

## EXCHANGE ECHOES.

*Lumberman's Gazette, Bay City, Mich.*—There has never been a winter since the first saw mill was erected in this country where there were so many mills in operation, and so much lumber and timber manufactured as during the winter of 1886-7 just closing. This shows unusual activity in the trades which demand timber and lumber for their prosecution, and expected activity in railroad rolling stock building.

*Ottawa Free Press.*—Lumbermen generally express themselves quite pleased at the outlook for the coming season. Notwithstanding the passage of the Inter Commerce bill the prospects for large and brisk sales are as bright, if not brighter, than in past years. This applies principally to the American and Canadian markets. As regards the English trade, however, one firm reports a decided falling off both in square timber and sawn lumber. On the other hand another firm reports that their business in these lines with the English market will be exceptionally heavy. Prices will certainly rule as high as last year, and the opinion is generally held there will be a shade of advance. Owing to the Inter Commerce bill coming into force on the 1st of April, there is a heavy rush to get as much of the contract lumber as possible shipped to the United States before that date, and complaint is made of an insufficiency of cars. The actual amount of lumber which will be manufactured this season will be much heavier than that of last year. Not one firm reports a falling off in this respect, while two firms, Messrs. Hurdman & Co., and Messrs. Grier & Co., report a decided increase; the former of about 25,000,000 feet and the latter of about 20,000,000 feet. The new mill which Messrs. Grier & Co. are building, will increase their manufacturing capacity enormously. The lumber manufacturing industry of the Ottawa Valley was never so prosperous as at present, and notwithstanding all the disadvantages under which it labors for want of a more protective commercial policy with the United States, it can compete successfully in Eastern American markets with the Michigan lumber.

*Monetary Times.*—We have repeatedly besought the attention of mill-men, lumberers and builders to a desirability of a freer use of hemlock timber and lumber for building uses. The supply of pine will not last for ever; and it would be well to familiarize people with the fact that there is a wood easily available and will take its

place for many purposes. This is coming into use in Canada, year by year, more freely. That hemlock is making progress in popular esteem in the States, too, is evident. The Bay City Gazette tells us that a larger product of this wood is looked for in Michigan this year than ever before. It is coming into competition with pine in the lake cities, and indeed it is no mean competitor, light and strong and durable as it is, especially when it can be furnished for two dollars less per thousand. Then again, as we learn from the *Timberman*, in Central and Southern Ohio the hemlock from the forests of western Pennsylvania has been coming in alongside the pine from States further west and for some purposes beating its rival. "Within the past year, the development of the Western trade in Pennsylvania hemlock has been very marked, and the indications are that the rise has but just begun." That journal ventures to declare that it is the bill stuff of the future, and is besides, successfully used for shingles. Pennsylvania makers turn out hemlock shingles and sell them, with a fifteen year guarantee, at prices which pine producers can hardly match.

## BEWARE OF THE SHODDY SPECULATOR.

TORONTO, March 18th, 1887.

To the Editor of the Canada Lumberman.

"This is the fool who lent money gratis."—*Merchant of Venice.*

It is a trite observation that history repeats itself. We cannot avoid enquiring: Are we on the eve of another stagnation in trade as was from '72 to '79, when the crash of falling firms was heard daily? In one of our Eastern provinces a bank has gone down accompanying an extensive lumber firm; in Great Britain Stewart Bros. have failed for \$500,000; while south of us a monetary panic is predicted by the Solons of Wall street, and at home the feeling is not one of security,

many houses being supported by flying buttresses.

It were well did lumbermen take something more than a superficial glance at the standing of the parties to whom the bulk of their sales are made, and endeavour to realize the fact that sooner or later a reaction will follow from which they will suffer the inevitable consequences of supplying men who have nothing to lose. As long as our speculative builders are able to make sales of the miserable tenements erected by them, so long can our dealers expect with a degree of certainty, to be paid a portion of the amount due them, but the moment any stringency is felt then payments cease, and the lumberman finds too late that he has supplied material to increase the value of the property mortgaged to the individual furnishing the cash.

It is worse than folly to ignore what is patent to all in the trade. We all know that sales are made to men who have not one cent to lose, and who, trusting to the future, expect to realize sufficient means to stave off the evil day. It is not to speculative builders alone that reference is made, but to contractors as well. Men eager to do an extensive business tender for work far too low, and having obtained the contract find that with a number of such low priced contracts on hand, they cannot attend to each as it deserves and are compelled to call a meeting of creditors at which a compromise is made of about 30 or 40 per cent. on the dollar to be paid in installments at 3, 6 and 9 months, the payments of which cannot be met as their assets are not in existence, but merely supposititious margins due on contracts, which have to be earned and subject to whatever may happen. The final winding up of the affairs of the ambitious incompetent builder is the result.

Competition among both the lumber dealers and builders is to a very great extent the cause of the evil. Nor can the real estate agent escape censure. Blocks of land are thrown on the market, (so far realizing more than their actual worth) easy terms are offered to such as will build. Houses spring up like

The Vanburn Mills, on American side, start operations next week. There is annually shipped from this mill from 25 to 30 millions shingles, besides clap-boards and other lumber, all cut on this side, and shipped to the States without the payment of one cent of duty.

