

## OUR QUEBEC LETTER.

THE HALL ESTATE—A LAND DISPUTE—INCREASED COST OF MANUFACTURING TIMBER—IN THE BUSH—HIGHER PRICES—MINING NOTES.

From Our Own Correspondent.

QUEBEC, Feb. 8th.—A rumour which proves to be a canard has been in circulation for some time past, to the effect that the estate of the late G. B. Hall, including the mills, etc., at Montmorenci, and limits elsewhere, were about to be disposed of to a company for the sum of \$2,000,000.

A dispute is now in progress with respect to the timber upon a large tract of land recently secured from the Crown Lands Department of Quebec, by the English Colonization Society, of which Lord Dunmore is President. The land in question is a portion of that under license to Messrs. G. B. Hall & Co. for lumbering purposes, and this firm assumes therefore that the usual conditions of lumbering licenses had not been effected by the consent of the Department to grant the land for colonization purposes. Their contention is therefore that they have the same right as heretofore to cut timber over the limits in question, with the exception of those parcels of it allotted to actual settlers for a year past. The Colonization Company on the other hand affect to believe that in virtue of the Hon. Commissioner's decision to grant the land as it may be required for settlement, they have become actual proprietors, not only of the land, but of all the timber standing upon it. Hence a dispute which has recently occupied the attention of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. Some time ago the Company caused a lumberman in the employ of Messrs. G. B. Hall & Co. to be arrested for robbery, because he was found cutting timber on the land in question. The case was dismissed, and later a writ of injunction against the firm was applied for. The whole case was argued a day or two since before the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

Logging, which was for so long a time delayed in the early part of the winter, through the absence of the necessary snow, is now by all accounts vigorously prosecuted. Last week's thaw caused very bad roads in the bush in portions of the Eastern Townships, but subsequent snow storms must have remedied this condition of affairs very materially.

Manufacturers complain that the cost of making timber has very materially increased this winter in consequence of the higher cost of provisions, and of the increase in wages and Government charges.

Advices received here by last mail from England confirm previous reports as to the scarcity of stocks and increase in prices on the other side of the Atlantic. Holders in this city, in consequence, are not apparently anxious to sell, and manufacturers prefer not to enter into any immediate contracts for future delivery. Several offers for the cut of deals at mills in this district have been refused. I have been unable to obtain the prices offered.

A quantity of manufactured lumber for special building purposes, a portion of the yield of the Montmorenci Mills, has been sold in New York at a considerable advance on last year's prices.

As there have been no transactions for so long a time, it is difficult to give quotations. From enquiries made of several brokers, however, I have reason to believe that the following may be regarded as approximate:—

Waney white pine, 19 in average	\$00 00 00 33
Square 60 ft. av'ge, 15 in	00 30 00 31
Oak, 60 ft. average	00 00 00 50
Elm, 45 to 60 ft.	00 00 00 30
Ash, 15 inches and up.	00 25 00 30

A meeting will be held here to-morrow of the promoters of the new Asbestos Manufacturing Co. The directors will be selected, four from the Quebec shareholders, and three from those in Boston. The capital is \$300,000, and the factory, which will employ about 100 hands, will be erected either at Quebec or Lewie. This Company owns the celebrated Ward Asbestos Mine at Thetford, Megantic.

## LIVERPOOL.

The *Timber Trades Journal* says.—It may be as well to contrast the present position of the stocks held here now with what they were last year at the same time, leaving out pitch pine, which will be referred to later on; and we find that the whole of the stock of square timber is

only 1,689,000 cubic feet, as against 2,510,000 cubic feet last year, or, to put it briefly, nearly 1,000,000 cubic feet loss.

This great shortage is mainly accounted for in the deficiency of three or four articles, viz., Quebec yellow pine, oak, birch, and Baltic fir timber. The unsatisfactory condition of the market at the opening of the year made buyers reluctant to enter into contracts; hence the importations of these goods have been comparatively small, and this has had the beneficial effect of lightening many of the old stocks, and bringing them into their present moderate dimensions.

In hewn goods, deals, battens, boards, &c., we find a similar reduction compared with last year's stock; thus at the end of 1881 the total stock of all kinds was 29,859 standards, while at the end of the preceding year it was 53,664 standards, showing here a reduction in stock of not less than 24,005 standards, or nearly one-half, so that, even taking the present quiet state of the trade into consideration, the outlook is hopeful from a seller's point of view, especially as the weather in the various provinces in Canada continues to be from the most recent advices of an almost unprecedented character, little snow having fallen and the task of getting out logs in the forests being thereby hampered to a large extent. In addition to all this there is the increased cost of provisions, and the advance in wages which have now to be paid to the lumbermen.

