

HOME AND FOREIGN TRADE REVIEW.

Office of CANADA LUMBERMAN, }
April 29th, 1889. }

Local trade is generally very good throughout Ontario. During the winter months dealers throughout the Northern and New England States expected a very active trade but this has not been realized.

There is no scarcity of lumber or shingles, and buyers take hold very sparingly in view of the general feeling that prices are or will be lower. Even with a continuance of the scarcity of water in many of the smaller streams the general belief is that there will be an abundance of logs to keep the mills of Canada pretty well supplied.

Shingles are lower in price and only standard brands are wanted at all. To meet the requirements of the trade Canadian manufacturers should take more pains in the manufacture and putting up of these goods.

Ash and basswood are this spring feeling more than ever the competition from the states bordering on the eastern provinces, and this is notably the case as regards Michigan and Wisconsin.

While some sales of cuts that are above the average have been made at even higher figures than last year, since the views of buyers to-day average lower than the markets closed last fall. Our correspondent from the Ottawa district writes: "We have thought that there would be a steady business the whole of the season, but do not see any prospects of an advance - indications are to our minds a little the other way, in fact quite so. Notwithstanding the short time we had sleighing through the section of country north of here and Peterborough, still a full supply of logs has been taken out but the cost will undoubtedly average something higher than the year before. There is a difference of opinion among manufacturers as to prices being sustained."

The absence of rain has created some consternation among river lumbermen, and the indications at present are that most of the cut will spend the summer in the dry beds of the smaller streams. The early and rapid thaw melted the ice in the smaller streams, and there being no spring rains of any consequence, there is not water high enough to float the timber. It is estimated by lumbermen this will be the cause of the decrease of fifty million feet of lumber next season. This season's cut at the mills will be covered by the logs held in reserve. All the mills at the Chaudiere have commenced sawing and the first lumber tow of the season left for Montreal on the 24th. Square timber, cut last winter, is already on the way to the Quebec market. A large raft belonging to Thistle, Carswell & Co. pulled out, Thursday, from Klock's mills on the Ottawa. The raft contained 160 fine cribs, and the owners expect the lumber will be delivered in Quebec by the 10th of June. With one exception, this is the earliest period on record which square timber has been started for the Quebec market.

Our correspondent at Goderich, Ont., under date of April 27th, writes: "Navigation opened here about a month earlier than other years. Some lumber, lath and shingles have already arrived. It is expected the usual quantities of lumber will be transhipped at this port during the current season. The imposition of 3 cents per M. feet as harbor dues by, and in addition to heavy rents paid to the Government by lumbermen, will not it is hoped very materially lessen the volume of business done here, though lumbermen know 3 cents sometimes turns the scale from profit to loss. Prospects for business over this part of Ontario are fair. Retail dealers, planing mill and factory men are now in most cases, careful and judicious purchasers and the results are seen in prompter payments and fewer failures. The car service has been all that could reasonably be expected, and as regards extra freights no complaint can justly be made."

There has been an increase in the cut in New Brunswick at many of the leading points. Above Grand Falls 50 per cent more lumber has been put in over last year. Ice was running on the 20th in the Madawaska river—logs mixed with it. Unless there are copious rains many drives will be hung up, as there is not sufficient snow to depend upon. As usual lumbermen lose a few days of good driving owing to their tardiness in getting to work in time. A very few have commenced driving.

The agreement arrived at between the ship laborers and the merchants, shipowners and stevedores seems to be fairly equitable. They are to be paid from April 1 to November 1, \$3 per day on sailing vessels and \$4 per day on steamers; from November 1 to April 1, \$2 per day on sailing vessels and \$3 per day on steamers. Employers select their own crews, and many employ six seamen on ships and four on barks in loading and discharging. The employers agree to give their work exclusively to Union men except as above provided.

The total export of railway ties in 1888 from the maritime provinces to the United States was 489,146 of a total value of \$92,206, and by reference to the statistics of the trade of Moncton we find that during the same period Moncton exported 220,805 railway ties, practically one-half of the total export of the provinces, showing its importance as a lumber centre.

