in Canada, Michigan, Wisconsin and other states, hundreds of millions of '94, '95 and '96 stock, all ready to ship, and millions more to be manufactured, with 1897 cut to follow. The effect of this will be to check the advance in price that should take place.

Canada owns billions of white pine standing timber, and for want of appreciation or realizing its value an annual destruction of millions is going on, resulting in a loss to all interested.

I know of only one way to advance the price of lumber to a paying basis, and that is to manufacture no more than the demand requires, but who can stop the "Niagara" or the whirlpool below?

The lumber manufacturers are "in it"—the loss; the railroad companies are "in it"—the profit; the government are "in it"—destruction of timber.

Yours truly,

C. H. CLARK.

[The above letter was written for our December number, but was received too late for insertion.—THE EDITOR.]

THE DUTY QUESTION.

MONTREAL, 25th Nov., 1896.

To the Editor of the CANADA LUMBERMAN:

DEAR SIR,—In reply to yours of the 10th inst. would say, that although a protectionist president has been elected in the United States, I cannot believe that the duty on lumber going there will be re-imposed, for the following reasons: The great bulk of the people of the United States being consumers, their interests will be considered rather than that of a few lumbermen who represent but a small portion of the people and who have really a monopoly of the business, as the principal part of the timber lands are comparatively in the hands of a few operators who can control the output if they will; but the apparent disposition of most lumbermen is to get rid of, as fast as possible, what standing timber there is left and let the future take care of itself. Then the fact of so many Americans being so largely interested in our mills and timber lands, will naturally influence them to oppose any legislation that will debar them from getting our pulp wood, logs and lumber, which they see the necessity of having to keep their paper mills working, and the refuse of the logs to make their salt. The Titabawassy, the Cass and other rivers that once furnished this material are almost denuded of their pine, and it is doubtful if Michigan, which once made four thousand million feet of lumber in a single year, produces half that quantity at present, even though it is of a very inferior quality. There is still some good timber in Michigan, but it is in very few hands.

Last year there was taken across the Georgian Bay and Lake Huron to that state some three hundred million feet of pine logs to keep their pans and mills going. Saginaw, Alpena, Muskegon, Grand Haven, and other centres of the great lumber industry, will, if something else does not turn up, be places of the past. Then, again, if our American friends should revert to the import duty on our lumber, we would, of

necessity, reimpose the export duty on logs and pulp wood going to the States, resulting in what I think would be contrary to the interests of both countries.

In reference to the outlook for the coming year's business, I think it is good. The American market during the past year has been very quiet, while the English trade has been good, most every kind of lumber being in demand, particularly waney board timber and spruce deals. Had it not been for the high rates of freight prevailing in the fall, much more of the latter would have gone forward; in fact, had it not been for the British market the past season, many of our lumbermen would have run their mills on short time. The outlook for next year's business is promising, the cut of deals being all sold.

Yours truly,

J. K. WARD.

INFORMATION WANTED.

SCOTSTOWN, P. Q., Dec. 16th, 1896.

To the Editor of the CANADA LUMBERMAN:

SIR,—I wish to transmit about eight horse power a distance of about 1,500 feet from a water wheel, which I can do by using an electric motor, but that is expensive.

I have been thinking that I could connect an air compressor directly to the water wheel and carry the air in steam pipes to the place where the power is required, and use an ordinary steam engine. There is only one difficulty I see in the way, that is, to keep the engine from heating. Perhaps some of your readers have had experience with this kind of power, and can give me some light on the subject through the columns of THE LUMBERMAN.

Yours truly,

C. H. PARKER.

[It is perfectly feasible to transmit the power by means of a compressor and a steam engine as you propose. There is no difficulty about the heating. The cylinder of course would need oiling, but the principal difficulty that has been found has not been the heating but the cooling, as the air expands when released from the engine and usually produces frost. The method of transmission by compressed air has a good deal to be said in its favor, but in this individual case we are of the opinion that the cost of the apparatus, namely, the compressor and the engine, would be considerably more than the cost of the electric outfit.—ED. LUMBERMAN.]

KEEP ON ADVERTISING.

No business man not yet dead in the shell but can see even in dull times an opportunity to let the world know that he is alive. In advertising one's business it is perhaps three times out of four a blind and fatal mistake to leave the public in the dark as to whether the factory is still running and the owner thereof alive or dead. No industry that is not overdone or wrongly located can be effectually downed by a spell of depression. Consumers do not quit the world as some gentlemen did in the days of Noah, and if unable to purchase what they need to-day, the same need speaks for itself to-morrow. When the wind is low, mend your sails, and the man who is prepared for the breeze is the man most benefitted by the same.—Power and Transmission.