These facts all point towards an advance in prices upon those now current, and buyers must be prepared to pay prices for Canadian goods which a couple of years ago would have appeared absurd. Owing to the causes referred to above, there is a very strongly marked decline in the extent of the importation of wood goods into Liverpool and the other ports in the Mersey, the tonnage employed only amounting to about 360,000 tons in 1881, as compared with 485,000 tons in 1880, 326,000 tons in 1879, and 373,000 tons in 1878. This 360,000 tons is distributed amongst the great timber shipping districts as follows:—Quebec and Montreal, 83,000 tons; St. John, N. B., 70,000 tons; Miramichi and other spruce deal shipping ports, 81,000 tons; pitch pine ports, 68,000 tons; and the Baltic, White Sea ports, etc., 59,000 tons.

With this moderate importation merchants have not experienced the effects of over-crowded quays to the extent that has been the case in former years, and which has caused so much loss and expense in endeavoring to keep the vessels discharging without incurring the cost of demurrage. This, in some measure, was owing to the use made of part of the system of new docks opened during the past summer, which may sometimes afford relief to the ordinary timber docks, when any occasions of emergency present themselves, though it would be unwise to assume that any regular accommodation will be given to the timber trade, as these magnificent constructions are intended chiefly for the use of the great transatlantic lines of steamers plying from this port.

The import of Canadian yellow pine timber from Quebec for the past year was 29,634 logs, as against 48,147 in 1880, 25,253 logs in 1879, and 25,100 logs in 1878; and from St. John, N. B., only 1,140 logs, compared with 2,228 logs in 1880, and 2,631 logs in 1879. This is about an average quantity of Quebec wood, but so far as the St. John, N. B., pine timber is affected it shows a steady decline, which is owing solely to the over-increasing scarcity of this favourite wood. The import of Quebec pine deals has been much less than that of 1880, the relative quantities being 1,530,000 pieces, against 2,040,000 pieces of the preceding year, but the increase in consumption has again shown how yellow pine in the form of deals is taking the place of log timber, for the consumption has not only swallowed up the whole of the past year's import, but has made an inroad into the old stock of 1880 to the extent of about 4,000 Petersburg standards. The importations of spruce deals from St. John, N. B., and the various other New Brunswick and Nova Scotian ports, show a considerable decrease from 1880, when the quantity was about 6,300,000 pieces, whilst during the past year about 4,900,000 pieces were imported. This shows a large decrease at first sight, but it must be remembered that the import of 1880 was excessive, and the quantity is only a moder-

ate one, being as nearly as possible the same as that of 1879.

The stock of these goods on hand now is only about one-half of that of last year at this time, and this fact, together with the reports from St. John, N. B., and other deal-making districts, of continued mild weather, which prevents saw-logs being got out of the woods, makes this article, at the prices asked for it, appear one of the safest in the market to purchase now.

There has been a considerable reduction in the consumption of Canadian oak logs, which is, however, balanced by the increased quantity of oak shipped from the United States, and cut into sizes suitable for railway wagon building, and as this branch of business has increased to such an extent that not less than 305,000 cubic feet has been sold since the commencement of the past year, it is palpable that it must greatly affect the price of the old-fashioned shipments from Quebec, seeing that at present these goods sawn ready to size and of prime quality, can be bought at less rates than the oak in the log.

Pitch pine timber has been imported very freely, and the arrival of vessels with this wood on board may be said to have continued without cessation from the first day of the year to the last, the steady increase in this trade being shown as follows:—In 1879, about 39,000 tons of shipping were employed, in 1880 about 56,000 tons, and in 1881 about 70,000 tons. With this continued pressure upon the market prices have ruled low throughout the past year, and this state of things is likely to continue so long as the pressure to sell for arrival is so visible and the stocks on hand so large. In hewn timber the stock now is 510,000 cubic feet, and sawn timber and deals 471,000 cubic feet, say nearly 1,000,000 cubic feet of all kinds, as against about 630,000 feet at the end of 1880, and, as the import season for this wood is now again commencing, there is little prospect for any immediate rise.

The importation of Baltic timber has been so small during the past year that the comparison between it and that of the previous year is most noteworthy. During 1880 the quantity of fir timber imported into Liverpool was 33,700 logs; in 1881 it amounted only to 8,200 logs, roughly speaking, one-fourth. So far as this port is concerned, we can only look upon the prices asked for red and white fir as being altogether out of proportion to the merits of the wood, when compared with its rivals.

## STILL APPROVED.

We have received the following letter, which speaks for itself:—

To the Editor of the *Canada Lumberman*:  
GENTLEMEN,—Please send your paper, the CANADA LUMBERMAN, to the enclosed addresses. I can get quite a number more subscribers, as it is a very useful paper.

