

of an average season. It is estimated by well-informed lumber dealers that there will be a shortage of twenty per cent. in the supply procurable in the Georgian Bay and Lindsay districts. And in the Ottawa districts the condition is thus described:—Upon the south side, there is a shortage of perhaps one-fifth of an ordinary season's cut, but on the north side a fair average supply of logs has been got out. A marked difference existed all through the lumbering season between the territory on the upper and lower sides of the Ottawa river, respectively with regard to weather and quality of snow, the northern district having a very decided advantage. On the southern, as well as in the western part of Ontario, there must be a number of logs "hung up," the prospect for driving being not favorable.

The price of lumber appears likely to continue firm at the advanced rates. There are several reasons for this: one being the activity in building which is already manifest in various parts of this continent, and another the increased cost of lumber production. One large operator informs us that the price of labor and the prices of materials are so much enhanced within twelve months that he expects his season's operations, although equal in turn-over to an average season, to yield him \$20,000 less profit. This goes to show that the rise in price of lumber has not yet reached a point where it equals the rise in cost of production. As it is put in another case: "The smaller proportion of first-class logs now procurable, as well as dearer labor, renders it increasingly difficult to conduct large operations with the success of former years. We find, for example, that of our cut of deals this last winter, barely 10 per cent. of the whole were of the first quality, and these we have sold at nine per cent. advance over last year's figures; 14 per cent. were seconds, and for these we obtained a half per cent. advance. The bulk of the cut, say two-thirds, were third quality, and on these the advance in price was 4 per cent. while on the remainder it was something over fourteen." Thus the increase in price upon the whole was not over six per cent., while the prices paid for labor, an important element in the cost, were from 20 to 30 per cent. higher, in some cases more, for drivers are dearer relatively than shantymen this season. Food and material, too, are appreciably higher, whether the N. P. advocates will admit the fact or not.

The indications are that prices will continue firm. A prime factor in maintaining values for some time to come is the active demand from Chicago and Detroit for Canadian lumber. Immigration and extensive

building accounts for activity in western markets, and sends up the price. Eastern cities do not report corresponding stir, and the Albany markets do not show such an advance; still the eastern demand promises to be healthy, and prices are meantime well maintained. Contracts have been made by Canadian dealers with American parties which confirm the impression of firm prices in the future.

#### THE PROVISION TRADE OF CHICAGO.

When in pursuance of the courteous policy of the citizens of Chicago, her commercial representatives were deputed to show that city's "biggest things" to the Canadian Board of Trade and municipal excursionists on their recent visit, the visitors were too short of breath and too scant of time, properly to "take it all in" as it deserved. When, for example, Messrs. Howard, White & Co., publishers of the *Daily Commercial Bulletin*, distributed by the hundred amongst the visitors a quarto sheet bristling with figures relating to pork, lard, and beef, there were few upon the train who retained sufficiently their *compos mentis*, after all they had seen and heard, to grasp the significance of these huge industries. They had seen at Armour's and at Fowler's packing houses, innumerable car loads and ship loads of hog products. And at the Union Stock Yards they had seen acre upon acre of cattle, with great storehouses of fodder and endless bins of corn. But these things were on so great a scale that it was not easy for the unaccustomed eye to measure or the untrained mind to grasp the difference between hundreds of thousands and millions: and the general effect was one of wonderment.

Never before, probably, had so many Quebec visitors seen sides of salted pork piled in warehouses by the hundred tons, like pig-iron upon the canal bank. Nor had a hundred Ontario travellers, at one *coup d'oeil*, beheld hams and sides of bacon heaped in symmetrical rows resembling cordwood, in perspective, in forest or on wharf. But it is necessary to fix quantities in the mind, if one wishes to learn something definite from all this vast display, and this we are enabled to do by means of the statistical sheet we have named, and the sixteenth annual live stock report of the Union Yard and Transit Company.

Those of our readers who inspected the packing-houses we have named, with their annual capacity of 1,100,000 and 900,000 hogs respectively, may need to be told that there were thirty or forty other smaller packing-houses in the city, and that the grand

total of hogs summer and winter packed was last year 5,100,000; and even that enormous aggregate was exceeded by half a million in the previous year. The product of these myriads of unhappy porkers is represented in 1881 by the following figures:

Pork, mess,.....	347,437 barrels.
do. other, .....	37,487 "
Hams, green, .....	24,981,411 pounds.
do. other, .....	23,249,049 "
do. sweet pickled, ....	98,466 tierces.
Shoulders, .....	34,148,102 pounds.
Bacon, Cumberland,.....	9,810,075 "
do. long clear,.....	29,804,358 "
do. short clear,.....	15,280,842 "
do. other, .....	109,943,000 "

Besides singed bacon, bellies, backs, hocks and tongues, and 271,851 tierces of lard. Let us take breath before analysing the stock-yard figures, and while doing so, remark that the value of the *direct exports* of hog products from Chicago to Europe during 1881 was about \$52,000,000, or an average value of \$1,000,000 per week, to Britain, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and the Scandinavian countries.

Receipts of live stock at Chicago stock yards other than hogs, were as follow in different years. The growth is astonishing:

	Cattle.	Sheep.	Horses.
1866,.....	393,007	207,987	1,553
1870,.....	532,964	349,853	3,537
1875,.....	920,843	418,948	11,346
1880,.....	1,382,477	335,810	10,398
1881,.....	1,498,550	493,624	12,909

The estimated value of these animals, plus that of hogs received, was in 1866, \$42,765,000; in 1870, \$62,090,000; in 1880, \$143,057,000, and last year, \$183,007,000, the largest ever known. It is a fact, vouched for by Mr. George T. Williams, secretary and treasurer, that the animals received at these stock yards in one day last year numbered 82,890. If the size of these figures should, as is not unnatural, stagger any reader who has not seen this great centre of the provision trade, it may be well to remind him that there are fourteen railways leading into Chicago, and that these animals were, with the exception of a trifling percentage driven in, brought thither by those roads.

Remembering the vastness of this commerce, and the large proportion of these food products which finds its way to the sea board and across the Atlantic, it is none too soon for Canadians to attempt to secure a fair share of its carriage by our magnificent St. Lawrence. Chicago's grain is already handled largely by the Canadian route, as Montreal barges, elevators, and steamships know, but we might do more of that provision trade. And it was well for Mr. Griffith to call attention, as he did, to the preparations being made by the City of Quebec to accommodate provision and grain traffic from the Great West which may find its way to her harbor.