

## LONDON BOARD OF TRADE RETURNS.

With this issue, says the *Timber Trades Journal*, we publish the timber portion of the Board of Trade returns for March and the past three months, which are rather later in appearance than usual, the Government report not being issued to the public till the afternoon of the 9th inst. Extending our remarks beyond that portion confined to wood, we observe that, although the business of the country continues favorable, it works upward very slowly from a national point of view. The general character of the returns is very much in keeping with the accounts we receive from the provinces; there is certainly an increase of business, and in some places trade may be even rather brisk; but there is no "boom" yet to inspire that confidence in commercial circles which is the customary forerunner of advancing prosperity. People rather think there is a good time coming, but they do not depend on it, and those who try to persuade themselves that the good time has actually arrived, as they see more business doing, wonder that so small a share of it reaches themselves. Last year the Board of Trade returns for March, in the export department, surpassed those of the March previous (1886) by £492,011, and in our imports for the same month there was an increase of £1,303,993, but we did not improve on those figures to a like extent in the March just passed.

All we have to the good in the comparison is £45,224 in the export trade, while our imports show a small deficiency amounting to £204,109. In other words, our oversea trade as a whole has fallen back in the month of March as compared with March last year by £158,885. This may not be altogether unfavorable, but it shows that we are not doing any great things in the way of regaining our former foreign trade. All the same there is something for from discouraging in the figures the Government have just put before us if we look carefully into them. There is an item of £187,196 less of manufactured articles. We are surely able to do without these, and will hardly regret the deficiency; and as food and drink are cheap and plentiful with us, we can very well dispense with the £1,974,965 worth of eatables and drinkables duty free, which we did not receive this March, but did the corresponding month last year. On the three months including March we have gained on the trade of last year for the same period, say—

On the import side.....£4,589,039  
On the export side.....2,557,450

Total increase during the 3 months, £7,146,489

If our export trade holds its own we shall be sure to have plenty of imports.

So much for the general trade, which it is always desirable to take a glance at before going into that branch, which more nearly interests ourselves, as every section must assimilate to the whole mass. Timber importations at this early period is seldom a trustworthy index to that which is to follow, the foreign trade being very desultory, but we all like to see the season open quietly. It disheartens the most sanguine to see cargoes coming forward early one on top of the other as it were, to be thrown into the public sales as fast as they are unloaded, which has been the case for the past four or five years.

It it be admitted (which some will not allow) that the import season for timber has begun, it must also be allowed that it has commenced with great moderation. Last year at this time we had to record an excess of import over 1886 up to 31st March amounting to within a fraction of 100,000 loads (see No. 554, Vol. 22, page 413), but this year tells a very different tale. The import of timber goods in March just passed is 60,982 loads in arrears of March, 1887, and, instead of the first quarter of the year showing an increase on the previous year's import up to that date, it is, according to the Board of Trade returns, 41,703 loads behind it. We are admonished of large east coast contracts gone out, and of steamers with heavy cargoes on board on their way home, and that the great thaw will be followed by a very considerable fleet of timber-laden vessels for this country. But, if so, that is nothing unusual when the spring trade begins, and in the meanwhile we have the important fact before us that, instead of being supplied with 100,000 loads more than last year as was the case in 1887, we are 41,000 loads deficient, in the comparison, up to the present date, with stocks generally very much below what they stood at then. Our readers can substantiate these figures for themselves from the subjoined timber returns of the Board of Trade, which may be considered very satisfactory as far as they go.