Railway ties are admitted into the United States free of duty, yet the trade has undergone considerable

change within the past few years. Shippers find it hard to make contracts at 28 cents where they were nearer 38 a few years ago. As they pay 7 cents freight by vessel to Portland, 9 for cedar and 10 for other kinds to Boston, and 13 to New York, besides railway freights, labor in handling and commission charges, there is not a large margin after paying the first cost. The fact that the entire export of railway ties from the Maritime provinces to the United States, admitted as they are duty free, does not exceed the number required for renewals on the Intercolonial railway alone, to say nothing of renewals on other roads and the requirements of new lines, is significant.

Pulp wood is another article which has of late been quite extensively shipped from Moncton. The wood costs about \$2.50 per cord, and the freight is \$3.50 to Providence, where it is admitted free of duty. The kinds of wood most in demand are spruce and poplar. The latter wood is not considered of any value in this country, and the export is a clear gain.

From the reports of sales in England and reports from other sources, quite an impetus is expected to be given to all branches of trade in Quebec and the greatest boom in the lumber trade that has been experienced for many years is expected. Freights are high and there is a good demand for ships. Quebec trading vessels are many of them unavailable, having been tempted to accept coal freights for South American ports in consequence of the favorable charters offered several weeks ago. They will undoubtedly come to Quebec after their return to British ports, but it will be near mid-summer before the majority of them need be looked for. Then we may expect to see a large timber fleet in port. The officials of the cullers department are making preparations for a big season's work this year. It is stated that the quantity of square timber coming to the market will largely exceed that for many years past. A rough estimate places the quantity made during the winter at about thirteen million feet. The following steamers have been chartered to load deals and timber at Quebec and Montreal for the United Kingdom:—"Capulet" (1,416 tons), "Avlona" (1,279 tons), "Elbe" (1,748 tons), "Guy Colin" (1,463 tons), all at 65s; also, the "Austerlitz" (1,076 tons) and "Thornholme" (1,101 tons), at 68s 9d.

There is a marked renewal of life in the trade in the eastern States, and much interest is manifested in the prospective opening of the New York canals. New York and Philadelphia are booming in the building trades, the consumption of lumber is very large, and the lesser cities appear to be doing their proportion of improving. At Boston there is very little change in the condition of the market but a good demand for lumber is looked for later on. Spruce lumber of all kinds continues firm. The export trade from New York is much more active, shipments are heavy and are likely to continue for some time, as orders are in good supply and only held in check by the scarcity of vessels. Trade at Cleveland is dull and prices are unsettled. There is a good consumptive demand at Chicago but the shipping requirement is anything but satisfactory. At Minneapolis the market is quiet and lumber is selling lower than it has for a long time.

FOREIGN TRADE REVIEW.

Referring to the unusual winter shipments from Montreal, via Boston to the London market, indicating a desire on the part of shippers to get their goods early in the market, a London trade journal says: "These shipments cannot leave a satisfactory result to the exporter, and it may be hoped that this will prevent their continuance as in the general interests of the trade it appears undesirable to interfere with what has heretofore been the close season for Canadian deals. We trust that the comparative bareness of this market, as regards pine deals, will not lead the shipping houses to overdo us with consignments. This they could easily do, as there is no shortage on the other side, but it probably would not prove profitable business. At present there is a fair demand for 1st and 2nd quality with a sufficient supply. Considering the scarcity of 3rd and 4th the demand for these is remarkable for its sluggishness. Although we anticipate a fair consumption for these qualities in the future, this may easily be checked by high prices (which are a necessity if shippers are to make any profit), freights being higher than last year, and the forward contract prices in Canada, taking them all over, the highest on record. When prices of pine deals from any cause reach a very high level, consumption is checked by the substitution of whitewood or other goods. The accounts from the Clyde, Tyne and other shipbuilding ports continue to be very encouraging. It is said that it is almost impossible to make a contract for a steamer in any of the well-known ports for delivery this year. Ship-builders have their hands as full of work as they care to undertake."

Messrs. Simson & Mason's London wood Circular says: "During March a good volume of business has been transacted, although prices have not continued on the advance as in the previous months of this year."

During the month the dock stock of pine deals has been reduced by 135,000 pieces, and we carry forward 560,000 pieces. At this rate of consumption there will be but an insignificant balance remaining when fresh

arrivals come forward. Prices firm.

The present supply of spruce is very short, viz., 360,000 pieces, against 395,000 in 1888, 716,000 in 1887, and 880,000 in 1886, consequently prices have been well maintained. With the good demand and high values ruling at the great spruce centres, enhanced freights from the spruce ports, and the continued firmness of the Baltic white, this is likely to continue. Stock reduced 90,000 pieces during the month.

