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THE CANADA LUMBERMAN

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THE CANADA LUMBERMAN is published in the interest of the lumber trade and of allied industries throughout the Dominion being the only representative in Canada of this foremost branch of the commerce of this country. It aims at giving full and timely information on all subjects touching these interests, discussing these topics editorially and inviting free discussion of them by others.

Especial pains are taken to secure the latest and most trustworthy market quotations from various points throughout the world, so as to afford to the trade in Canada information upon which it can rely in its operations.

Special correspondents in localities of importance present accurate report not only of prices and the condition of the market, but also of other matters specially interesting to our readers. But correspondence is not only welcome but is invited from all who have any information to communicate or subjects to discuss relating to the trade or in any way effecting it. Even when we may not be able to agree with the writers we will give them a fair opportunity for free discussion as the best means of eliciting the truth. Any items of interest are particularly requested, for even if not of great importance individually, they contribute to a fund of information from which general results are obtained.

Advertisers will receive careful attention and liberal treatment. We need not point out that for many the CANADA LUMBERMAN with its special class of readers is not only an exceptionally good medium for securing publicity, but is indispensable for those who would bring themselves before the notice of that class. Special attention is directed to "WANTED" and "FOR SALE" advertisements which will be inserted in a conspicuous position at the uniform price of ten cents per line for each insertion. Announcements of this character will be subject to a discount of 25 per cent. if ordered for three successive issues or longer.

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.

Mr. Hotchkiss, U. S. Consul at Ottawa, who was engaged for many years in the lumbering business in the United States and Canada, has received a number of letters from publishers of lumber trade newspapers and gentlemen engaged in the lumber business in Michigan and Wisconsin asking him what the probable effect would be if the American duty of \$2 per thousand feet on Canadian lumber was removed. He has sent an answer to all such inquiries to the effect that, in his opinion, the price of lumber in the American markets would not be affected by the free admission of the Canadian product, and that the removal of the duty would simply mean \$2 a thousand feet in the pockets of the Canadian lumbermen. Mr. Hotchkiss does not believe that the export of lumber from Canada would be sufficient to reduce the price of lumber at any point in the United States. The output from Ottawa, no doubt the greatest lumber centre in Canada, is not probably over 300,000,000 feet annually—not more than enough to supply the wants of one good-sized American city.

In the last issue of this journal was given particulars of the loss of the noted Joggins timber raft, the whereabouts of which was at that time unknown. It has since transpired that the United States steamer Enterprise found the huge mass broken up about 250 miles south-southwest of Sandy Hook, and about 135 miles from the place where the steamer Miranda left it. Immense quantities of logs were found floating in every direction, and the fact was soon learned that the great raft was an entire wreck. Something more than \$50,000 has been expended in this experiment, and the attention of the whole lumber world has been attracted to it. The loss is almost, if not quite, a total one, and the failure is so complete that the probabilities are that no similar attempt will again be made. Even should this prophecy not prove correct there will, in all probability, be steps taken by both Congress and the Dominion Government to prevent another raft becoming a danger to commerce.

MR. FRENCH, M.P.P., for Leeds and Grenville, has introduced a bill into the Ontario Legislature for the appointment of fire guardians for the prevention of bush fires. It is founded on legislation in force in the Western States and Manitoba, which has been found to work beneficially in those localities. It delegates to the township councils the power to appoint fire guardians who may be either pathmasters, fence viewers, or other competent persons. No person is to be allowed to start a bush fire for the purpose of clearing lands without the written permission of the guardian after he has viewed the locality. The guardian will be paid by fees to be collected from those requiring his permission. In bringing actions for damages for loss caused by bush fires it is often difficult to prove negligence. Mr. French's bill makes the omission to procure the fire guardian's consent a *prima facie* evidence of negligence. The measure is another step in a good direction and ought to be adopted. If such a scheme were carried out it would do much to prevent those destructive bush fires which have destroyed so much valuable timber.

SINCE the late Government sale of timber limits there has been a brisk demand on the part of American operators for Canadian limits, chiefly in the Mississauga and Algoma Districts. There have been some sales but holders of limits are disposed to ask high prices, and the tendency is to hold in the expectation of a considerable advance in values, owing to the growing needs of Americans and the rapid exhaustion of their supplies. The possibility of the speedy removal of the American duty which would, of course, result in an enormous expansion of the export trade to the United States has a decided influence in stiffening prices. Many Michigan lumber operators are turning their attention towards the timber resources of Ontario, and negotiating or prospecting with a view to the purchase of limits in the province. A number of estimators in the interest of these wealthy firms have lately gone into the bush to make investigations and important transactions are likely to be reported before long.

