

THE METAL TRADE.

THE UNITED STATES MARKETS.

New York.

Direct trade may be seen very gratifying evidence of a general and healthy revival of the iron and steel industry of the country. If we take the value of the most important products in the trade and the opinion of the most important publicists on the subject, we must admit that the iron trade has not been in a more healthy condition since the memorable crash of the year 1873. In our own market quite a volume of business has been reported for the past week. Consumers have been the principal purchasers at prices, which made public, about on the basis of these figures—

Table with 2 columns: American Pig No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, No. 5, No. 6, No. 7, No. 8, No. 9, No. 10, No. 11, No. 12, No. 13, No. 14, No. 15, No. 16, No. 17, No. 18, No. 19, No. 20, No. 21, No. 22, No. 23, No. 24, No. 25, No. 26, No. 27, No. 28, No. 29, No. 30, No. 31, No. 32, No. 33, No. 34, No. 35, No. 36, No. 37, No. 38, No. 39, No. 40, No. 41, No. 42, No. 43, No. 44, No. 45, No. 46, No. 47, No. 48, No. 49, No. 50, No. 51, No. 52, No. 53, No. 54, No. 55, No. 56, No. 57, No. 58, No. 59, No. 60, No. 61, No. 62, No. 63, No. 64, No. 65, No. 66, No. 67, No. 68, No. 69, No. 70, No. 71, No. 72, No. 73, No. 74, No. 75, No. 76, No. 77, No. 78, No. 79, No. 80, No. 81, No. 82, No. 83, No. 84, No. 85, No. 86, No. 87, No. 88, No. 89, No. 90, No. 91, No. 92, No. 93, No. 94, No. 95, No. 96, No. 97, No. 98, No. 99, No. 100.

Scotch—Sales of over 2,000 tons are reported for the past week at figures below our last quotations. It is noticeable that importations are lighter than they have been for months, and the foreign markets—especially Glasgow—are steadily advancing. From official figures just given to the public, the fact is established that stocks in bonded warehouses in this country are much lighter than the general estimate. The shipments exhibit an increase of 123,845 tons since Christmas, as compared with those of the past year to the same date. Quotations of leading brands are as follows: No. 1 Pig Iron—Gartsherrie 56s, Coltness 57s, Langton 56s, Summerlee 54s 6d, Carrubroe 54s 6d, Gt. Glasgow 54s 6d, and Ellinton 52s. Middleshrough Pig Iron was quoted as follows: No. 1 Foundry 40s, No. 2 43s 7d, No. 3 41s, No. 4 40s, No. 4 Forge 40s. These quotations are fully sustained by the following figures ruling firmly in our own market—

Table with 2 columns: Glasgow, Gartsherrie, Summerlee, Ellinton, Coltness.

English—Inquire is more active, and holders who would have been willing sellers, one month ago, at \$18 per ton, now quote No. 1 Middleshrough firmly at \$22.

Rails—Best American steel rails are quoted at \$65 cash at works. But all mills are sold so far ahead that no transactions are mentioned for any earlier delivery than September or October. The demand for iron is better than it has been for several months.

Tin—There has been a further sharp advance in price of big tin under extensive speculative operations, strengthened by favorable accounts from abroad and more demand from consumers. After sales of some 1000 to 1200 tons at 20 1/2 @ 21 1/2 cts as to delivery, for Straits, the market closes buoyant. Quotations are 21 1/2 cts spot for Straits; 21 cts for Australian; 20 1/2 cts for Billiton; 21 1/2 cts for English L. & F.; 21 1/2 cts for English refined, and 24 cts for Banca. Tin plate more active and ruling strong, with an advancing tendency to prices.

Copper—More business in ingot is reported, and price shows corresponding improvement. Sales include 300,000 pounds at Baltimore and Lake at 18 1/2 to 18 3/4 cts cash, and 750,000 pounds future delivery at 18 to 19 1/4 cts. Manufactured quoted as follows: Brazier's copper over 10 oz., per square foot, 28c to do. 12 oz. to 16 oz., 30c; do 10 oz. to 12 oz., 32c; do lighter than 10 oz., 34c, circles segment and pattern sheets less than 84 in. diameter, 31c; do. do. over 84 in., 34c; locomotive fire-box sheets, 31c, sheeting copper over 12 oz. per sq. ft. 26c; do. bolt 28c, copper bottoms, 31c.

