

THE HEMLOCK SITUATION.

Western manufacturers of hemlock, according to the American Lumberman, are reporting flattering conditions prevailing in the various departments of their industry and from all accounts the coming season promises to be one of the most active that the manufacturers have ever enjoyed. Dry stocks are exceedingly low and broken in assortment. Shippers are greatly bothered by the scarcity of cars, which, while annoying, should in a measure conduce to the strengthening of market values. The volume of sales is steadily increasing as the season advances, although operations are at a standstill in some sections owing to the bad condition of the country roads.

A manufacturer who has made a careful survey of the situation confidently predicts that there will be a substantial increase in the quantity of hemlock sold during 1903, which he thinks will be greater than for any year previous to this, estimating the expected increase at from 25 to 35 per cent. over previous seasons. He gives as a reason for this that stocks are already in favorable demand, that norway piece stuff is scarce and will continue so, and that the spread in prices is greater in comparison with other woods used for construction purposes than it has ever been since accurate data on the subject have been secured. Occasionally it is noted that some of those who are selling hemlock on a commission basis are able to find a soft spot here and there, but no particular attention is paid to this by the larger manufacturers, as they are able to dispose of their stocks without difficulty to the country trade at list prices, and the surplus, when any exists, is well cared for in Chicago and the larger markets. More hemlock is going into the country trade this spring than had been counted on and but for the temporarily low prices that are being made on yellow pine dimension hemlock would doubtless find no difficulty in reaching territory that heretofore has been regarded as a natural absorbent of the southern stock. Even as it is, hemlock distribution is steadily expanding through the western and middle states, and its position for future development is regarded as entirely satisfactory by hemlock manufacturers in all sections.

FIRES.

The saw mill of Higgins Bros. at Metcalfe, Ont., was destroyed by fire on March 9th. The loss is \$3,000, with no insurance.

The shingle dry kiln of the Royal City Mills at New Westminster, B. C., was burned recently, together with a quantity of shingles.

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