

SHAKY LUMBER.

MR. EDITOR:—If the question, as to the cause of lumber being shaky, was put to one hundred men, probably nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine hundredths, of them would say it was caused by the wind swaying the trees when frozen. This answer or reason seems so plausible, that but few give the matter more thought. All lament the fact that lumber is shaky, but take no pains to investigate the matter, and to inquire if that answer is correct or not. Having given the subject much thought, I have arrived at a different conclusion; I am satisfied that the wind has nothing to do with it. Shaky timber never grows in places particularly exposed to the wind, and the heart of white pine never freezes unless it is shaky. It usually grows on low, wet, cold land, and if found on a high land, it is in or on some depression or valley, that is undrained on that high land. If the land on which shaky timber grows is cleared up, and sown to grasses, the spot on which the shaky timber stood, will grow a wild grass, and until it is drained, cannot be made to produce any other. Now my theory is, that there is a substance that is soluble in water, in the cold, wet places where the timber grows and it is taken up in the sap of the tree, being a little heavier than the sap, it is left in the grain of the wood, and coats it over, and this coating is so smooth that it prevents the grains of wood from adhering to each other. As proof that this soluble solution is heavier than the sap, we always find the butt of the tree shaky, if any part, and never the top. As proof of the coating of the grains of wood, those grains that are shaky, as we call it, will not rot; after shaky pines has all fallen to pieces, as it were, they grains themselves, are found perfectly sound and bright, showing that this coating is impervious to water, and the fact that it takes three

or four times as long to season or dry shaky lumber than it does sound lumber, this shows to us that this coating prevents the sap leaving the wood. The above are the reasons for my theory. What this substance is I am not enough of a chemist to tell. I have no doubt if one would burn some shaky timber, and analyze the ashes, he could tell us all about it. What would be of more value to the public would be to find a remedy. If it is the same substance, as my theory holds, as the one that causes the wild grass, no doubt draining would be a remedy, if it was done before the trees grew, but that will not help the grown timber. I submit this, hoping that it will attract the attention of some one that can tell us more about it. CANADA.

—*Boston Lumber Trade.*

**THE WILLIAMSPORT MANUFACTURERS AND THE
WOODBURY CLAIM.**

At the close of the recent national convention of lumbermen at Williamsport, a meeting of the planing-mill owners of that city was called by J. T. Drew, Esq., of the counsel of the executive committee of planing-mill owners, for the purpose of bringing before them the matter of the demand of Joseph P. Woodbury, and those associated with him in the ownership of his patent, for a royalty on all planing and moulding machines, using the "pressure bars" claimed to be covered by said patent. Mr. Drew explained to the gentlemen present the effect of the sustainment by the courts of the validity of the Woodbury Patent, and the consequent enforcement of the demand of the claims of the Woodbury Patent Planing Machine Company, and the importance to each of them of uniting in the organized effort, now being made by more than a thousand leading firms throughout the country in combination, to resist the claim. The assurance was given that

the manufacturers of Williamsport might be depended on for co-operation with, and financial support of, the combination.—*Boston Lumber Trade.*

LUMBERING IN MAINE.

From Editorial Correspondence of the Montreal (Canada) Gazette.

Bangor is a place of considerable importance, which it owes chiefly to the lumbering interest which centres there. There are several large saw mills in its vicinity, and others are studded at intervals along the banks of the Penobscott river, between Bangor and the Province line. What, however, strikes all, as at different intervals we catch glimpses from the train of the mill ponds, is the character of the logs which are being cut up into lumber. As a general rule, they are spruce logs, from five to fifteen inches at the butt, but not averaging on the whole more than about six or seven inches. Here and there a pine log or a small pond of them carefully boomed in, afford the evidences of the departed relics of the forest. Even these are small logs compared with what is the average class about a mill on the Ottawa or the Trent. The truth is that the lumber of Maine is well nigh exhausted, the victim to that most reckless system of waste which has everywhere on this continent characterised this industry. The Bangor paper which we got on the train had a letter from California describing lumbering operations near the Sierra Nevada, and there the inevitable madness crops out. Describing the magnificence of the forest trees, four logs from a single tree scaling six thousand feet of lumber, the average of a lot of logs at one of the mills being fifteen hundred feet, the writer proceeds to refer to the yellow pines in those forests, resembling the Norway pine in Maine, the timber being hard and excellent for flooring. And then comes the old, old story: "These trees are gen-

erally passed by, but they will soon be wanted. Now only the best is taken—the cream of the forest." Happy will it be for the lumber interests if when they are wanted they are still to be had, for it would be no unusual experience, judging from the record in Maine and Canada, to find that the fire had run through the partially cleared forest, and swept away the now despised timbers. It would not be easy to estimate in dollars the loss which this culling system has produced in Canada; and the scurvy apologies for saw logs which now fill the mill-ponds in the rivers of Maine are the warning voice to Canadian lumberers of a day fast approaching, and not, I fear, very far off, when a similar experience will be theirs. The present depression in the lumber interest affords a fair opportunity for a pause in the career of our production, and for stock-taking in relation to the real interests of the trade. I believe there is to be a meeting of lumberers next week in Ottawa to consider the position of the trade, and it is most sincerely to be hoped that wise counsels will govern its deliberations.

J. W. Bashford, timber agent for the state of Wisconsin, is meeting with commendable success in settlement for trespass on the St. Croix and Lake Superior landgrant. There are now about fourteen million feet of logs in the boom here, which have been cut on these lands. Lumbermen who have committed trespass on these lands now have an opportunity to make arrangements to retain possession of their logs until such time as they can be put in proper shape for sale or shipment. Wisconsin will doubtless realize more by this arrangement than any other which could be adopted.—*St. Paul Press.*