Lead—Sales reaching 500 to 600 tons domestic pig at 4 1/2 and a shade under are reported. The market is yet rather weak. Manufactured lead quoted as follows: Bar, 6c; pipe, 7c, sheet, 7 1/2c—less 10 per cent. discount to the trade—and tin-lined pipe 15c.

Pittsburgh.

Pig Iron—The market up to the close of last report was extremely quiet, as reported, but in the latter part of the week there was more activity. Sales made thus far this week indicate no change in prices, and we repeat last week's quotations: Cold short, \$20 to 21; neutral, \$22 to 23; cinder-mixed red-short, \$23, all-ore red-short and Bessemer, \$25 to 27—all on four months time. Sellers are not anxious to accept large orders at present prices.

Manufactured Iron—There is considerable inquiry for the various kinds of manufactured iron, but buyers are not very prompt in placing their orders. Bar may still be quoted an 2.20 cents, but sheet and tank have advanced the former fetching 38 cents and the latter 3 cents. There is a heavy demand for the latter, and it is not probable that even a large order could be placed for less than 3 cents.

Nails—The Western Nail Association have agreed to fix the selling price of nails at \$3.00 per keg, usual terms. They have been selling for some time past at \$2.75 to \$2.85.

Railway Spikes—There has been no change in price of railway spikes, and we repeat last week's quotation—2 1/2 cents per pound, 30 days.

Old Rails—Are worth from \$29 to \$30 per ton. Scrap Iron—Dealers report a stiffening of prices but consumers of No. 1 wrought are still supplying their wants at \$22.00 to \$25.00 to \$26.00 per net ton—last two figures being for railway scrap. Cast scrap is worth from \$17 to \$22 per gross ton. Old car wheels \$28 to \$30.

Copper—Prices have undergone no change. Lead—Pig lead is quoted at 6 cents. Manufactured, unchanged.

Philadelphia.

Pig Iron—The pig iron market is stronger than it was last week. A few of the best brands are out of the market altogether, the owners holding them for higher prices. No. 1 foundry, which sold a month ago for \$22 now commands \$26, and is scarce; No. 2, \$22 1/2 to 24, according to brand; gray forge, \$20 1/2 to 21 at furnace, although some lots have been sold at \$20.50, with few inquiries, it being held mostly by strong parties who can wait.

Blooms—Best cold blast charcoal at forge \$63 for No. 1 (2464), with numerous inquiries for immediate delivery; runout anthracite, \$55 1/2 to 57, at forge (2464); scrap blooms, \$50 (2240). Forges are full of orders and prices are stiffening in sympathy with an improving market.

Muck—The improvement in muck bar mentioned last week has been sustained and prices are firm at \$41, with numerous inquiries and a higher figure probable in a few days.

Merchant Bar—Most of the sales are in small lots at 2.35c cash, though plenty of orders for very large lots are in the market, 2.4 to 2.5c is the current quotation. Makers are meeting the requirements of customers and declining very large orders except at current prices at date of delivery, as the impression is general that the upward tendency will not be arrested until buyers have been pretty well supplied.

Nails—Nails have advanced to \$1, with an active demand, buyers having seen that bottom was touched at \$2.75. Makers are filling small orders and refusing large orders except at current rates when delivered. An order for 1000 kegs was received this week at present prices. The mills have enough work for August and most of September.

Sheet Iron—The quotations given below are still the ruling rates, but prices have advanced during the past few days so that leading houses have declined orders this week on that end. Quotations are as follows: Runned No. 28 to 28 1/2 cts, No. 22 to 25 1/4 cts, No. 16 to 21, 4c, 1/2 inch for extra qualities. Best bloom, No. 28 to 28 1/2, is down from 7 1/2 to 7c. No. 22 to 25, 6 1/2 cts, No. 16 to 21, 6 1/2 cts. Imitation Russian, 8c, common red plates, 3 to 4, blue annealed, 3 to 4, 18 to 19, 3 1/2 cts, best bloom plate 3 1/2 cts.

