

Editors Cong. Herald—
Dear Brethren—
It was with deep interest that I heard the proposal to start an Organ of Congregationalism at the West. Your circular received a few days since added to that interest, & after such that as other pressing engagements would permit, I offer the following letter as No. one of a correspondence which shall be continued at intervals of two or three months if you approve & consider it worth the subscription to the Herald in which case please send it to
S. Souther Jr. Fryeburg, Maine.

For the Congregational Herald—
Things in Maine.
During these winter months, there is little in our snowy state to interest the dwellers in sunnier regions. The Summer is bringing us from year to year increasing crowds of tourists, who find in our lakes & mountains, our magnificent sea coast & well-nigh boundless forests, scenery which combines the the grand & the beautiful in no ordinary degree.
But dreary Winter changes the scene, & not only do our visitors depart, but many of our own citizens

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Date: ca. 1880

Description: Letter to the editor of a Congregational newsletter about industry in Maine by S. Souther, Jr. of Fryeburg.

become birds of passage, & seek a more genial climate
at the South

Lumbering -

And still there is not a complete suspension of life
in Maine even with the thermometer at 20 Degrees below Zero.
Over large portions of our territory the intense cold furnishes
the means of increased activity. The wide Marshes are
frozen & allow the passage of heavy teams engaged in
lumbering. All thro' the Northern sections of the State,
this business is now at its height. Thousands of young
men, the flower of our State, have plunged into the dense
forests, & the sun will reach the Summer Solstice, before
they will emerge again following the trophies of their Winter's
toil & exposure in the hazardous "drive" down stream.

One gets a new idea of the extent of this lumber business
by a trip up the Penobscot, say about midsummer.

Then the saws are driven to their utmost. Night & day there
is no respite, & leaving these some dozen miles above
Bangor you meet the masses of logs on their passage down to
supply the Mills attended by scores of daring, strong handed
lumbermen. In making this trip last June I passed in
one "boom" formed by linking together a chain of narrow islands
& so reserving one portion of the river for nearly three miles
as a capacious basin Ninety Millions of lumber in one Mass.

And in answer to an inquiry how many people found em-
ployment in the business on the Penobscot, we were told by
an intelligent & experienced lumberman that the number
would reach 20,000—No wonder this makes Bangor the greatest lumber mart
in the world—

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Shipbuilding.

This branch of business is the twin sister of our lumbering. Formerly there was an almost entire suspension in this department of industry during Winter, but now the heavier pressure of mercantile activity calls for the construction of ships at all seasons of the year. The click of the Mallet & adze breaks on the still, cold air of the Winter's morning, & the keel shoots along snowy, "Ways" to plunge in an almost frozen sea. We thus added to our commercial Marine the last year 138 Ships, 63 Brigs, 1218 Schooners, other S. Total 2354, with an aggregate of 110,000 Tons ~

And still the demand increases rather than diminishes. More ships, larger ships, swifter ships, for commerce finds new channels thro which to pour its ever swelling tides.

Besides this the frightful storms of this season almost decimate our shipping. There's sorrow on the sea, & all along our coast & far up among our hills, families are in mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Rispacks from whose side sons in all their manly strength are stricken down. What sacrifices do we of Maine offer at the shrine of commerce! ~

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