

THE MICHIGAN FIRES.

There has been just issued from the signal service office at Washington a report on the forest fires in Michigan in 1881. It is a comprehensive and well prepared work, filled with many facts which are unfamiliar to the reader living in the vicinity of the devastated district. Our readers are familiar with the main facts of that seething, devastating, life and property destroying conflagration which swept over four counties in three days, but they are possibly not so well acquainted with the facts in detail or the causes to which the fires were attributable. The work just published says the extent and irresistible power thereof are largely due to atmospheric conditions which are considered worthy of explanation in the work alluded to, and the which conditions were so favorable to the spread of the flames, which destroyed two million dollars worth of property and 125 lives in the territory lying between Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron, and Tuscola, Sanilac and Lapeer counties. Although the fires had been burning more or less extensively for several days previously, the work of devastation and death did not begin until Monday, the 4th day of September, at which time the flames were driven by strong, changing winds that grew to be gales as the flames advanced. The spreading of the flames in Sanilac county are put down as the direct result of the passage of a thunder storm over the peninsula. Of course, to be added to the atmospheric causes alluded to, are natural and local causes, which are mainly responsible for the destruction, in the shape of a protracted drought, dried and withered grasses, acres of "slashings," dry pine tree tops, and other inflammable material. But the causes and the history of the forest fires, which are of so recent occurrence, is familiar, and need no repetition here. We all remember when the appalling disaster became fully known, how the great, generous heart of the nation throbbed in response to the urgent demands of the grief-stricken people, whose homes had been desolated. And while it is less than two years since the fiery scourge levelled everything in its track, the waste places have all been repaired, and through the munificent liberality of a generous nation offering the people are actually in better condition to-day than previous to the horror, and possibly better off financially than if the fire had never occurred. But outside of this there is a dark mantle still hovering over that burned district which it will take many years to efface, and which the liberality of the people, no matter how munificent, can never entirely obliterate. The memories of the loved and lost still linger with those remaining, and the impress of sorrow still marks the downcast, weary expression of the mother weeping for her little ones, but who can find no consolation or comfort. The work just issued by the government which has called for these reflections, is a brief, detailed history of the forest fires of Michigan which in after years will be valuable for reference because of the minuteness of detail.—*Lumberman's Gazette.*

COMPETING PINES.

The *Northwestern Lumberman* says:—It is the common hope of Southern lumbermen that the exhaustion of northern white pine will be a speedy process, for on this, they think, largely depends the rise of the lumber industry of the South. After many of the present owners of yellow pine and the mills for sawing it, are in their graves, the Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota saws will continue chewing up the virgin pine in those states; yet the increasing use of the southern variety does not depend on the extinction of its white rival. At the rate white pine is now being worked up, it cannot be many years before the better qualities will have become less plentiful in the market, and resort to other woods for finishing purposes will become more general than now. Gradually, as the hardwoods will have to be more and more depended on for finishing, yellow pine will increasingly enter into use, but it will be along time to come before yellow pine, for coarser and commoner uses, will not have to compete with the white and lighter, consequently more portable, variety. For such purposes it will win a place mainly on account of its strength and durability, where such qualities are most desirable.

Chips.

THERE are 340 kinds of timber on the North American continent. The Dominion of Canada has 90 varieties—60 east of the Rocky Mountains, and 30 on the western slope.

THE *Winnipeg Commercial* says that a gentleman, just returned from the Shell River country, says that Mr. Crerar has nearly three million feet of lumber cut, which will be floated down to Brandon. On Bud Tail Creek, Nelson & Mackenzie have taken out about the same amount.

A DISASTROUS forest fire is raging on the Marshfield Plains, Mass. Three thousand acres of wood land have already been destroyed. Two hundred men are unable to control it. Several dwellings are in danger. It is supposed it caught from a match thrown among the leaves by a smoker.

THE *Waukegan* correspondent of the *Midland Free Press* says that the large addition to the mill has been completed, and it is expected that the manufacture of lumber will be on a much more extensive scale than previous seasons. The *Waukegan* mill is the finest in the Georgian Bay district.

THREE RODES brought to Pulaski, Tenn., lately a monstrous burl that is on a log six feet long and three feet in diameter. It extends three-fourths of the way around the log, measures 16 feet in circumference, and weighs 4,500 pounds. It was found in Marshall county, and it took a six-horse team to haul it here. As such burls are valuable for veneers, Mr. Rodes thinks he has struck a bonanza.

THE *Timber Trades Journal* says:—It is now generally believed that the Government is about to authorize the Dock Company to so amend its charter as to enable it to substitute a wooden dock for the proposed stone dock at St. John's, Newfoundland. The *Colonies and India* says: "Mr. Simpson, the American patentee of the wooden class of dock, has arrived there for the purpose of taking the matter in hand."

THE *Monetary Times* says that the Amherst, N. S. wood-working firm of Rhodes, Curry & Co. are still adding to their premises, their latest addition being a building 60 feet by 30 for store rooms and show room. They make a specialty of church furniture, altars, and also hardwood mantels, veneered doors, etc., etc. They are making a second shipment to Newfoundland of a lot of doors, newell-posts, mantels and wainscoting.