Scrap Iron—There is considerable demand for No. 1 wrought scrap, which sold this week, as vessel, at \$28 to \$29, ex-yard, \$28.

THE PRESENT PROSPECTS OF THE IRON TRADE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM—II.

(Pall Mall Gazette.)

Returning to the subject of an article which appeared in the Pall Mall Gazette on the 18th inst, we may begin by enumerating the exports in quantity of various kinds of iron and steel from the United Kingdom to the United States during the past five months (January to May) of the present year 1880, and in 1879 and 1878; also during the ten months of the active trade (August, 1879, to May, 1880), and during the whole year 1871, the last preceding year of greatest exports—

Iron and Steel—Exports quantities in 1,000 tons: 11-11,000 from the United Kingdom to the United States: first five months, 1878, 10,000 tons; August 1, 1879, to May 31, 1880; and whole year, 1871 (Board of Trade tables).

Table with 5 columns: Five months to May 31, 1878, 1879, 1880, Iron and Steel, Ten months August 1, 1879, to May 31, 1880, Whole Year, 1871.

The exports of the five months of 1880 are nearly ten times those of 1879. The total exports of 1871 were 916,000 tons. The exports of the twelve months ending July 31, 1880, will be not far short of 1 1/2 million tons; and of that quantity one million tons will be pig and "old" iron—in striking contrast to the exports of 1871, when rails were the predominant description. Judging by the values given by the Board of Trade tables, the average price of the iron and steel exports of the five months January—May, 1880, was 72s.; but for the single month of May only 70s. This indicates a working out of the contracts made at high prices; and the 70s. represents a large proportion of manufactured iron and steel. Mr. Swank, the well-known secretary of the great protectionist body called the American Iron and Steel Association of Philadelphia, has just issued a report for 1879, with a preface relating to 1880. Mr. Swank's main contention is that in February last his countrymen arrived at the conclusion that in the United States "domestic productions had fully overtaken the consumptive demands of the country," and that the consequent fall of prices has been philosophically accepted. Mr. Swank gives the following figures as the production (in millions of tons) in the three years 1877-8-9—

Table with 4 columns: United States, 3,07=3,070,000 tons, 1879, 1878, 1877.

Mr. Swank says that on March 1, 1880, there were 697 furnaces in blast in the United States with an annual capacity of 6 1/2 million tons (of 2,000 lb. each), provided the furnaces worked all the year. There were in course of building forty-eight new furnaces, with a calculated capacity of 1 1/2 million tons. At end of 1879, he says, there were 388 furnaces in blast, compared with 265 at end of 1878. Mr. Swank also gives the following careful comparison of prices, and to render it more convenient to English readers we convert the dollars into shillings:—

United States—Iron and steel. (1). Lowest prices 1877-79; (2). Highest prices, February, 1880; and (3). Prices, May 15, 1880, in shillings sterling—(1 dol. = 4s.).

Table with 3 columns: No. 1, Lowest prices, and when; Description; No. 2, No. 3.

Comparing the prices of February, 1880, with the low prices of 1877-79, there cannot be any wonder that the collapse has been so severe. But even the prices of May, 1880, are still 50 to 76 per cent. higher. We arrive, then, at five tolerably plain conclusions:— First, that in 1880, and most probably in 1881 and later years, the demand for iron and steel of various kinds, but principally rails, in the United States will, at a certain range of prices, compel that country to import about 1,900,000 tons or more from this country, even at the present preposterous rates of specific duty, ranging from £1 to £6 10s per ton, or from 100 to 150 per cent., according to the import price at New York.

Secondly, that the strong efforts made this year in Congress in support of Mr. Covett's proposal to reduce the iron and steel tariff by one-half or two-thirds—efforts which, as Mr. Swank admits, have greatly alarmed the Pennsylvania ironmasters—justify the expectation that next year (the presidential election being disposed of) there may be a considerable abatement of the present duties, and therefore an extended opening for the use of British iron and steel in the States.