THE Provincial Legislature of Ontario was opened on the 25th ult. by Lieut.-Governor Campbell. The speech from the throne, which was of unusual length, contained the following reference to the lumber trade, and the recent increase in timber dues:—

"The value of our timber limits having greatly increased of late years, it was recently thought that the time had come for making such advances in ground rents and timber dues as should bring to the provincial revenue a substantial increase without being unfair or oppressive to persons engaged in the lumber trade. Certain increases were accordingly made, and that they were not unreasonable or inopportune has been shown by the large prices obtained for limits at the timber sale which was afterwards held."

It is proposed to increase the number of ministers by separating the Department of Agriculture from that of the Provincial Treasurer. Mr. Dryden, of South Ontario, a practical farmer, and one of the old time members of the Legislature will, in all probability, be the new Minister of Agriculture. Hon. Mr. Pardee, whose health has been very poor for some time, is not expected to be present in the House during the session, as it is understood that he will shortly leave for Florida. Among the bills foreshadowed by the speech is one for the separation of Parry Sound and Muskoka from the adjoining counties for certain purposes.

A CASE of special interest to the holders of timber limits, and which forcibly illustrates the evils of the present uncertainty of jurisdiction as between the Dominion and Ontario Governments is among the subjects now before the Ontario government for action. It affects the title of extensive limits, comprised in townships Nos. 75, 76 and 83 in the Algoma District, which were sold by the Ontario Government in 1872, and since that time have changed hands two or three times. In 1884 the territory was claimed by the Indian Department under the Robinson treaty, for the purpose of an Indian reserve. The timber rights were sold by the Dominion Government for \$316, to Honore Robillard, now M.P. for Ottawa, who resold them shortly afterwards for about \$55,000, to parties by whom lumbering operations are now being carried on. The holders of timber limits from the Ontario Govern-

ment include the estate of J. D. Smith, Balfour & Menzies, Klock & Co. and others who have urged upon the Provincial Crown Lands Department, the necessity of protecting their rights. In consequence an application has been made by the Government, to restrain the cutting of timber by the present holders of limits granted by the Dominion. The results of the suit will be watched with much interest. The doubt as to the validity of the title granted by the respective governments has been a serious drawback to the development of the timber resources of North western Ontario.

THE name of Congressman Nelson seems to be coming prominently before Congress during the present session, through his introduction of at least two bills effecting the lumber interests. In addition to the one referred to elsewhere in this issue which proposed to abolish the duty on lumber, we find that for the fourth time he intends to introduce his bill to open what is known as the Red Lake reservation. This tract of land is a part of the original Louisiana purchase which the Indians have never ceded to the United States. It is conceded that there is likely to be very strong opposition to the measure. The Michigan delegation in the House is solid against it while the Wisconsin, New York, and Pennsylvania members who have constituencies are ready to work desperately against it. The reason assigned for this strong opposition is the idea of opening up two million acres of pine country to Canadian lumbermen. Half of this lake reservation lies on the northern slope of the Kainy Lake region, and its pine would have to be floated over the international boundary to the saw mills already at work there. All that lumber would come right straight down the lakes and be sold in competition with American. Interested Canadians will watch the result of the movement, and hope to secure their bread with the butter side up.

If what is being written by our lumber contemporaries across the lines be true, it is quite evident that wholesalers in lumber, at least in some sections, are not accumulating the "root" to an extent consistent with their inclinations. Following the balancing of ledgers for the year 1887 come up from numerous quarters a wail of dissatisfaction, telling the tale of small profits or no profits at all. An experience such as this for a period of two or three years, is not one of the pleasantest things in this life, and accordingly many of the class referred to are asking the question: "Where should I be located?" Various are the reasons assigned for this unsatisfactory state of affairs. New railroads or freight combinations let in a competition which cannot be met, compressing prices down to bare cost; competitive markets opening up in new quarters, struggling to gain the mastery. These and other reasons seem to be the secret of such disturbing influences in the wholesale trade, and they prove obstacles hard to surmount. To those who have settled down to investigate the different locations for probable successful business enterprises in lumber, we would advise the mer. of capital and energy, not alone to seek new fields of labor among the forty-two states of the Republic, but also to look to the different provinces of the Dominion where there will be abundance of room for the profitable investment of their capital in supplying their own people with the products of Canadian forests. Many have already come among us, and others are sure to follow.

CERTAINLY the fate of the big raft is not calculated to encourage further attempts to convey logs to the markets of the neighbouring republic in this manner. Under other circumstances more propitious to it, success might have been achieved, but the fates seem to have been against the venture from the beginning. The insufficient strength of the ways preventing the first attempt at launching the huge mass, the compulsory relinquishing by the tug of the reconstructed raft, and its breaking up at sea before it could be recovered, gave one heavy blow after another to the enterprise. Anyone of them might be possibly avoided with suitable precautions, even the whole of them might be escaped, but altogether, they point to an aggregate risk that must have a deterring effect. The loss in material, in labor and other expenses and in time, must have been very heavy, amounting to far more than several successful ventures would recoup. The risk of heavy loss seems dis-