

# THE Canada Lumberman

MONTHLY AND WEEKLY EDITIONS

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ADVERTISING RATES ON APPLICATION.

THIS 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 the inserted in a conspicuous position on front page of the Weekly Edition.

## ASSESSMENT OF LUMBER.

By some persons the basis upon which lumber may be assessed does not seem to be clearly understood. There is prevalent a idea that it is an injustice to assess all the lumber on land at the time the valuation is taken, inasmuch as the quantity may include almost the entire season's cut, the bulk or all of which may be shipped out within a comparatively short time.

It is doubtless within the rights of the assessor to tax all lumber in stock. Even if the lumber should be sold at time of assessment it is still assessable, for there must have been received for it the equivalent in cash or other asset which would be equally liable to assessment under the heading of personal property. If, however, there is any indebtedness against the lumber the amount of that indebtedness must be deducted from the valuation thereof.

Assessments are made upon personal property, representing the assets less liabilities. If, for instance, the assets of a particular company were twenty thousand dollars, and the liabilities fifteen thousand dollars, the amount upon which taxes would have to be paid would be only five thousand dollars. This regardless of the quantity of lumber on land.

According to the Assessment Act "Personal property shall include all goods, chattels, interest on mortgages, dividends on shares or stocks of banks and other incorporated companies, money, notes, accounts and debts at their actual value, income, and all other property except land and real estate." The person to be assessed is requested and can be compelled to furnish a statement of assets. If when received it is not satisfactory, an appeal

is taken to the Court of Revision, where both sides are given an opportunity of verifying their claims. On several occasions lumbermen have succeeded, through the Court of Revision, in obtaining a reduction of their lumber assessment, especially where it has been shown that the amount carried at time of fixing the valuation was exceptionally large. More can be accomplished in this direction by diplomacy than by antagonizing the Assessment Department, particularly in view of the admitted right to assess all lumber on hand.

## BAD DEBTS IN THE LUMBER TRADE.

It would be interesting to learn what percentage of earnings is set aside by the lumber trade each year as representing uncollectable debts. Though of late there have been few business failures, it is safe to say that the losses still approximate a considerable sum, as legitimate failures are not the most destructive agencies to be contended with. The suggestion, recently made to the publishers of this journal, that a "Black List" of lumber buyers be compiled, is significant.

There are a large number of responsible lumber dealers in Canada—men who have earned the confidence of the trade, and even though their resources in some cases may not be large, the manufacturer assumes little risk of loss in selling his lumber to them. Unfortunately, there are always to be found a few persons presuming to call themselves lumber buyers who possess neither money nor honesty, but who seek to profit by sharp practice. The character of the lumber business renders it susceptible to the unscrupulous acts of these so-called dealers, and during the past few years they have not decreased in number. It seems that no sooner has one of these polished individuals been brought to account and his plans thwarted than another appeared to take his place. Hence it is difficult to rid the trade of their existence. It is against this class of buyers that the lumber manufacturer would welcome some protection. Honest, energetic business men will sometimes become financially involved, but the person who is willing and anxious to meet his obligations is a source of small loss as compared to the trickster whose main object is to deceive.

The large manufacturer suffers very little through bad debts. His trade is concentrated and he is dealing usually with large firms whose standing is at all times readily obtainable. The manufacturer who ships in carload and broken lots is more liable to accept accounts of questionable character. He frequently has not the facilities for investigating promptly the financial responsibility of the prospective customer, and is also more disposed to overlook this necessary duty.

How to minimize the loss attributable to bad debts is a question that cannot readily be answered. Probably the formation of an association of the lumbermen of Canada would do much in that direction. Many mill men might also exercise greater discrimination in accepting orders from buyers. There are so many well known dealers in the country that there is little excuse for selling lumber to a person who cannot promptly give assurances

of his responsibility. Mill men should not hesitate to request the buyer of whose standing he knows nothing to satisfy him that settlement for the material will be made in due course.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Apropos of our remarks in last issue, congratulations are due to the newly-formed Government of British Columbia upon the stand taken on the timber question. The refusal to abrogate the law prohibiting the export of timber in the log will surely be found in the long run to have been in the best interests of the country. The province of Ontario stands as a notable example of the advantage of home manufacture.

It is gratifying to learn that more determined steps are being taken to punish persons guilty of stealing logs, a crime which is altogether too prevalent. It is strange that persons whose characters are above reproach in other respects, will confiscate timber as if it were of no value. On the other hand, the fact that the owner's marks are often defaced indicates a recognition of the gravity of the act. It is hoped that the punishment for the offence will be more severe in future.

The result of the sale of timber limits to be held by the Ontario Government in December next will be of more than usual significance. It will be the largest sale since 1885 and the fourth largest since Confederation. In the neighborhood of 900 square miles will be offered. The prices which buyers are willing to pay for these limits will in some degree reflect public opinion as to the value of pine timber as an investment as well as for lumber-producing purposes. During the past few years of prosperity in the lumber trade, many lumbermen have increased their holdings of timber limits. Will they continue to add to their holdings is the question which will be determined in part by the sale of December 9th. The licensees are to be allowed only ten years in which to cut the timber on some of the berths, while the ground rent has been increased to \$5 per square mile and stumpage dues to \$2 per thousand feet board measure. These increases mean additional revenue for the Government, at the expense of the lumbermen.

The buying power of Canadian lumbermen is steadily on the increase. The sawmilling and woodworking establishments have doubled in number within a comparatively few years. Statistics of the aggregate value of machinery and lumbering appliances purchased each year are not obtainable, but if they were the showing would doubtless create surprise by reason of its magnitude. Settlements which a few years ago were almost unknown can now boast of thriving manufacturing industries, the existence of which is due in a large measure to the growth and development of the lumber industry. A considerable quantity of imported machinery is also purchased each year, and our advertising pages bear witness to the extent to which the manufacturers across the border