Thirdly, that with the occurrence of a favorable harvest in 1880 in this country and on the Continent it is almost certain that the home consumption of 3.1 million tons in 1879 will be materially increased.

Fourthly, that the collapse in the iron market since March last is directly and plainly the result of over-speculation far more than over-production. The violent rise of prices stopped consumption at home and stopped purchases of British iron in America. Consumers at home and in America who could afford to pay 50s. to 55s. for pig iron could not afford to pay

70s. to 80s., or even prices much less. Hence the fall of the market to some extent due to its level in the summer of 1879 has restored the activity of the solid consumptive demand.

Fifthly, that the pressing practical question now relates to the price at which British iron and steel can be offered in the markets of the world, with reasonable profit to the producer. It may be assumed as almost certain that with such average annual prices for (sheet) pig iron as 18s. in 1878, and 47s. in 1879, the yearly output in 1879 of 20 million tons cannot be sustained. The average price of 1879 was 53s. of 1876, 58s., and of 1875, 68s. Scotch pig iron cannot probably be now continuously produced at less than 50s. to 52s.; Staffordshire probably a few shillings higher; Cleveland, Northamptonshire and Berkshire certainly several shillings less. At these limits there is a hopeful future for those establishments in the iron trade in this country, which possess the best advantages of locality, of cheapness and quality of fuel and of iron ore, of new and scientific furnaces and plant, of skill and energy of management, and such a command of capital as renders them free from the burden and peril of money borrowed for urgent business purposes. Whenever the whole or most of these favorable conditions are not found it is very unlikely that any permanent rise of market prices will enable the manufacture to be continued at a satisfactory profit.

Leaving these portions of the subject which relate more particularly to detail, it is necessary to examine some of the larger conditions of which the specific economic facts are but a few of the consequences for the production and consumption of iron and steel are no more than indications of a class of events controlled and directed by the productiveness of the seasons and the effectiveness of human labor. As regards America, the larger conditions which modify all others are:— (1) The rapid increase of population and production in the West and North-West, and to some extent in the South, and (2) the shifting of political power which, under the Constitution, will follow as a matter of settled law the population of the several States as shown by the census of the present summer. To take the last point first: the proportion of members in the House of Representatives is adjusted after each census on the basis of the population in 1860, the then total population of 31,500,000, divided by 233 as the number of members, gave 127,000 of population as entitling to one member. The 38,500,000 of 1870 raised the unit to 165,000, and if, as may happen, the population of 1880 amounts to 50,000,000, the unit would become 214,000. Between 1860 and 1870 the New England and Atlantic States increased 16 per cent., the West Centre 25, the West 65, and the South 18 per cent., and the results on the proportionate representation were to reduce from 91 to 75 the number of representatives from the New England and Atlantic States, and from 69 to 6, the representatives of the West Centre States. On the other hand, the representatives of the Western States rose from 23 to 29, and of the South (as the negroes were for the first time counted as freemen) from 50 to 63. These were great changes. But since 1870 it is certain that nearly all the increase of population has been in the West and North-West, and it is possible that the effect of the census of this year may transfer, in 1881, as many as 15 or 20 representatives from the New England and Atlantic group of States to the non-manufacturing States, of which even Chicago is now an Eastern entrepot. The first condition of comfort and progress in these communities of the Western wilderness is that, inasmuch as their raw produce must be sold cheap because it has to bear the cost of thousands of miles of transit to a market, so the implements and tools which are required for the purpose of their hard and adventurous labor must also be bought cheap, both in cost and quality. Mr. Swank's report indicates very plainly that in Pennsylvania the inevitable outcome of these conditions is clearly foreseen. Next, as regards the increase of population in the West. In the single year 1878, about 15,000,000 acres of wild land were brought under cultivation in the new States and Territories by settlers, who were chiefly men with families taking up farms of about 160 acres. The average area taken by settlers is about 50 acres per head. The new Western population would be, therefore, about 300,000 persons in one twelvemonth, a rate of settlement wholly without example. The immigration into the States was, in the three years 1876-77-78, about 175,000 a year, or say more than 500,000 persons in the three years. The immigration of 1879 was much larger. But the immigration of 1880, according to the progress of the last five months, will probably reach 400,000. The actual arrivals in the States to the end of the past month (June) were about 250,000 persons. Such, then, are the broad facts on which the general problem seems to rest.

