

THE Canada Lumberman

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ADVERTISING RATES ON APPLICATION.

THE CANADA LUMBERMAN is published in the interests of the lumber, wood-working and allied industries, being the only representative in Canada of these important interests. It aims at giving full and timely information on all subjects touching these interests, and invites free discussion by its readers.

Special pains are taken to secure for publication in the WEEKLY LUMBERMAN the latest and most trustworthy market quotations throughout the world, so as to afford to the trade at home and abroad information on which it can rely in its operations. Subscribers will find the small amount they pay for the CANADA LUMBERMAN quite insignificant as compared with its value to them. There is not an individual in the trade, or specially interested in it, who should not be on our list, thus obtaining the present benefit and aiding and encouraging us to render it even more complete.

Advertisers will receive careful attention and liberal treatment. For manufacturing and supply firms wishing to bring their goods to the attention of owners and operators of saw and planing mills, wood-working factories, pulp mills, etc., the CANADA LUMBERMAN is undoubtedly the cheapest and most profitable advertising medium. Special attention is directed to "WANTED" and "FOR SALE" advertisements, which are inserted in a conspicuous position on front page of the Weekly Edition.

MILEAGE AND STUMPAGE CHARGES.

The new regulations imposed by the New Brunswick Government on Crown timber lands have now been in operation a year. It will be remembered that the annual charge was increased from \$4 to \$8 per square mile, and the stumpage dues on spruce, pine and fir saw logs from \$1 to \$1.25 per thousand feet, and on cedar from 80 cents to \$1.25. The result of the first year's operations has clearly shown that the advanced charges were imposed at an inopportune time, for the lumber industry of New Brunswick is now in a very depressed condition. With the high wages which have prevailed, and the fixed charges incident to the ownership and cutting of timber, the lumbermen find it almost impossible to operate at a profit.

A delegation representing the Lumbermen's Association recently waited on the Government to ask that the mileage on timber limits be reduced to the old rate of \$4 per mile, this rate to continue at least until the lumber market improves. It was pointed out that the higher charges were imposed after a few years of prosperity in the lumber trade, and at a time when the signs pointed to a reaction. Since then this condition has been realized, the present season being the most unsatisfactory that has been experienced for many years. It is most difficult to place a cargo of lumber in the British market, and, with the exception of the cargoes that were sold during the early spring, very few shipments will be made to that market.

The increased mileage charges represent about \$40,000 annually, while the stumpage increase amounts to approximately \$43,000. The total is not a large amount, but under existing conditions the lumbermen consider it a hardship to be compelled to pay the higher rates. As it is in the interest of the Govern-

ment as well as of the province that the saw and shingle mills should be operated, it is believed that the Government will at least accede to the request for a lower mileage charge.

RED CEDAR SHINGLE DIFFICULTIES.

The shingle mills of British Columbia, unlike those in Eastern Canada, can be operated the year round. The possible production is the daily capacity multiplied by the number of working days in the year. A comparatively small mill will, in the course of twelve months, produce a considerable quantity of shingles, and during a portion of this productive period the consumption of shingles is almost at a standstill. The large number of new mills which have been built within the last three years have a combined capacity greater than is generally supposed, and, taken in conjunction with the old established mills, the output has been greatly in excess of the demand. Overproduction has resulted in a demoralized market, prices having steadily weakened for some months past, until now they are at the point where the manufacturer's profit is entirely obliterated. This is all the more regrettable for the reason that the red cedar shingle is in popular favor and has always been in good demand. The North-West trade this year has been particularly brisk.

Various plans have been originated to maintain prices at a reasonable basis and prevent, if possible, serious loss to the trade. This has been found difficult of accomplishment. The large number of small mills were a great source of annoyance and even some of the larger manufacturers did not adhere to association prices, so that it soon became a question of price cutting to obtain orders, and there is now practically no standard prices. When business is brisk and orders plentiful, an association designed to regulate production and maintain prices may easily be kept together, but when heavy stocks are being carried for which there is little demand, many are apt to yield to the temptation to break away from all unity with confreres and endeavor to reduce the burden they are carrying even if at prices which represent no profit.

How best to handle the Ontario trade is a proposition to which the B.C. shingle manufacturers have given much consideration, without, apparently, arriving at a satisfactory solution. The appointment of five selling agents for the province was one of the plans inaugurated, but after a test it was found impracticable. Another proposition that has been considered is the appointment of a secretary through whose hands all orders for the Eastern trade should pass, he in turn to appoint district representatives where found advisable to do so. By some it is believed that such a plan might be successful, but others, remembering the fate of previous efforts, are skeptical.

We must confess that the immediate outlook for the B.C. shingle industry is not promising. It will probably pass through a period of reformation, during which time some of the weaker manufacturers may succumb. Some mills will be closed down and probably dismantled. Little money is likely to be made by either manufacturer or dealer. In the meantime the

market will expand and a year or two hence production and supply will get closer together and the business will once more be on a substantial footing. This forecast is not very acceptable to those who have invested their money in shingle plants, but it is a fair statement of the situation, all the more deplorable because brought about solely by the shingle manufacturers themselves rather than by trade depression. Too many persons, with no experience and little capital, sought to become rich through the operation of a shingle mill. The craze for shingle manufacturing has now, we hope, spent its force, and, disastrous as have been the results, a useful lesson may have been learned.

FIRE RANGING ON LICENSED LANDS.

The Government of the Province of Quebec are about to adopt new regulations looking to the better protection of timber lands from fire. Before finally adopting the new laws it was considered advisable to ascertain the views of the limit holders, for which purpose a meeting was held in Ottawa recently. The suggestions submitted to the meeting by the Government were:

First. To increase the fire tax on limit holders from 17½ cents to 25 cents per square mile.

Second. To increase the number of fire rangers from 65 to 100 for fire districts Nos. 1 and 2.

Third. To require lumbermen to pay the whole cost of extinguishing fires instead of one-half as at present.

The lumbermen agreed to the first and second suggestions, but claimed that the Government should continue to pay one-half the cost of extinguishing fires. The discussion on the subject brought up the question as to the relative merits of the Quebec system as compared with that existing in Ontario, and the opinion of many of the licensees strongly favored the method in force in Ontario. In this province the government charges no fire tax. The limit holder is allowed to name as many fire rangers as he considers necessary for the safe protection of his limits, the cost thereof being divided equally between the Government and the licensee. The rangers are selected by the licensees, but the Department of Crown Lands reserves the right to reject or remove any person who they consider unfit for the position. This system has provided very efficient protection, the limit holders fully realizing its benefits and availing themselves of its operation. The number of rangers employed on licensed territory has increased from thirty-seven in 1885 to two hundred and forty-four in 1903.

A comparison of the operation of the systems in the two provinces leads one to favor the Ontario system from the standpoint of both efficiency and economy. According to the last report of the Minister of Lands, Mines and Fisheries, the area of timber lands under license in the Province of Quebec was 62,730 square miles. The number of fire rangers on this territory was only seventy-two, whereas the fixed charges to be paid by license holders, according to the rate of 17½ cents per square