

## CANADIAN LUMBER.

CHICAGO, Sept. 9.—The lumbermen had a hearing before the Tariff Commission to-day. The Saginaw men and others had urged a duty of two dollars a thousand feet of lumber. Mr. Dean, of Chicago, a wholesale and retail dealer, took an opposite view. He could see no reason why a duty of two dollars a thousand feet should be paid on lumber from the neighboring Dominion; but he could see many reasons why there should be no such duty. The Saginaw men the other day had estimated their supply of lumber at only enough for ten years. If that were so, it was the part of prudence to draw from other sources. He himself was not in full sympathy with the idea that there was but ten years' supply of lumber on hand in Michigan, but still the supply was growing rapidly less. The "stumpage" men had formed combinations, and the effects was to "bull" the price of lumber, which had been advancing for the last two or three years out of proportion to former years. He had been in the business many years, and up to the time of the fire lumber had cost him an average of \$14.46 per thousand. The year after the fire the rebate which was allowed on iron, glass, etc., not having extended to lumber, it cost him \$16.80 per thousand, so that the lumbermen made a profit of over two dollars per thousand by the great fire. In 1873 it fell to \$12.72, in 1875 to \$11.78, and in 1876 to \$9. It remained at about the same figure from 1877 to 1879, but in 1880 a little "boom" started, the stumpage being confined to a small number of owners, and the average cost of the lumber in that year was \$11.62; in 1881, \$13.92, and in 1882, so far, between \$14 and \$15. That was the direction which things had been taking in consequence of the manipulation of stumpage. He could see no earthly reason why the American lumber interest should have any protection. Corn, pork, and beans were what entered into the lumber business; Illinois produced them. As to the difference in the cost of labour he had no faith in it. He did not see why a fool across the imaginary line would work for \$15 a month when he could cross that line and get \$20 a month. He believed that the labour in Canada was as well paid as in the United States. Besides, the Canadians had to pay at least \$1 more a thousand for freight on lumber than the Michigan lumbermen. Another advantage which the Michigan men had was that they could utilize their slabs and sawdust. With these advantages on the side of the American lumberman he could not see why they should be further protected by a duty of \$2 a thousand.

NEW YORK, Sept. 10.—To-day's *World* says: "The duty on Canadian lumber, as Mr. Dean, of Chicago, showed yesterday, is one of the greatest scandals of the whole tariff. The Michigan lumbermen had testified before the commission that the supply of Michigan lumber would be exhausted in ten years at the present rate of diminution, and they had at the time insisted that a duty should be retained for the purpose of restricting the importation of Canadian lumber and of confining American buyers to the rapidly dwindling American supply. A more greedy, selfish, and scandalous demand was never made. Europeans look with horror upon the recklessness with which we are using up our national inheritance, and wonder that there is not enough foresight in the country to adopt some measure for keeping a constant supply of forest timber. Our children will know what we have thrown away, and while the Canadian forests can yield us the product of all products that it is to our advantage to import as much of as we can, since many generations cannot reproduce the timber which one reckless generation can destroy, the men who profit for the time by this recklessness are allowed and encouraged to argue in behalf of a duty which insures that the denudation of our forests shall soon at a more breakneck pace than ever.

## THE PROTECTION OF TIMBER LIMITS.

The following letter appeared in the *Toronto Globe* :—

SIR,—Among the practical results of the Forestry Congress has been the directing of public attention to the timber supply of the Dominion and the United States. We find

from the official reports now being issued of Professor Sargeant, the United States special commissioner, that, practically, white pine can no longer be looked for in quantity except in five States, and in these he gives the following estimates of available standing timber, and the cut for 1881 :—

	Still standing. Feet.	Cut for 1881. Feet.
Maine.....	475,000,000	128,000,000
Pennsylvania.....	1,800,000,000	280,000,000
Wisconsin.....	41,000,000,000	2,100,000,000
Michigan.....	35,000,000,000	4,400,000,000
Minnesota.....	6,100,000,000	540,000,000
	84,375,000,000	7,658,000,000

