



PUBLISHED
SEMI-MONTHLY.

The only Newspaper devoted to the Lumber and Timber Industries published in Canada.

SUBSCRIPTION
\$2.00 PER ANNUM

VOL. 3.

PETERBOROUGH, ONT., DECEMBER 1, 1883.

NO. 23.

WHICH WAY IS THE MARKET TENDING?

The *Timber Trades Journal* of Nov. 3, says. If any inquirer doubts the activity of the timber trade of the United Kingdom in a general sense, we commend to him the perusal of the provincial reports in our last impression. It is true they are not all equally favorable, but he would probably rise from the investigation with the impression on his mind that, whether people were getting money by it or not there was certainly a great deal of business doing.

Liverpool has been for some months past on what may be termed "the croak," on account of the importation of wood goods being much in excess of the demand; but a more hopeful tone then began to prevail. Large quantities of goods were going away into the country, and the worst that could be said of the market was that "the imports kept pace with the consumption." So it will be admitted they ought to do, at this time of year, and something more, else where would be the stock to carry the building and other trades on till next season came around? There was no further retrogression in the price of spruce at the public sales, and it was admitted that buyers were coming forward more readily than had been their wont of late, for which sufficient reasons were assigned, chiefly in the tempting prices at which goods were to be secured, and the approaching close of the import season, when they will no longer be obtained so cheaply. Birch timber and sawn pitch pine, but especially the former, fetched fair prices, and showed that there were plenty of buyers still in the market.

Hull reported diminishing arrivals, but plenty of deliveries, as "the railway company and the river sloops were very busy." The same state of things was also announced from Hartlepool, which was "enjoying in most departments of the trade a fair amount of work;" and what can be pleasanter to record than this? "A very fair trade is doing in sawn wood goods, which are mostly going out of the stocks in the yard. A large number of orders for deals, battens, and floorings are daily loaded up, and are evidently intended for immediate use among joiners and builders, as distinguished from the huge quantities sent from time to time on ship into the interior for stocking purposes;" and the saw mills of the neighborhood were said to be working very briskly.

No slackness of business, excepting in the import department, is reported from Grimsby, Sunderland, or Newcastle, and the abatement of the supply is likely to stimulate the demand. Only mining wood seems to be in excess about these regions, and a fair trade was doing in timber with the ironworks, collieries, and manufacturing around. Leith was by no means overstocked, and the importation was slackening, while at Glasgow, which, as we stated last week, has been importing very freely, the prices realized at the public sale were such as to make

a London importer's mouth water. Quebec 3rd pine deals of good sizes fetched £11 to £12 per standard at Messrs. Singleton, Dunn, & Co.'s sale of the 18th Oct., and Michigan, 1st £26 to £27, and 2nds £20 2s. 6d. at the sale by Messrs. Edmiston & Mitchell on the 24th—prices unknown to the London market, even when times were much better, and indicating that there is great life in the trade, notwithstanding the abundant rate of supply that has hitherto prevailed, and the expectation of a good deal more to come forward before foreign shipments cease for the year.

If we had only these reports before us, the unpaying prices of the London public sales would seem unaccountable, but other bodements are singing in the winds which it would be imprudent for the trade to ignore. An increasing number of vessels, our Stockholm correspondent tells us, are arriving to load at the lower Gulf ports, and it is already perceptible that a considerable number of ships are still afloat, timber-laden and destined for these islands, as well from America as from Europe. A single sentence sometimes divulges more than a whole column of beating about the bush; and such we find in the Cardiff report of last week. A number of market cargoes were then and there announced, with the following information added:—"Some have gone to Bristol, others to Sharpness, and some have been taken in here to be landed, we understand, for shippers account." Coupling this with the Swedish statement (under date of 20th October), wherein our correspondent expresses his belief that the fall shipments from the Gulf ports "will reach very near an average, in spite of assertions to the contrary so frequently heard a month ago," it may be safely inferred that there is yet a good deal of timber produce to come forward, and that the trade will be fortunate if it is not burdened with something more than an average fall importation ere the setting in of winter closes the timber shipping season. It is satisfactory though, in the midst of its unwonted importation, that the retail trade of Cardiff continues in a prosperous state, as confirmed by the following sentence—"Retail business is very brisk; all our timber merchants are exceedingly busy, sending away as fast as they can deliver, and we hear of nothing but contentment regarding the trade." What more could be said, if we were in the midst of those good times which are always coming but never acknowledged till a succession of commercial disasters undeniably prove to us that they have just gone by.

