

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE monthly returns of the Board of Trade, of Toronto show exports in lumber for month of Aug. 1891 to be \$83,038 as against \$62,822 for the same month last year; an increase of \$20,216. The exports in the products of the forest in 1878 were \$19,511,575, and these had increased in 1890 to \$26,179,136 showing a growth in the lumber trade in Canada that is far from discouraging.

LEARY, the log rafter has made a reputation for himself in the success that attended his work in rafting large quantities of logs from New Brunswick to New York. But behold a greater than Leary has made himself known, and we are now told that Lock, Moore & Co., of Westlake, La., will try the experiment next season of rafting logs to England from Galveston. "The attempt" says a lumber contemporary "may seem too much of a risk for the amount of the prospective return. It has been demonstrated, however, that large rafts can be successfully towed on the ocean, but whether they can be made strong enough to withstand the hardships of such a long voyage, remains to be discovered. The greater the risk, the larger the profit, if the plunge is made on the right side."

THE collector of customs at New York recently wrote to the Treasury Department at Washington, in regard to the cancellation of export bonds under the departmental instructions, where the duty does not exceed \$100, upon presentation of a bill of lading without requiring the production of a foreign bill of lading. He pointed out the provisions of the recent reciprocity treaty with Spain, and the possibility that Canadian lumber exported from the United States may be entered in ports of the Spanish West India Islands as lumber of the United States. He enquired if, in the opinion of the department, the waiver of the requirement to procure foreign landing certificates would tend to a breach of comity towards a friendly power. Acting Secretary Spalding has replied that the department does not apprehend that the Government of Spain will construe as unfriendly the regulations referred to, as it applies equally to all exports made by the drawback of duties.

WORK on the Manchester ship canal in England is being pushed ahead with all energy. Its completion, which is expected next year, may have an important influence on the lumber trade of this continent. The calculation is, when the canal is opened, that by bringing timber ships straight to Manchester, instead of unloading them at Liverpool as much as seven shillings per ton will be saved in the carriage. The eastern portion of England forms the market for the Baltic white woods, and that of the west is supplied with American woods. Manchester being some thirty miles inland will most probably produce a redistribution of area and will send the American woods further east than they have hitherto gone, and this, if carried to the extent anticipated by the supporters of the canal, will effect in no slight degree the timber trade in America, Norway, and Sweden. The demand for the Baltic woods will decrease and that for American woods will increase to a corresponding extent simply because it will be possible at a cheaper rate to place the latter in the markets hitherto supplied with the former.

THE statement is made that cedar railway ties are being imported at Cleveland from Canada at a considerable undervaluation and an investigation has been ordered by the custom's authorities. In all lines of business conscience seems to come to a dead stop when the government of a country can be defrauded. Reference need not be made to instances as glaring in both kind and extent as the Tammany frauds of some years

since across the border, or our own revelations at Ottawa and Quebec just now. Perhaps to these, however, we must attribute the lesser peccadillos like cedar post undervaluations or the case of a woman from Windsor of a week ago, who was discovered in the act of bringing over from Detroit, carefully concealed beneath her petticoats, a bag containing a few brace of chickens and several dozen eggs, and who coolly admitted she had been doing this kind of thing for years and selling the stock to a local grocer. These are poor arguments for the removal of a custom's line between the two countries; the morals of both Yank and Canuck would at the same time be improved by the removal; and would not trade and commerce experience a relief by virtue of the freer breathing?

THE first fruits of Adam Brown's visit to the West Indies, so far as the lumber trade is concerned, are shown in a shipment of lumber a fortnight ago from Montreal to Kingston, Jamaica by E. H. Lemay of Montreal. Mr. Lemay says plainly that this shipment is the direct outcome of the Jamaica exhibition. It consists of 750,000 feet of lumber, and he was placed in direct communication with the firm to whom he made the sale through writing to Mr. Brown. If the first experiment is successful Mr. Lemay will continue to export to Jamaica. Other lumbermen will watch with interest the result of the Montreal experiment. Mr. Brown in his official report of his trip to Jamaica says, "a large and profitable trade can, if properly attended to, be done in lumber. Most of the supplies have hitherto been obtained from the United States, the large proportion of which is supplied to that country by Canada and culled there and sent to different tropical countries, Jamaica and other British West India Islands among the rest." White pine Mr. Brown says is in good demand. Likely difficulties in regard to freight rates were anticipated by Mr. Brown, but his efforts to have this question satisfactorily settled are hardly likely to prove futile. The experiment of Mr. Lemay will furnish practical information on the question.