Some fair lines of yellow pine and ash changed hands at good rates. Deliveries during the month embrace 310 loads of ash and elm and 130 loads of birch. Of ash and elm there is scarcely a month's consumption remaining on hand, the total amounts to only 390 loads! The market is open for the new imports.

The wood circular of Denny, Mott & Dickson, under date April 2nd, says: "The demand for Yellow Pine, Oak and Elm has been dull during last month, but the stocks are so bare that holders are certain of realizing them at good prices long before the high-priced new season's shipments can come to hand."

A moderate amount of business in Pitch Pine has been transacted at extreme rates for sawn logs; hewn timber being very scarce with slow demand. The first cargo of the new season's shipment is now in dock, and as stocks become replenished with arrivals of steamer cargoes, it remains to be seen if present high quotations will be sustained in face of the recent heavy additions to the stock of Memel Fir timber, which latter can now be brought in at much lower prices than Pitch Pine.

Recent arrivals of fresh Fir timber from Memel by steamers have swelled stocks to about 9,000 loads, and more is to follow. There are now about 4,000 loads more in the ponds than in the corresponding month of 1888. Demand has been fairly active and may be expected to increase as the import price of Fir now being much less than that of sawn Pitch Pine, it should compete more successfully with the latter than it has been able to do for years past. Prices continue steady, and no appreciable fall is to be expected until easier freights contribute to lessen the import cost.

PERSONAL.

Mr. John C. Whyte, of the firm of F. G. Strickland & Co., machinery agents, of New Westminster, B. C., paid us a visit last month. Mr. Whyte reports business good in the Western Province, and the lumber business rapidly increasing on the Pacific Coast.

A representative of the firm of Porter, Robertson & Co., wholesale lumber dealers, 31 Adelaide Street East, Toronto, made THE LUMBERMAN a call last week. This is a new firm just started in business, and we wish them every success in their new enterprise.

John McLaren, who for three years has been head bookkeeper of the Grape Sugar Refining Company, at Walkerville, goes to New Westminster, B. C., where he will manage the finances of the McLaren Ross Lumber Company, who have purchased a large tract of land in the western Province.

Mr. Levi Booth, foreman for Mr. J. R. Booth, lumber merchant, Ottawa, was recently stricken with paralysis. He had just returned home from a tour through the lumbering districts of the west and the southern States, where he has spent the past winter. We understand he is in a fair way for recovery.

We received a call last week from Mr. W. R. Rawlings, travelling agent for the well-known firm, The R. H. Smith Co. (Limited), saw manufacturers of St. Catharines, Ont. He says their saws are fast growing in favor and showed us some fine testimonials. He reports trade good and prospects very encouraging.

SALE OF VALUABLE TIMBER * LIMITS SAW MILLS AND LUMBER BUSINESS. TENDERS

Will be received by the undersigned at their OFFICE IN KINGSTON, up to Thursday, 20th June Next, For Valuable Timber Limits, comprising 110 square miles, situated in the Townships of North and South Canboro, Darling and Lavant, in the Counties of Frontenac and Lanark, in the Province of Ontario, on the Madawaska, Mississippi and Clyde Rivers.

These limits largely contain pine, and have convenient water ways, greatly facilitating the driving of logs.

A FIRST-CLASS STEAM MILL is situated in their centre, equipped with modern machinery, including Dressing, Lath and Shingle Machines, all in perfect working order. There are spacious piling grounds, containing three sidings from the main line of the Kingston and Pembroke Railway, giving every facility for handling, loading and shipping to a well-established and growing retail connection in Kingston, which has also unequalled advantages for shipping by rail or water.

AT THE MILL are about 18,000 pine logs, which the purchaser can have at cost. Plant and rigging for the working of the business are all in good order, and will be sold with the properties.

AND AT ALMONT.

A STEAM SAWMILL AND MACHINERY, situated on the Mississippi River, together with spacious and convenient yard containing about eight acres, with siding from Canadian Pacific Railway, and a well-assorted stock for an established retail trade.

Parties may tender separately for the Mills and Limits. Possession given immediately. Terms easy.

Full particulars can be obtained on application to the undersigned. A CALDWELL & SON, Lumber Merchants, Kingston, Ont.