

It was then, as it is now, an essentially necessary feature of the profitable prosecution of this Trade, that it should be carried on where water communication was easily attained. The many rapid rivers rising in the Lebanon range, and passing into the Mediterranean Sea, on the Syrian Coast, furnished the necessary facilities for this purpose, and no doubt the Phœnician raftsmen of that day were as well posted in all the mysteries of the *drive*, as his Canadian successors. This ancient Lumber traffic had other elements in common with that of more modern days. Though carried on under the burning sun of Syria, the lofty mountain range of Lebanon experiences all the rigors of a Canadian winter, and to this day it is no uncommon thing to find the sites of the ancient forest inaccessible in the month of June, in consequence of the quantity of snow still on the ground.

The trade in Lumber has always been of importance. Ancient Egypt, the Granary of the then known world, consumed large quantities of Wood, and as it does not produce Timber, the great proportion of its supplies were imported. Italy, the next centre of civilization, dealt largely in Timber, and in fact it may be said to have been a large item in the commerce of civilization, in ancient as well as in modern times.

The variety of Timber which constitutes the Staple Trade of Canada is known as the Pine or Fir. It is widely diffused over the surface of our Globe, and is common alike to the wilds of Siberia, the slopes of the Himalayas, the isles of the South Sea, the plains of South America, the acclivities of the golden Sierras of California, and the mountains of Canada. It is common in Northern Europe, widely diffused over Asia, constitutes the principal Forest tree of America, and some of its varieties are to be found in Africa. In point of utility, the Pine, as a Forest tree, ranks next, if it is not superior to, the Oak. At any rate it is more extensively used, both in the arts and as an economical production. There are about twenty varieties of Pine; each marked by distinctive and well known peculiarities, but all having strongly defined affinities, so that it would be no easy matter to mistake that species furthest removed from the true Pine, for any other variety of Forest tree. One of the principal characteristics of the Pine family arises from the fact that they do not bear flat leaves, but a species of spines, which are however real leaves. They are chiefly, but not all evergreens, and the appearance of the tree, as well as the quality of the Timber, varies with the species, and also with the situation