The following are the official returns for the month of March, 1887 and 1888, compared, and also for the three months ending March 31st, 1887 and 1888, compared:—

	QUANTITY.		VALUE.	
	1887 Loads.	1888 Loads.	1887 £	1888 £
TIMBER (Hewn).				
Russia .....	1,681	574	9,949	2,438
Sweden and Norway.	63,103	21,515	83,203	29,599
Germany .....	6,793	1,005	18,121	1,560
United States .....	3,701	9,475	14,650	40,357
British E. Indies .....	2,659	1,654	26,571	19,420
Brit. North America .....	280	692	1,100	2,406
Other Countries.....	42,668	50,565	38,585	53,427
Total .....	120,885	85,480	192,179	149,207

TIMBER (Sawn or split, Planed or Dressed).				
Russia .....	1,643	15	1,919	21
Sweden and Norway.	62,149	24,258	129,523	51,473
United States .....	14,222	28,159	37,122	76,357
Brit. North America .....	7,223	8,277	13,786	16,147
Other Countries .....	2,632	1,625	9,881	6,889
Total .....	87,869	62,292	192,231	150,887
Staves (all sizes) .....	8,877	3,126	53,051	2,117
Mahogany (tons) .....	2,107	4,896	17,297	41,734
Total of Hewn & Sawn .....	208,754	147,772	384,410	300,194

	QUANTITY.		VALUE.	
	1887 Loads.	1888 Loads.	1887 £	1888 £
TIMBER (Hewn).				
Russia .....	4,421	3,687	14,513	7,898
Sweden and Norway.	110,327	66,912	149,218	88,029
Germany .....	12,147	8,842	33,182	14,578
United States .....	8,991	19,597	39,076	83,701
British E. Indies .....	4,268	5,060	42,910	60,053
Brit. North America .....	492	1,012	1,674	3,366
Other Countries.....	116,438	137,896	106,933	132,480
Total .....	257,081	243,096	387,506	390,105

TIMBER (Sawn or Split, Planed or Dressed).				
Russia .....	24,794	6,233	38,592	12,150
Sweden and Norway.	105,443	73,485	220,593	155,557
United States .....	31,628	44,426	86,755	121,602
Brit. North America .....	11,914	19,893	23,198	38,584
Other Countries.....	7,235	9,349	24,292	30,084
Total .....	181,014	153,386	393,430	357,977
Staves (all sizes) .....	17,323	13,908	102,307	89,099
Mahogany (tons) .....	11,256	9,722	92,510	84,499
Total of Hewn & Sawn .....	438,095	396,392	780,936	748,082

## PERSONAL.

The Ottawa papers report Mr. R. Nagle, the well-known lumberman, as improving though still very ill.

The return of Mr. D. B. Meigs, a well-known lumberman, for Missisquoi, as member of the House of Commons, has been announced in the *Canada Gazette*.

Mr. Tucker David, has vacated the editorial chair of the *New York Lumber Trade Journal* and transferred his interest in the same to his late partner, Mr. J. D. Cray. We wish the new management every success.

One of Nova Scotia's pioneer lumbermen, N. L. Jodd, of St. Margaret's Bay, will be missed this season by his company, having died suddenly last winter. The mill will run as usual, the past winter proving very favorable for the taking out of logs.

M. M. Boyd & Co., the enterprising lumbermen of Bobcaygeon are working on the system of tramways throughout their property, intended to greatly facilitate handling the immense cut of lumber to be cut during the season, which will amount to from ten to twelve million feet.

## BUSINESS NOTICES.

The Gutta Percha and Rubber Manufacturing Company, of Toronto, have recently supplied about 3,000 feet of the larger sizes of Monarch rubber belting to Messrs. Hurdman & Co., Ottawa, for their saw mills at that place.

Attention is directed to the announcement in this issue of the Ball Electric Light Co., manufacturers of Electric Light Apparatus, Toronto. Mill owners contemplating introducing electric light into their mills will do well to correspond with the above firm.

As per announcement in our advertising columns, tenders are being asked up to the 30th June next, for the purchase of the estate of George Baptist, Son & Co., Insolvents, of the city of Three Rivers, lumber merchants. As this is a very valuable property there well in all probability be a brisk competition among prospective purchasers.

The Napanee Cement Co., Napanee, Ont., are Manufacturers of hydraulic cement of a superior quality, which they say is specially adapted to the construction of bridges, sewers, cellars, culverts, cisterns, foundations, etc. They also manufacture quicklime of special grade suitable for paper manufacturers, gas purifying, strong masonry and fine finishing work.