THE *Northwestern Lumberman* says:—The tide is already flowing into Manitoba, and before the season closes it is certain that that province, as well as the Northwestern territories, will have received a large addition to their populations. Judging from Winnipeg advices, though there will be a vast amount of lumber wanted in that region during the season of activity in building, there will be plenty offered both from home and American sources of supply.

THE *Lumberman's Gazette* says:—There is an undoubted inclination among the lumber manufacturers whose product has heretofore been tributary to Chicago to ship their lumber direct to the points of consumption. The prospect for bearing or controlling the market on the part of the dealers, who are not manufacturers in that city, therefore is growing beautifully less, and will probably continue to become more improbable, if the determination of the manufacturers alluded to above persisted in.

Although millions of feet of timber per year have for many seasons been taken from the northern forests of New Hampshire, it is stated that so rapid is the growth that there is probably an acreage of timber very much greater than that of twenty-five years ago, land which at that time was used for tillage being now entirely covered with a healthy growth of small trees, which in a few years will be placed on the market; while to the west, stretching toward Moosilauke, and to the east, as well as up to the "east branch" of the Penigowasset, which, it is expected, the new railroad will follow in its course to the Fabian House, lie thousands of acres of heavy "old growth" timber, which will prove to some one a greater bonanza than many a western silver mine.

WE have received the first number of *The Lumber Trade Review and Builders' Journal* published in New York. It is full of valuable information, is well arranged and neatly printed.

THE *Bellefonte Ontario* of May 2nd says:—The Grover has cleared with lumber for Oswego from the Eagle mill. The Grant and Belle of Hamilton, are still loading at this dock. The rate to Oswego on lumber from this mill is now only 80c. per M.

THE *Canadian Pacific Railway Register* says: The cost of lumber consumed by the road was over ten millions of dollars. Sixteen million feet of this lumber were brought from Minneapolis and it cost in Minneapolis \$300,000, which altogether with the duty and freight would make it cost over \$350,000. Six million feet of lumber were brought from Keewatin. This cost at the rate of \$25 per thousand feet. Material to the value of \$250,000 has been brought to the recently erected storehouse adjoining the works.

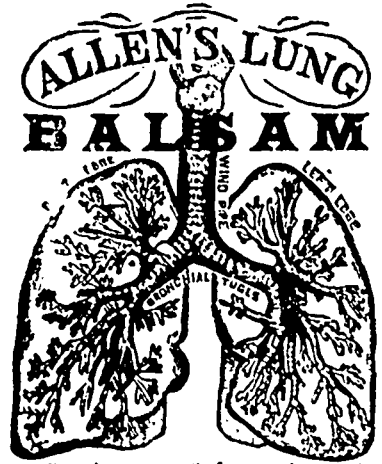
THE *Mail* says that owners of lumber vessels found it difficult to express their indignation toward the Alcona and tow for cutting the rate on lumber to Buffalo. Several charters at \$2.50 were nearly made, with every prospect that that would be the opening rate, when the Alcona sailed in and accepted \$2. The action would not cause so much disgust but for the fact that the Alcona was chartered to carry iron ore all season, and only wanted one cargo, in her eagerness to get which, she spoiled the chances of those who are regularly in the lumber business.

THE *Lumberman's Gazette* says:—If mill men all over the country would adopt the same system as those of Muskegon, and run their establishments only ten hours a day, it would be better for themselves and all concerned. Less hours, greater care in production, and economy in many places where extravagance usually prevails, will produce a cleaner, finer grade of lumber, and prevent any material reduction in the mill profits. This policy will also maintain prices, not only in the better class of lumber produced, but also in reducing the cost and proportionately thereby increasing the demand.

Mr. H. C. Fraser, inspector of ties and timber for the C. P. R., says there is piled along the Thunder Bay Branch, waiting for transport to the west to be used in construction, over 1,750,000 ties, besides piles, lumber and other materials to be used in construction. Some 3,000 men were engaged during the winter in getting out these material. These will now go out on their homesteads, or west to work on construction. The ties are worth 30 cents each delivered on the railway. They are of good quality. The value of the materials now on the track is about \$1,000,000. Materials to the value of \$300,000 are to be delivered.

THE *Canadian Pacific Railway Register* says: Fifteen miles east of the Red River at Emerson the line of continuous forests is reached—woods of almost impenetrable thickness—comprising all the varieties of the Lake Superior region. West of the Red river to the Pembina mountains the various streams which drain this region sustain a fine growth of oak, poplar, elm, cottonwood and ash-leaved maple, Southern Manitoba being much more heavily timbered than the central or northern portion of it. Timber culture on the prairie is already carried on to a considerable extent, and in a few years quite a large quantity will be raised on "tree claims."

THE *Northwestern Lumberman* says:—In the county of Russell, Manitoba, 275 miles north-west of Winnipeg, 2,000,000 feet of lumber has been sawed and sold to the settlers for cash during the last two years, at an average price of \$30 a thousand. This year 6,000,000 feet of logs are being taken out for local consumption. The operations connected therewith have employed men at \$30 a month, with board, and for teams a corresponding rate is paid. Nearly all the supplies for the camps have to be teamed from Brandon, 200 miles distant, the teams earning \$6 to \$8 a day. These facts illustrate the energy with which settlement and improvement are being prosecuted in the Canadian Northwest.



(This engraving represents the Lungs in a healthy state.)

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