

LUMBERING IN CALIFORNIA.

I date my letter among the pines, 35 miles west of the summit of the Sierra Nevada, and 4000 feet above the sea. I have just been out to see them haul logs. All the logging in this country is done in the summer on wagons or "trucks." There are five yoke of oxen in each team, one teamster and one man to swamp and assist about loading. A large part of the men engaged in lumbering here are from Maine.

The axles of the trucks are of iron four inches square and eight feet long. Upon each axle a block of wood six inches wide, and coming to the tops of the wheels is bolted and clamped in the strongest possible manner. Upon these are placed the bunks, each eight feet long, and projecting over the wheels. The wheels are made of pine logs four feet in diameter, sawed into sections eighteen inches thick, and then hewn so as to be seven inches wide at the outer edge, where they are bound with heavy iron ties. These trucks are strong enough for a load of twenty tons in a rough place and cost from five to eight hundred dollars each. A sugar pine, that had calmly and proudly maintained its position upon the side of the mountain, for perhaps two thousand years, had been ruthlessly sawn down. What sacrilege! What a wanton attack upon things ancient and honorable! The seed of this tree was, perhaps, germinating when Virgil was writing the *Æneid*! It was six feet through at the stump, but only four logs, each sixteen feet long, were taken. All the lumber among the limbs is left to decay, and trees having limbs low down are not touched. We took the two middle logs and set the brake, which was so powerful that the hind trucks plowed their way down the mountain without turning.

On reaching the mill we found these two logs scaled 2958 feet, making the four logs from that single tree

scale about 6000 feet. One log on the mill brow, 20 feet long, scaled nearly 2200 feet.

The average of the whole lot at the mill at that time was about 1500 feet. No logs are hauled up hill. When all the lumber worth cutting standing in the valley above the mill and on the sides of the mountains sloping towards it, is manufactured, the mill is moved.

The yellow pines in these forests are as large as the sugar pines and as fine looking trees. They are much like the Norway pine in Maine. The timber is hard and excellent for flooring.

These trees are now generally passed by, but they will soon be wanted. Now only the best is taken—the cream of the forest. The two steam saw mills here, about a mile apart, are cutting out 70,000 feet of lumber daily, which is to be run down the Flume 37 miles to the railroad, and the largest and best part shipped to San Francisco. The owners will of course reap a rich harvest, but the poor men who work in the mills and are much out of employment five months in the year, who have to compete with Chinese labor, are no better off and less happy than the men in Maine who have less wages, less temptations and more steady employment. The lumber here is all cut by circular saws. There are two circular saws, each about five feet in diameter, one above the other.

The climate here at this elevation is most excellent. The air is cool and bracing, and the water cold and pure. One of our men who frequently bled at the lungs when in San Jose, is well and able to work here.—*Cor. of the Bangor Whig and Courier.*

A fire at Muskegon, Mich., August 1st, destroyed half the city. The lumber mills, of which there are many, escaped however.