In other words the results of his investigations show that, taking into account all white pine timber whether profitably accessible or not, there now remains less than twelve years' supply; and what deductions follows from these facts? It is not difficult to see that the demand instead of lessening will, with continuing prosperity, and enlarging population there, still further increase, and that very soon the Canadian source of supply must be looked to. We have been told by some lumbermen that there is still a fifty years' supply in Canada. That, however, does not take into consideration the certainty, ten or fifteen years hence, of this immense United States demand, which, added to that from Great Britain and South America and to our own local consumption, will soon tell on our forests. It is very doubtful if, in view of these facts, we have twenty five to thirty years' supply. It may be said that the pine tree is constantly growing, but very few are aware that it takes between seventy-five and one hundred years for a pine to attain a merchantable size sufficiently large for square timber. But this is not all. The general opinion among lumbermen prevails that more pine has been burned by forest fires than has been cut by the lumberman's axe. These fires are the more serious in this respect that small as well as large trees are burned, and that the soil beneath them is largely ruined by the vegetable mould being as it were eaten away. The question as to what we are to do under the circumstances is very grave. The provinces of Ontario and Quebec at present derive a large annual revenue from timber lands, and therefore have an important interest in seeing that our forests are not exhausted, and that these sources of revenue are not gradually cut off. The Dominion at large, again, is interested in continuing in future years our export trade in timber and lumber, and so conserving our forests that the sources of supply will remain undiminished. If we further recall the facts that no industry in the Dominion requires as much private and banking capital, employs as many men and is as widely distributed, as an industry, over the whole Dominion as that of lumber and its products, we see forcibly how the question of the conservation of our forests is one which must interest every section of the country. How is this question, then, to be settled?

The Forestry Congress discussed the subject of forest fires and made recommendations, some of which, I trust, will be taken up by Parliament. But has the Congress gone far enough? Even if forest fires are entirely stopped, still the supply of white pine remaining is insufficient to carry us over very many years unless steps are taken to promote the growth of the younger trees. The true and most feasible plan would seem to be to strictly preserve all seedling pines from injury, to prevent the cutting down of any under about fifteen inches in diameter at the base, and to curtail the leases of limits to lumbermen to a fixed period of five or seven years, after which the limit should have a rest of twenty to twenty five years. This rest would give an opportunity to the younger pines to attain a merchantable size, and if followed under a regular system over the whole country in which pine timber limits occur, could be arranged in such a way as to afford a continuous supply of lumber in the future and a perpetual source of revenue to the Governments of our different Provinces. The grave objections to the present systems are that they subject the public lands to unrestricted waste for just such length of time as the lumbermen find it profitable, without any regard to the future, and that they place the Governments in the position of owners desirous of making the largest possible

immediate return, regardless of the impoverishment of their possessions in the near future. Now if the regulations for the prevention of forest fires be made more stringent and a system of police protection inaugurated with a view to the detection and punishment of offenders, and if, following this, the forests are, under an organized plan, given periodical rests, there is no reason why the lumber trade should not continue in the far future, as it is now, a large and important industry.

Yours truly,  
A. T. DRUMMOND.

Montreal, Sept. 2, 1882.

## FOREST FIRES.

The *Montreal Herald*, of Aug. 23rd, in an article on the Forestry Congress then in session says:—"One topic broached on Monday, and judged of such commanding importance as to head the list of subjects to be taken up, namely, Forest Fires, was by general consent, held for yesterday, the members, doubtless, feeling that, in a matter of such magnitude, of such vital interest to the Republic and Dominion alike, and involving so many delicate questions, and such a variety of conflicting opinions, it would be well—not exactly to "sleep over it," but to discuss the matter conversationally before dealing with it formally. The wisdom of this postponement was fully proved by the tone of the debate when the topic was brought up yesterday. Members had evidently come prepared to discuss the whole question in a practical spirit, and it was simply astonishing to observe the concurrence of opinions as speaker after speaker unfolded his views. Some of the statistics offered will, we are sure, be startling to the general public. Those which show the enormous value of the forest's products, eclipsing that of every other industry, are second in startling interest to those representing the fearful waste which has been going on for years, and the means of checking which have yet to be devised. By a coincidence which is more than curious, for it is as nearly demonstrated as could be, those who took part in the debate one after another placed the value of woods destroyed by fire at ten times that of timber felled by the lumbermen. One gentleman, it is true, modestly alleged that for every tree another was burned, but this was generally put aside, as not even an approximation to the actual facts.

