

THE TIMBER TRADE OF QUEBEC.

Messrs. J. Bell Forsyth & Co. Review the Trade of the Past Twelve Months.

We have again the pleasure of laying before the trade the usual statements of supply, export and stock wintering, together with prices current, tonnage employed, etc.

In Ocean Steamships the steady increase often alluded to in these circulars has not been realized this year, while the decrease in sailing ships so greatly felt in this port is alarming; and of schooners, colliers, &c., from the Gulf and Lower St. Lawrence the increase continues to be satisfactory.

We are happy to state for the benefit of all concerned in our trade, that an amicable adjustment has been arrived at between the Merchants of Quebec and the Ship Labourer's Society, by which rules detrimental to the trade and onerous to ship-owners have been annulled. This barrier to vessels loading here, especially steamships, having been removed, great results may be anticipated for the benefit of the employee as well as the employer.

The statement of supply handed to us by the Supervisor of Cullers, shows a slight increase in the quantity measured over the very limited manufacture of 1887, with a corresponding increase in the quantity exported, and in some woods. White pine especially, the most diminutive wintering stock on record. The total of all woods measured this year is 6,035,269 feet, while 8,551,840 feet have been exported, and only 5,617,723 feet are wintering in the Coves.

Prices generally opened at slightly advanced rates, which continued all season with a further marked increase toward the close.

WHITE PINE.—The supply has been unusually small, although slightly above that of 1887, and it is a remarkable fact and worthy of record that the entire stock is held by shippers, and the manufacturers for once have sold out all their stock in this market, and in many instances their entire manufacture for delivery next year. Such a healthy state of things is unprecedented we believe, and while the production this winter will be on a larger scale than during the past two or three seasons, it will not be in any way excessive, and in our opinion is warranted by the healthy demand in Great Britain as well as in this market. The enhanced value of Pine Timber Limits is very significant and a sure index of the scarcity of this great staple of our trade.

WANEY.—Has been in better request than Square all season, and sales were readily effected as lots arrived, and in many instances were contracted for last spring or in early summer. The supply though light, has been unusually good as to quality. In the stock remaining, just one-half of that of 1887, some old and inferior wood is included. The production this winter is likely to be on a moderate scale—clean, large, girthy wood being more difficult to procure than ever.

SQUARE.—The few new rafts manufactured last season were readily disposed of at good prices, but old timber was not so easily placed until towards the autumn, when the short supply and favorable accounts from Great Britain caused this wood to be more and more appreciated until finally every stick passed out of the manufacturers' hands into those of the shippers. The local demand has been steady all season and is likely to continue.

The Square wintering is less than last year by 1,714,250 feet, and contains the usual proportion of common and inferior wood unfit for shipment, culls, &c.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| 1888 } Square. 1,791,113 | 1,791,113 | 2,580,591 | Square. |
| 1887 } Waney... 2,020,043 | 2,020,043 | 6,020,000 | 1,226,000 Waney. |
| 1888 } Square... 1,168,547 | 1,168,547 | 4,294,851 | Square. |
| 1887 } Waney... 2,062,085 | 2,062,085 | 5,127,080 | 2,434,403 Waney. |

RED PINE.—This wood has been in good demand, especially for fresh parcels. The supply, though small, has been sufficient and the stock very light, yet slightly in excess of last year. The Irish demand, once so enormous, is at present very limited, and this wood does not command the attention it formerly did.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1888 } 582,305 | 582,305 | 465,360 | 464,691 |
| 1887 } 591,646 | 591,646 | 405,720 | 404,124 |

OAK.—Good and choice lots have been in fair request all season. Prices have advanced and the stock

wintering though somewhat heavier than last year, is under average. From all reports the manufacture will be light this winter. There is little wintering at Garden Island or Collins Bay.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| 1888..... | 1,139,252 | 1,178,920 | 824,253 |
| 1887..... | 746,243 | 1,012,160 | 748,673 |

ELM.—The supply of this wood has greatly fallen off, the export exceeding last year, and the quantity in stock fully one-half less. Standing Elm is difficult to procure in large quantities, and present prices leave little margin for profits to the manufacturer.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1888..... | 171,388 | 504,080 | 241,571 |
| 1887..... | 221,358 | 405,040 | 502,773 |

ASH.—Both the supply and shipment have been light, and the wintering stock, composed to some extent of old and inferior wood, is less than last year and under the average.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1888..... | 150,361 | 217,720 | 275,193 |
| 1887..... | 114,282 | 191,840 | 287,174 |

BIRCH.—Is completely shipped out, the stock being nil. Contracts have been freely made at our quotations.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|-----------|---------|---------|--------|
| 1888..... | 168,562 | 165,760 | 1,422 |
| 1887..... | 112,990 | 192,680 | 12,935 |

STAVES.—There is nothing encouraging in this branch of our trade which was once such an important and profitable item of shipment. Not only was the great demand for the British Isles a leading feature in the past, but Spain Portugal and France formerly drew considerable supplies direct from this port.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|--------------------|---------|---------|--------|
| 1888 } Pipe... 79 | 79 | 55 | 53 |
| 1887 } Pipe... 386 | 386 | 112 | 118 |
| 1888 } Pipe... 44 | 44 | 220 | 41 |
| 1887 } Pipe... 156 | 156 | 306 | 33 |