I am yours respectfully,  
C. WEBSTER.

Lion's Head, Feb. 3, 1882.

THE value of the lumber cut yearly on the Pacific coast, at the rate of £10 per 1,000 feet at the port or place of shipment, is \$6,000,000. A thousand years would not suffice to exhaust the giant woodlands extending from Alaska to Santa Cruz, so that on a very rough estimate this portion of the resources of the Pacific slope is worth at least \$6,000,000,000.

THE *Cincinnati Gazette* says there is now at the Public Landing in this city a steamboat of large size, built for the purpose of developing a new enterprise, which, if successful, will add to the long list of American exportable produce. The boat is supplied with machinery for the purpose of grinding and compressing tanbark. She will be run up the Tennessee River, where bark is obtainable. There the bark will be taken on board, ground, compressed, and packed in kegs or half barrels, and in that shape shipped to Europe. Bark is now brought to market in bulk and handled at great expense, and cannot be shipped to Europe at all. It is needed in that country to enable tanners to compete with American manufacturers in the production of leather. The compressing of cotton has greatly reduced the cost of transportation, and it is this principal that is to be applied to the tanbark business.

## MICHIGAN FOREST FIRES.

DETROIT, Feb. 10.—The Michigan Commissioner of Insurance reports that the losses of 1881 exceed those of 1880 by \$500,000. Only twenty stock companies had losses in the burned districts, aggregating \$101,942.00, which has been paid, nearly half of it by one company, the Watertown, N. Y. The two mutual companies of Huron, Sanila, and Tuscola counties had about \$80,000 losses, none of which have been paid. It is estimated that the property losses of persons who applied to the Fire Relief Commission for aid amount to \$2,138,820, or over \$200,000 less than those occasioned by the forest fires of 1871. It is probably however, that when full statistics are collected, the fires of last fall will be found to exceed in damage those of 1871 by many thousand dollars. There are one hundred companies of other States doing business in Michigan, whose aggregate capital is \$45,719,280; reduction of assets, \$2,392,937.65; admitted assets, \$112,935,346.47; liabilities, \$31,380,246.23; surplus as regards policy-holders, \$77,274,360.24; surplus over capital, \$31,555,100.24; risks written in Michigan, \$139,891,998.59; premiums on risks in Michigan, \$1,675,853.06; losses incurred on above, \$1,111,168.19; losses paid, \$1,091,956.52. There are only two Canadian companies doing business in this State, the British American Assurance Company of Toronto, and the Western Assurance Company of Toronto. The 1881 statement of the latter is not yet received, but the former has a capital deposited in the United States of \$200,000, and its Michigan business for 1881 amounted to \$1,588,301 in risks, \$27,078 received for premiums, \$17,569.03 losses incurred, and \$3,959.98 losses paid.

THE *Montreal Witness* says the lumbermen are pushing operations vigorously in the vicinity of Lake Kazizakichiwogamog.

It is now thought that the Maine lumber cut on the Penobscot waters the present season will not be far from 100,000,000 feet. Last year the total reached 150,000,000. There is, however, said to be an overstock of 60,000,000 of old logs.

END SPLITTING OF LOGS AND PLANKS.—Logs and plank split at the ends because the exposed surface dries faster than the inside. If muriatic acid be saturated with lime and applied to the ends like whitewash, the chloride of calcium formed attracts the moisture and prevents the splitting.

A CALAIS correspondent says on Wednesday morning last, the Custom House door was surrounded by teams from the St. John River. They were being bonded, for the purpose of working in the Maine woods, for which they started as soon as they had complied with the Government requirements.

THE *Northwestern Lumberman* says the New York Central Railway Company has supplied a train of new lumber cars, which arrived at Tonawanda, N. Y., recently. They are so constructed that they can be utilized for either lumber or cattle. Other roads would do well to take pattern after the Central, and thus greatly benefit their patrons, and facilitate the business of lumber shipping, which would prove to the former's pecuniary advantage.

THE *Moncton Times* says reports that have reached us show that the season so far has been good and favorable to economical logging. The lack of snow till January prevented hauling operations, but the weather was most favorable for cutting and yarding. Since the snow has come, hauling has been prosecuted vigorously, there not being sufficient snow to impede the work, as is often the case. Should the season continue steady the result will be very favourable.

MRS. PARTINGTON SAYS, don't take any of the quack nostrums, as they are regimental to the human system; but put your trust in Hop Bitters, which will cure general dilapidation, costive habits and all comic diseases. They saved Isaac from a nevere extract of tripod. They are the *re plus unum* of medicines.—*Boston Globe*.