Last week we traced briefly the progress of importation throughout the land, in comparison of 1882, and on the present occasion we have attempted to show what kind of markets the goods had come to; and so far from finding it in a normally depressed condition, there are not wanting evidences that it is maintaining its

ground, and even going ahead through all the countervailing influences which were acting to its disadvantage, and were it for the rest of the year restricted to the legitimate business of buying abroad and selling at home by the established houses in the trade, there is nothing to show that is not in the way to a measure of prosperity quite equal to that of any period in the best records of the past.

The worst sign of the times may perhaps be found in these market cargoes, which are the bane of an established trade. When firms have imported all that they are likely to require for the connection they rely on, and by which they expect to realize a fair profit, nothing can be more vexatious than to see the cut from under them as it were by a crowd of cargoes sent into their port on speculation, which they have either to buy, at some inconvenience probably either as to money or space for storage, or to allow to be sold piecemeal to the very customers on whom they depended, to relieve them of the stocks they had already imported.

Money is however easy, and trade is evidently in good heart as a whole. Only in London do we see sacrifices made, which are quite inconsistent with the state of trade elsewhere; and even in London, should the supply not very much exceed moderate bounds, it will surprise nobody to witness a great change for the better, before the end of the year.

TAPER GROUND SAWS—THIN SAWS.

The majority of all millmen and filers know but little of the changes that have been made in saws in the last twenty-five years. When the circular saw was first introduced no one knew anything about hammering them open; it was thought the stiffer the plate the better. Then they were all made straight gauge. Following came the taper ground saw, which has been in use twenty years, and is still in use by majority of mills. Now I would like for some one to bring proof that it is better to have the plate thicker in the centre than elsewhere, and convince me of any benefit to be derived therefrom. It would be much easier to convince me that I am wrong than to convince the great number of mill-men who are using taper saws that they are wrong. Since the motion of circular saws has been increased, the extra steel in the centre is a detriment instead of benefit. It is well known that a saw will not run well when it is stiff in the centre. I would by all means prefer it thinner there than otherwise. My reasons are these: First, a straight saw will run with less set; second, it requires less hammering to put the saw in good condition for running. The less set the less power it takes to drive it, the lighter it cuts, and the less liable it is to buckle and dodge. Everything that will lighten the running of a saw should be sought for by all interested in its use. For a long time there were, but few changes made, but within

the last five years there has been much discovered that nearly doubles its capacity. And other things, when better understood, will add to this efficiency 25 per cent more than is now realized by the majority of mills.

Many mills are now running thinner and straight gauge saws. Some are making a success of straight 8 gauge 60-inch, and some do well with 10 gauge 72-inch. I have faith and confidence that five years hence 10 gauge saws will be run with as much success as 8 gauge saws now.

This using of thin saws is a subject of much interest to all persons engaged in the manufacture of lumber. Timber is becoming too scarce and expensive to waste 25 per cent of it in sawdust. All that can be saved by the use of thin saws over thick ones is clear gain. Many try to run thin saws, but fail for lack of knowledge how to run them, and how they should be made. There are several causes why millmen are not running saws three or four gauges thinner than those now in use. Thin saws can be run if they are properly handled. One prominent cause of their failure to run satisfactorily is in not having the proper number of teeth. It is not all in filing; much depends upon the hammering of the saw. I have seen gauge 72-inch saws run in hardwood and carry as much feed as was carried ten years ago in soft timber by 8 gauge, and with good results. (M. Corel.)

Conversion of Prairie into Forest.

Attention has lately been called to the fact that the numerous small prairies that were common in the Wabash basin at the time of its first settlement have become transformed into woodlands, and that owing to this gradual change of prairie to forest, the actual forest area of some of the counties of Southern Illinois is greater at present than fifty years ago. Extensive woods of oak and hickory more than eighty feet in height, and with trunks of nearly two feet in diameter, are now growing on what was open prairie within the memory of some of the present owners of the land. This is interesting as a slight indication of the solution of the mystery which involves the origin of the prairies; while the rapidity with which these new woods have sprung up, shows that the re-production of our failing forests can be accomplished in a shorter time than is generally supposed, if proper consideration and attention can only be given to the subject.—*Lumber World*.

A Small Fortune at Twelve.

By the sale of timber limits on Saturday last, at Ottawa, from which the sum of \$37,000 was realized, a young boy 12 years of age, named Taggart, becomes the possessor of about \$10,000, in cash, besides a very valuable farm. He is a son of the late Mr. Taggart, lumberman, Pembroke, who died seven or eight months ago. Young Taggart is at present in attendance at the Pembroke public school.