DEALS—PINE.—Have been in fair demand all season, though the advance in freights and scarcity of tonnage militated considerably against the export, which would otherwise have been much greater owing to the demand in Great Britain, especially towards the autumn. Our figures show only a small portion of the Deal trade of Canada, the bulk of the Ottawa "cut" and other mills West being shipped from Montreal. Prices have been well maintained, the demand being stronger than usual for the lower qualities. Michigan Deals have been received and shipped as heretofore, one cargo only being included in our wintering stock. The excitement now prevailing in Ottawa and elsewhere regarding lumber for the South American markets will likely lead to large transactions, in which case the manufacture of Deals will be considerably curtailed.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| 1888..... | 1,545,565 | 1,189,490 | 827,416 |
| 1887..... | 1,487,158 | 1,365,510 | 670,341 |

DEALS—SPRUCE.—Have been in good request, and both supply and shipment fully up to the average. Prices have advanced, as will be seen by our quotations, at which rates contracts have been freely entered into for next season's delivery.

| | Supply. | Export. | Stock. |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1888..... | 2,739,993 | 2,448,156 | 1,132,428 |
| 1887..... | 2,301,996 | 2,399,489 | 990,591 |

SAWN LUMBER.—Has been in good request both for export and home consumption. The quantity of this lumber for shipment to the United States being greatly on the increase, and the lower grades formerly neglected being now in active demand. We quote Pine at \$15 to \$18 per thousand feet b. m. and Spruce at \$10 to \$12, according to specification and quality.

Freights opened at 18s. to 20s. for Timber, and 42s. 6d. to 45s. Deals, and continued at about these rates up to July, when they advanced, and finally closed at 25s. to 30s. for Timber, and 80s. Deals, with tonnage very scarce.

Rat Portage Protests.

Editor Canada Lumberman:

SIR,—As chairman of a public meeting held this evening, I am directed to write you on behalf of the citizens of Rat Portage, in order that through your columns the public at large may become aware immediately of the hardship we are likely to suffer.

Our district rejoiced exceedingly upon obtaining a decision of the great constitutional question involved in the St. Catharines Lumbering and Milling Company's case. We

thought that the settlement of this question by the Privy Council would put an end to the many drawbacks and disadvantages we have had to suffer for the last eight years. But no sooner has the decision been made public than we are informed that orders have been issued from the Department of Crown Lands of Ontario to compel the cessation of certain legitimate lumbering operations in our district. A petition (a copy of which is enclosed to you herewith) has been sent to the Department of Crown Lands, which will, we hope, grant us relief. But it was thought advisable to ask the co operation of your assistance.

The relief that we ask for in the petition is only of a temporary nature, and for this winter; and our district is not at all desirous of interfering with whatever policy in the timber interest may be deemed as the best for our province by our Legislature.

The effect of the carrying out of the present order of the Crown Lands Department will not only deprive several hundreds of families in our district of their means of support, certainly for this winter, and possibly for next summer, but also cause to be shut down two large mills here that will distribute \$10,000 a month in wages alone between them.

This seriously embarrasses the merchants of Rat Portage, and through them, possibly, the wholesale houses who deal with them.

We therefore think that the whole matter should be made known to the public, and trust that you will assist our community in making known our grievance, as we believe that, as soon as realized, our Government will at once take the necessary and proper steps to remedy the same.

Yours, etc.

WM. R. GERRIE,

Rat Portage, December 21st, 1888.

Acting Reeve.

THE PETITION.

To the Honorable the Commissioner of the Department of Crown Lands of Ontario:

The petition of the undersigned, the citizens of the municipality of Rat Portage, begs leave to show as follows:

1. That it was with feelings of great pleasure that we learned that the title question of our lands and minerals in this district had been decided, and we are now looking forward to an era of prosperity and the development of our district.

2. That at present our commercial interests are largely dependent on the operations carried on in our midst by the different lumbering camps and saw mills, all of which employ a large number of the workmen.

3. That certain of the lumberingmen applied, as has been the custom for the last several years, for licenses or permits to go on this winter as usual and cut logs for the next summer's supply for their mills, but were unable to obtain any permits or licenses until after the decision of the Privy Council.

4. That such lumbermen, though being unable to obtain any permits, were given to understand that your honorable department of the Government would not object to their going upon the limits in question, and build the camps and make the necessary arrangements for the getting out of their logs.

5. That in pursuance of such permission large numbers of men have been, and are now engaged for the winter's work, and will be in the different lumbering camps.

6. That also large amounts of money have been expended, and plant and supplies contracted for from the different merchants of our town, the security for which is mainly dependent upon the due completion of the season's work.

7. That we have just learned with great dismay that it is the intention of your department to order the cessation of all further operations of the above lumbering men for this winter, which also includes the closing next summer of certain large saw-mills in our municipality.

8. That the compliance with such an order involves the loss of employment of about three hundred men, now at work, and at a time in the midst of winter when the channels of labor are closed.

9. That the majority of such men, with their families, will be thrown upon our municipality for support for the balance of the winter, if such an order is enforced.

10. That the fact of having a large number of men suddenly brought into our midst, without employment and without money, and who will have to be fed either by the municipality or by the Government, will also be dangerous and prejudicial to the public peace.

11. That though the said lumbermen are desirous of getting out this season's supply of logs for the next year, yet they are not in any way desirous of avoiding the timber regulations of your Government or the payment of all dues for such timber.

Your petitioners therefore pray:

I. That you will be pleased to take into immediate consideration the gravity of the situation, and the financial loss that will follow from enforcing the order to desist from further lumbering operations for this season.

II. And make such arrangements for this winter that the interest of the province will be guarded and all proper dues collected, but also that the above lumbermen of our district who have camps established may be permitted without hindrance to complete their season's cut, and so make provision for the due operation of the saw mills in this district, some of which would otherwise be closed down.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

—George Brackett has started his new mill on the Snobomish, near Victoria, B.C. The mill will have a capacity of 40,000 feet per day.