The causes of these fires were gone into to some extent, among those specified being the carelessness of hunters and tourists, the ignorance of new settlers, the recklessness of shanty-men in some cases, and, though it is difficult to bring oneself to believe that such rascalities are frequent, the deliberate firing of the forest by lumbermen's employes with a view to providing themselves with the chance of work in the prospect of slack times. The remedy the Congress evidently felt was harder to get at than to ascertain the causes of the mischief. One suggestion, the appointment of a forest constabulary, paid by the Government or by the Government and the lumbermen jointly, met with general favor, and unanimous approval was stamped on a resolution offered by the Hon. Mr. Joly, to the effect that it was the duty of the Congress to press on the governments the necessity of taking precautions for the prevention of forest fires. Among the many sagacious suggestions offered by the President, the Hon. Mr. Loring, United States Commissioner of Agriculture, there was the excellent one of appointing a mixed committee of Canadian and American delegates to make this resolution effective.

## GOOD WORK.

The work of the American Forestry Congress recently held at Montreal, doubtless accomplished much good. This will eventually be realized, not so much in the direct benefits accruing from its deliberations as by the interest which it arouses and the attention it will call to matters of vital importance alike to Canada and this country. To the active lumberman whose energies are devoted to securing the most logs and making the most lumber that the character of the season and the extent of his resources will permit, the reading of essays on forestry; how most effectually to conserve them; the best methods of working timber lands in the interests of the holders, of the public, and of the

revenue; the duties of governments in regard to forestry; how to promote the extension of timber bearing lands in districts where timber is scarce, and how best to introduce it into treeless regions of the west; the protection of forests from fire; forests in relation to the water supply; utility of roadside planting, and the other kindred subjects which received the attention of this congress, may seem but visionary and impracticable, but there are important considerations involved in all these questions and it is only by agitation and persistent work that the worthy aims in view can be successfully brought about. An appreciation of the importance of these matters and the necessity of caring for the great interests involved can be secured only by forcing them before the people through such efforts as are being made by this congress.—*Lumberman's Gazette*.

## SIBERIAN FORESTS.

Some examinations have recently been made by exploring parties, of the character of the immense forests of Siberia. The most important timber stretch begins a little south of Dudino, and still far north of the Arctic Circle, the pines become tall. Here is a veritable forest, the greatest the world has to show, extending with little interruption from the Ural to the sea of Ochotsk, or about 650 miles, and 4 times as much from east to west. This primeval forest of enormous extent is nearly untouched by the axe of the woodman or cultivator, but in many places devastated by great forest fires. The forests consist principally of cembro pine, valued for its seeds, enormous larches, the nearly awlshaped Siberian pine, the fir and scattered trees of the common pine. Most of these trees north of the Arctic Circle reach a large size, but are often far isolated from all others, gray and half dried up with age. The ground between the trees is covered with a labyrinth of fallen branches and stems which are frequently covered and almost concealed by luxuriant beds of mosses. The pines, therefore, lack the shaggy covering common in Sweden and the bark of the birches scattered through the pines is distinguished by an uncommon whiteness.

## FIRE-PROOF JOISTS.

A Philadelphian paper notes the use of wood joists in the construction of a fire-proof building in that city, on Walnut street, above Fourth. It says that, strange as such a statement may appear, it is a matter of fact that many New England builders, contend that the wood joists, encased in plaster, are proof against any ordinary fire, and for many reasons are much preferred by them to the ordinary regulation fire proof joists. The joists are "stripped" on the outside, and over these strips irons are run, and on these the plaster is spread. The theory is that in an ordinary fire these joists thus treated will be fire-proof, and only when the fire has reached such a fury that the building must go anyway will they be affected. Here comes in one of the advantages claimed for them. When a building is being burned by a furious fire the iron joists expand and crush out the walls and do other damage. The wood joists would simply be burned up without injuring the walls at all.

An Ottawa dispatch says:—During the week ending the 2nd of September there passed Calumet slide 4,616 pieces of timber; Madawaska 5,935 pieces of timber and 5,183 sawlogs. There left Ottawa on the 6th and 7th of Sept. lumber two rafts containing 3,661 pieces of white pine and 2,004 pieces of red pine.

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