

CANADIAN LUMBERMEN.

BY MET. L. SALBY.

The Veteran American Lumber Journalist Indulges in a few Personal Reminiscences and Pays a Tribute to Canadian Character.

As a sort of prelude let me say that I like the Canadian lumbermen with whom I have come in contact, and am glad of this opportunity to shake hands with all of them at once through these columns. I like them because they are stout, vigorous, frank, and know their business. Mr. Eddy, who has figured so long and prominently in Canadian lumber affairs, was born in a New England state, and is consequently not a very stocky man, and like the majority of us yankees, may have the dyspepsia tucked onto him, but with this exception your lumbermen who have come directly under my observation look as though they might live long enough to see Canada annexed to the United States.

Mr. Little, whom I am glad to count among my friends, is not built like a Sampson, but he is wiry enough to make up for any deficiency in other directions. Permit me also to add that I am an admirer of Mr. Little, for he is doing a good work. Any man who battles for the trees is battling for humanity. Mr. Little and I have had some rather sharp tilts, but it was not because we were personal enemies. He was very radical one way in his estimate of the amount of standing timber, and I was very radical the other, hence we disagreed. Mr. Little, however, has seen the error of his way—so have I, and we have struck hands and are now working for a common cause. This is the gospel we dispense: No matter how much timber there is in Canada, or this side of the line, every stick of it should be most wisely conserved, for all too soon the demands of civilization will call for it. And when it is gone, what then? I will stop right here, for I don't like to think about it.

I started out to say a few words about the healthfulness of your lumbermen. They look as robust as some of the trees upon the sunny side of Georgian Bay. Let me instance Mr. Cook. He used to come in to see me, and his face would fairly beam with health and its resultants. It is a sad, these days, to use the word limitations—everybody with any "form" to his writings must somewhere in course of his article say limitations—so I will say that a man of that kind, a man who has had a good bring up and whose stomach and liver attend strictly to business, really has no limitation. When a man gets up in the morning with no bad taste in his mouth he can endure and accomplish to his own surprise, and to the downfall of his puny competitors. A sick man in business or professional life is like a sick hound in a pack—the healthy dogs are going to pick up the rabbits.

I have noticed that many of your lumbermen have come down from the Scotch and English, and, as a rule, they have not had far to come. To be a bit personal, I descended on one side from the French, and it is not improbable that my grandfather and the grandfather of some great, rich Canadian lumberman may have crossed swords on the field of Waterloo. Think of it! As it has been said, the world isn't so very big after all. But the great flat-iron of time smooths out many a wrinkle, and though our ancestors may have fought—though your grandfather gave it to my grandfather until he

threw up the sponge—we, thank God, are friends. And in returning these thanks I want to divest the idea of any individual significance, and apply it to the great nations which we respectively represent. Time acts as a filter, and as we glide through it we become better, and purer, and less wild bull like.

There is a good deal of the rough-and-ready about the American lumbermen. They inherit it directly from Andrew Jackson. They do not mean anything bad, for their hearts are good and warm, but too many of them will spit on the floor, and keep their hats on when, according to Hoyle, they should remove them. I love my countrymen, but if a greater proportion of them had more of that true gentleness of manner so marked in the better class of foreigners, it wouldn't hurt them. I am beginning to believe that the manners of a good many of us are a little too abrupt. We have been taught to believe there is virility in this abruptness. We are inclined to look upon polished manners as removed from that common sense which should guide us in our every day life. This is false philosophy, however. Common sense and polished manners should go hand in hand for the very good reason that only those who possess common sense can appreciate such manners. Come to turn this subject over in detail in my mind I do not remember having met a Canadian lumberman, an English or German lumberman, whose manners would do violence to the most approved drawing-room etiquette. Is it to their credit? It certainly is if it is to the credit of men to round out as many sides of their nature as possible; and I believe that in time we will find out that is what we are here for.