Holmes & Hammond expect to have their new mills running about the first of April. The principal machinery consists of five shingle machines. This new mill is situated opposite Green River, on American side, and it is expected that a large business will be done.

Our National Policy is like all first-class machines, easily disgraced by unskilled workmen and neglect, and through this neglect on the part of our Government officials, they are encouraging the robbery of our forest wealth by Americans, the benefits of which accrue to our neighbors instead of our own people. Canadian enterprise is being discouraged, and in a very few years, if the present state of affairs continues to exist, what little timber we have left will be stripped by Americans, leaving them not worth building mills on; whereas if a heavy export duty were exacted, our streams would be provided with mills and the ring of saws would testify to the opening up of additional labor, and encourage our children to hue out a home of their own in the land of their birth, who now are compelled to go abroad and seek work from those who have robbed us of our timber, and manufacture the same across the border. If this lumber was manufactured in Canada we could soon encourage a boom in milling, besides encouraging a channel to cultivate thousands of acres of our best lands into fields of wheat and other cereals, which now show nothing but the blackened stumps of hardwood, from which our spruce and pine have been taken.

I cannot see the policy of granting subsidies to railroads for the purpose of opening out our country, and then allow Americans to come over and rob our forests out of all the traffic required to support them after they are built. It is too much

like a cow giving a good mess of milk and then kicking it over.

We have very little standing pine left on the river St. John, spruce is scattering, small and scarce; cedar is rapidly disappearing, and this year the American woodsman, in his eagerness to obtain a stock of logs at all hazards, cut from the top of the snow, leaving several feet of stump.

There seems to be a great cry among lumber monopolists over the high stumpage tax in New Brunswick, but to our

## The Canada Lumberman and Scribner's Lumber &amp; Log Book

By A. G. Moortimer, Publisher.

Please send to the following address "The Canada Lumberman" and "Scribner's Lumber and Log Book" from this date until the end of the present year, for which inclose the sum of one Dollar.

1887.

Name

Address

Jonah's guard in a night—bad material, bad workmanship, and our pushing, energetic, speculative builder

"Fix'd on his house he leans; his house  
And all its props decay;  
He holds it fast; but, while he holds  
The tottering frame gives way."

Notwithstanding the severe losses experienced almost monthly the lumber dealers continue to sell to a class of men the most worthless—men who in the majority of cases are not competent to correctly calculate the cost of a building, and in almost every instance have not the most remote acquaintance with the science of accounts. Scarcely one of our dealers but has been victimized by this unsavoury class, the shoddy speculative builder and his more pretentious brother the ambitious incompetent contractor.

Lumbermen have the remedy in their own hands, which if applied, will, to a certain extent at least, save them many a dollar obtained from small margins. Let them combine, if that can be done, and agree to supply material to none but those having some means of their own, or to such as can give the most satisfactory security, and above all, absolutely refuse all contractors who have taken contracts so low that there is not a fair margin to cover all contingencies.

CANADA.

## NEW BRUNSWICK MATTERS.

MADAWASKA, N.B., March 21st., 1887.

To the Editor of the Canada Lumberman.

This has been one of the most discouraging winters for lumbering on the Upper St. John we have seen for many years. There will be a falling off of one-third the usual output. The great depth of snow we have had so long is decreasing rapidly, and, contrary to the general expectation, is passing away without causing floods. Quite a large quantity of logs are still left to haul.

mind the Government has acted wisely in this respect.

The only way to successfully open up our country is to restrict the cut of our lumber by adding more stumpage and export duty and manufacturing our lumber at home. In the near future agriculture must be resorted to in order to keep up our towns and cities instead of lumber, and the sooner politicians take this matter up the sooner there will be a boom in farming, and our province placed on a solid foundation.

A new line of railway has been run out from Campbelltown, Restigouche, to Grand Falls, which will open out one of the finest tracts of land in New Brunswick, besides bringing this upper country within one hundred miles from the seaport, making a market for Restigouche fish and a channel through which to ship our lumber. Many of our people are talking about locating on this line.

Yours truly,

P. O. BYRAM.

GRAVENHURST, March 24th, 1887.

To the Editor of the Canada Lumberman,

The stocking on Muskoka River and its tributaries is about completed, the following quantities being for Gravenhurst: Mickle, Dymont & Son, 12 millions; Ontario Lumber Co., 8 millions; Thomson & Baker, 7½ millions; Isaac Cockburn, 6 millions; McBurney & Laycock Co., 6 millions; Thomas Tait, 4 millions. The drive on the Muskoka River this year is expected to be about 60 millions. Snow still very deep and no prospects of going off as yet.

The cost of stocking has been considerable in excess of the estimate, mainly on account of severe snow storms.

Repairs on the mills have commenced, and owners anticipate a good season.

Yours truly,

LUCIUS.