RUSSIAN TOOL STEEL.

The tool steel used in Russia is imported chiefly from England, although some private firms are using German steel. The Obouchoff Steel Works, near St. Petersburg, are, however, making tool steel for their own use, and are also filling some orders for other Russian works. At the Obouchoff Works, Whitworth's system of compressing fluid steel has been for some time employed, and it is now being turned to account for the production of solid ingots of tool steel. The steel is prepared in crucibles from a mixture of blister steel with refined cast iron and ferromanganese, the materials employed being very pure. The Oural blister steel used contains carbon 1 per cent., silicon 0.06 per cent., manganese 0.22 per cent., and phosphorus 0.07 per cent. The application of the Whitworth system of compression enables perfectly sound ingots to be obtained the whole of each ingot being available for the production of tool steel by the further processes of hammering and rolling—Engineering.

A ROLLING MILL TO BE STARTED IN SOUTH AMERICA.

Last week's National Labor Tribune says:—On last Sunday six good members of the Association left Pittsburgh en route for the United States of Columbia, South America, where they have engaged for three years, at splendid figures, to work in a new rolling mill at their respective trades. The parties are Richard Bowater, roller, late of Park, Bro & Co.; Thomas Jones, heater, of Lewis, Oliver & Phillips upper mill; Thomas Hickey, boiler, of Schoenberger & Co.; Martin Richards, roll turner, of Westlake & Co., Warren, Ohio; and John Jones and John Rogan, roughers. Their expenses are paid from New York to the place of destination—65 miles east of Bogota, in the State of Boyalca. Their salaries commenced from the date of embarkation (last Thursday) from New York. They are first-class men in every sense of the word, and with proper care they will do well in their new home.

THE WOOL MARKET.

New York.

There has been no new feature noticeable in the trade of wool during the week passing in review. The market continues quiet simply because manufacturers are working up their stocks hoping to tire out the patron of wool growers, and if it is continued till wool would be a calamity to the woolen interest if it occurred, but there is no fear of that so long as the terms of the country hold them at prices equal to the value of the principal markets. We may as well candidly about this matter. There will be no break values, but rather an advance so soon as manufacturers commence to purchase supplies. California and improved Texas wools may be relatively too high, as stated with Cape and Montevideo, but other classes wool must advance in value with an improved demand to whatever of the leading shawl makers say a private correspondence with his agents.

ST. PAUL, July 28, 1880.

Your view of the shawl situation seems judicious in the absurdity of selling goods below cost of production. In coming to a final conclusion, you must remember that the price of wool is 20 to 25 per cent. higher than it was at this time last year, and the tendency of the wool market is now towards firmer prices.

The above change in wool is after a very considerable decline from the highest price, and on the ground wools we use the rise is 25 per cent. now.

Our best grades of woolen shawls for several years have been sold at an actual loss. This is an important acknowledgment, and it is known to be true to the letter, we leave the trade to digest it as they deem proper.

Philadelphia.