The Canadian lumbermen are hospitable, too. When in Detroit the last time I ran over to Windsor on the ferry boat to see if I could find a few trinkets cheap which could be smuggled back, and seeing a lumber sign, stepped in. I had not been in the office a half hour when the proprietor asked me if I would accompany him up to Walker's. We boarded one of those funny little street cars, in which the seats face outward, and dashed away behind the frisking mule for Walker's. You lumbermen know the line of industry in which Walker is engaged. Of course you do. He makes Walker's club, you know. I will not say here what kind of a club it is. It may be a base ball "club." If I should say exactly the kind of club it is, my wife, who may have this article sent to her by somebody who wants to make trouble in the family, would be likely to remark that she pitied the men whose appetites were so all-absorbing that there was not enough in the Windsor saloons to satisfy them, and had to go clear up to Walker's. Ignorance is bliss, and if my lumbermen readers understand my meaning, I ask that it go no farther. First and last, as many Canadian lumbermen as I have fingers and toes have invited me over to see them, and to fish and hunt in the good Queen's domain, and while the spirit is as strong as a hundred-ton locomotive, and the flesh, I think, would stand it without fading, that pesky panic of '93 is still roosting on the necks of a good many of us, you see. Economy is the order of the day, hence while we drink water and wish it were wine, and eat oat-meal broth instead of terrapin soup, the bear and fish will have a chance to grow.

To be a trifle more serious, if possible: The timber supply is a vital question with Canadian lumbermen, as without logs there can be no lumber. On this subject of supply there is diversity of opinion among you. I once heard the question discussed by Mr. Aubrey White and Mr. Little, and they agreed like fire and water. You have a great deal of timber though; there is no question about that; and here's a thought that in connection with this subject comes to me incidentally, as it were, but it is thrown out privately and must never get back over the line. I am ignorant how much of a police force is kept way up in northern Canada, where nobody lives, to watch the timber, but there are American lumbermen who, if they could have a chance at that timber, and it was guarded by a smaller force than the entire British army, wouldn't leave a fish-pole standing. Over here we have some of the best men you ever saw who used to haul government timber to the streams all day and sleep all night with a conscience so clear that they would snore loud enough to shake the squirrels out of the trees. But I may as well drop this subject, for I do not suppose there is an operator in Canada who will understand what I am talking about. There is no sense in talking Greek to plain, every-day-business lumbermen.

This privilege of sitting down and having a quiet little visit with the lumbermen of the Dominion is enjoyable. I already feel much better acquainted with them. Somehow our relations are all the time being more closely knit together. For the first time we will this year eat turkey and say thanks on the same day. True as you live the St. Lawrence shouldn't roll between two nations. And if we should join hands you would have more political fun in a week than you do now in a life time. We are in the midst of the throes of that political fun over here right now, as you know. Orators are saving their country every afternoon and evening, and we common herd are trotting around behind brass bands and neglecting our corn husking. Cull lawyers, who wouldn't be given a job by a chicken thief, have mastered and are teaching the science of finance, and honest men are being instructed by dishonest politicians to vote so and so when on election day they shall enter the little Australian booth and stand in the presence of their conscience and their God. They do not inform us when we are out of the presence of our conscience and our God, but any such little slip in logic as that disconcerts them not in the least. The phrase is kept in stock and is freely used alike by cross-road haranguers, congressmen and a whole batch of ex-governors.

Another taking feature of the political rally is the horse-back procession, a considerable portion of which is not infrequently composed of women. Out on the prairies the young woman, this year, rides man fashion, a dainty foot dangling on either side of the horse, and the men with silvered locks who come from their city homes to post us on the 16 to 1 question, sit on the hotel balconies and smile on and applaud them as on their prancing steeds they go tittering by. And they wring from the young men who come in from their farms, wearing their sheep-skin overcoats, a wistful sigh. (There is so much poetry in the subject that unconsciously it trickles out of a fellow.)

This campaign is going to relegate the side-