MR. PHIPPS, forest commissioner for the Province, is untiring in his study and investigations on the subject of forestry. In his last report he refers to the indifference to the question in America in contrast with Europe. Here, on condition of the lumberman, paying the authorities a certain amount, he is allowed to cut the timber of the forest at his pleasure. In Europe, on the other hand, the wood buyer is carefully instructed as to what portion he may clear or thin, while, as soon as the ground is ready, it is again planted or the gaps filled. Two reasons for the American practice exist: (1) Farm land was needed. This reason is not now valid, as the pine land now left is very largely too poor for agriculture. (2) Chiefly the timber could be sold. "Matters have now come to pretty much the following condition: This generation, say after 30 years, will have timber enough, though it will have to use much wood hitherto thought unfit. After that there will be little good pine and not much good hardwood in our present forests. What is obtained will be brought from British Columbia and the forests of the southern states, while the generation following will exhaust these. Considering the well known benefit of keeping a large section of the country in forest—benefits which it is not the province of this paper to state—I would earnestly urge the people of America to consider how much more advantageous it would be at once and decidedly to say of certain large portions now in forest, "These shall not be cleared for settlement; "These shall be sacred to the tree." Once this determination is arrived at, the rest is easy. Nothing is more simple than to introduce and maintain a method of preservation, if populations demand it, and government fulfils its desires. It is often said, "We have a large proportion of forest land." But most of this is not good forests. Much has been run over by fire, much culled of every good stick by the lumbermen. But nearly all this might be renewed and made good, permanent forest, if the means were used."

OUR Ottawa correspondent reports a brief, but important interview with Mr. J. W. Todd, of Liverpool,

Eng., an extensive operator in Canadian lumber, who spent some time during the past month in the Ottawa district. Mr. Todd's talk has an amusing side, albeit in the interests of Canadian lumbermen it is not desirable that the funny vogue should be continued. In all seriousness the CANADA LUMBERMAN and the newspaper press in general have been telling of the fast depleting stocks of dry lumber on the piling grounds of Ottawa and other lumber sections. Everybody in this country, who knows anything of lumber movements, was aware of this fact. These conditions have been growing worse each month until within the past few weeks it has not been possible in some cases to fill the orders that have come to hand. The members of the trade across the sea have read these statements, but have thought that Canadian lumbermen were playing at bulls and bears; at least to use Mr. Todd's words, "that the statements made respecting the shortness of lumber were greatly exaggerated." Our conservative and long headed Englishmen were not going to be caught by a caper of this kind, and consequently orders from England have been circumscribed. "Seeing is believing." Mr. Todd has been able to learn for himself the true condition of affairs. He now knows that the statements made on this side of the Atlantic have been moderate in tone and in no measure have they partaken of an exaggerated character. Stocks in the old country, Mr. Todd tells us, are low and getting lower, and putting these two conditions together, Canada has reason to expect a prosperous trade with England, after another season's cutting is put in our mills.

It reads like a joke to say that bread can be produced from sawdust, but propositions seemingly as absurd have before to-day turned out to be stern realities. The question is one in which lumbermen are interested, for they have the sawdust to sell and will hardly object to so large a market as one comprised of the bread-eaters of the whole civilized world. The problem is at present under investigation by the United States Department of Agriculture. This is the account given by a Washington correspondent: Scientists are of the opinion that no good reason exists why this thing should not be entirely practicable. It is a well known fact familiar to all that starch is a substance extremely nutritious; in fact, it is nearly all nutriment. Well, starch and sawdust are the same thing. Sawdust, which is "cellulose," is of precisely the same chemical composition as starch. The two are expressed by the same chemical formula $C_6H_{10}O_5$ —that is, six parts of carbon, 10 of hydrogen and five parts of oxygen. These are the simple ingredients of either starch or sawdust. Scientific experimenters have been trying for a long time to find out a way to transform the one into the other. If they should succeed the discovery would be away ahead of the philosopher's stone in point of value. An inexhaustible source of food supply would at once be rendered available in the forests, in grass and even in straw and chaff. Hitherto chemistry has occupied itself almost wholly with taking things apart, in order to find out what they are made of; but now the science is directing its attention to putting elements together for the production of useful substances. Already it has succeeded in the artificial preparation of indigo, alizarin, and many other compounds. The aniline colors, obtained from coal tar and yet rivaling the most brilliant tints of the rainbow, are similarly produced. From coal tar in like manner are derived many valuable anti-fever medicines and soporifics. The prospects of this new science of putting elements together seem infinite, and the era of bliss may yet dawn which has been prophesied by the illustrious naturalist. Frederick Cohn, who says that all struggles for existence among men arising from want of food will be done away with when chemistry shall have learned to make starch from carbonic acid and water. Plants grow by doing just that, and it may, therefore, be said that farmers have been engaged since time immemorial in this very chemical industry. It would scarcely be surprising, then, if the farms of the country should be replaced at some time in the future by chemical laboratories.