The Rathbun Co., of Deseronto, Ont., are calling attention in our advertising columns to the terra cotta manufactured by them, specially intended for rendering fireproof both new and old buildings. It is endorsed by leading architects as the most suitable material in the market for the construction of mills, factories, etc. Terra Cotta is a fireproof, material capable of withstanding the severest test. It is being used in the construction of some of the finest buildings on the continent, and is giving the most universal satisfaction.

We take pleasure in drawing the attention of our readers to the announcement in this issue of the well-known firm of Goldie & McCullach, Galt, Ont., manufacturers of flour mill machinery, wood working machinery, safes, vault doors, etc. This old established firm are too well known to need any introduction from us, and their manufacture can be classed as second to none on the continent. Parties visiting the Queen City would do well to call at the company's warerooms, next to the Mail office, where their courteous manager, Mr. Bostwick, will be pleased to show them as fine a sample of safes as can be found in the Dominion.

## NEWS NOTES.

—The North Hastings Lumber Co., capital \$20,000, has been incorporated.

—Another man gone wrong! Aldermen Patterson, of Cadillac, Mich., employed at Haynes Bros.' planing mill, thinks he has discovered perpetual motion, and has a machine going which he proposes to let alone for 30 days, to demonstrate his belief.

—Pacific coast capitalists are said to have made arrangements with the Maine Compress Company, of Bangor, to introduce its sawdust baling machine on the coast, which presses a ton of wet sawdust into three bales, each 24x24x36 inches, a reduction in bulk of 75 per cent. One coast concern agrees to bale 20 tons of sawdust daily.

—The *Toronto Empire* says: The wholesale men want the freight agents to see the necessity of constructing a general lumber depot in this city in connection with the Northern railway at the sole expense of the railways. Naturally enough the retail men are kicking against this, as it would deprive them of the earnings of their yards, or at all events it would do so to a great extent. The lumbermen of the Board of Trade went about their object very quietly and pretty successfully represented their story to the public. When, however, they met the railway freight agents the majority of them had not made up their minds as to what they did want, and railway representatives express no opinion whatever on the scheme. A committee was then appointed of the wholesale lumbermen to draw up some definite plan which they will submit to the railways in a few days. There is pretty sure to be some hard kicking on the side of the retailers, and the railway companies, if the matter should be submitted to them by their agents, are certain to consider it in a serious spirit. Though no expression of opinion has so far been given the fact of great piles of timber being placed in even comparatively close proximity to the engine-house and other railway sheds will have to be well considered. At any rate it is well that the public should know what the proposition is and give every side a show.

—The *Miramichi Advance*, in speaking on the stumpage question, "sits down" on the members of the Provincial parliament in the following unique but forcible manner: "The lumber trade, from Kent to Restigouche, has begged, by petition, for some relief from the oppressive stumpage, which is helping to close down mills and drive those formerly employed in them from the country. The Government pleads its revenue necessities for several years and says that but for these it would give the relief asked. When the exchequer is full and it has thousands to spare it spends the money for a third railway between Fredericton and Woodstock, for an additional public building at Fredericton, etc, and it hopes to make us forget its Punic faith by throwing this paltry \$5,000 grant at us in the form of an item in the Supplementary estimates, ostensibly in the lumber interest but, really, to build a road to the Salmon waters owned chiefly in official circles at Fredericton, and which it is said to be now determined not to spend after all. At least, it does not seem to have been voted and we cannot see, therefore how it can be 'appropriated.' Who asked for this \$5,000 to be spent for a substitute for the promised stumpage reduction? Were there any petitions, or requests for it from the lumbermen of the Miramichi as a body? Moreover, this idea of improving the lumber lands, is only a step in the direction already taken by the railway land corporation, which gives a drawback on stumpage at times to lumbermen who make such improvements. Even if the government spent \$5,000 in a bona fide way it would not be doing more than its duty and the appropriation would be in its own interest, rather than that of the lumbermen."