Wool continues firm and in good demand, with the stock: Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia—No. 1 above, 48c to 50c; No. 2, 47c to 49c; medium, 47c to 48c; coarse 42c to 43c, New York, Michigan, Indiana and Western—Fine, or X and XX, 41c to 44c, medium, 40c to 48c, coarse, 42c to 43c. Washed Combing and Delaine—Fine Washed Delaine, X and XX, 50c; medium Washed Combing and Delaine, 50c; coarse, 44c to 45c. Canada Washed Combing, 42c to 43c; Tab-washed Choice, 43c to 50c, fair 45c to 47c. Unwashed Combing and Delaine—Medium Unwashed Combing and Delaine, 35c to 36c; coarse, 32c to 34c. Bright Washed Clothing—Fine, or X and XX, 20c to 20c, medium, 30c; coarse, 30c to 31c. Dark Earthy Washed Clothing—Fine, 18c to 24c; medium, 28c to 30c, coarse, 26c to 27c. Oregon—Fine, 28c to 30c; medium, 30c to 35c; coarse, 28c to 30c. California—Fine, 25c to 26c, medium, 28c to 31c, coarse, 25c to 30c. New Mexico and Colorado—Fine, 29c to 30c; medium, 28c to 29c, coarse (Carper Wool), 22c to 23c. Pullet—Merino 40c to 45c; Super, 41c to 43c; Laub 40c to 45c.

Australia.

Advices are received from Sydney up to June 16th, Messrs. Griffiths & Co. report transactions as few and unimportant, with prices merely nominal. They also assert that there is likely to be a large increase in the exports of wool from there the coming season. The flocks of this colony on the 1st of January, 1880, were estimated as numbering thirty million sheep, or an increase of five million for the year, and as the late extended railways toward the upper Darling and Murrumbidgee rivers will probably bring to Sydney the wool product of a large extent of territory—that formerly shipped to Melbourne and Adelaide—we may look for an increase of 50,000 bales over the exports of this year. The shipments from that port for the season were 126,000 bales, being an excess of 33,519 bales over those for the same time last year. Greasy fleeces ranged from 8d to 11 1/2d for choice. Messrs. Goldsborough & Co., of Melbourne, Victoria, writing under date of June 10th state that the wool trade is dull as usual at that period of the year. Advices from the different country districts continued generally very favorable. Having had throughout abundance of feed and water, the stock are in excellent condition, and the fleeces are well-grown and sound; and there is every indication of the ensuing clip being equal, if not superior, to that of last year. The lambing also, so far, has been satisfactory, and, from all appearance, a large increase may be expected.

The season had been favorable in most of the wool-growing districts, and shearing will, therefore, commence early. Facilities for carriage had been greatly increased by the opening of railways in all directions, and the improvement effected in river navigation, there will be much less time than usual between the shearing and the delivery of the wool at the warehouses. The first Riverine clip wool sales will commence in Melbourne about the end of September. Inferior greasy fleeces were held at 6d to 8d, good average, 8d to 10d, and superior 11d to 14d.

NEW YORK DRY GOODS TRADE.

(N. Y. Economist.)

The second month of the summer has closed, and with it, we trust, the long lull which has supervened. Signs of awakening activity in mercantile circles are apparent on all sides, and the week passing in review has developed in many lines of goods an improvement in the distribution from commission circles that is alike cheering as it is gratifying. Increased action has been noticed in the movement of many lines of goods from first hands, and in some it has been specially significant, while in others the development has been slower and more gradual in its stages. Openings of reasonable fabrics in both cottons and woollens have become more general, and prices have been named and otherwise readjusted on so reasonable and satisfactory a scale, and in many instances in so close conformity with the views of large buyers, that the latter have to longer much excuse for delaying their needed purchases for the fall season. Conservatism and prudence seem peculiarly to mark the course of trade. No excitement or rush appears viable, but, on the other hand, transactions in nearly all departments of merchandise are characterized by a legitimacy, growing out of a healthy but gradual development of current and prospective wants. In woollen and worsted dress goods a large business has been transacted, and steady improvement is noted along the entire line of plain and fancy fabrics. For ladies' and misses' plain and fancy hosiery and men's knit hose there has been a steady inquiry for moderate parcels which in connection with the delivery of a taking place on previous orders has made business apparently quite active. In underwear there is a fair to good business doing at the firm current value ruling for the same. For fancy knit woollens, such as nubias, hoods, jackets, scarfs, etc., the request, though in some instances somewhat moderate, nevertheless, has been quite satisfactory. In carpets new business has been gradually improving, though still somewhat light in volume. Prices, however, are firm and unchanged.

—H. R. H. Princess Louise laid the tablet stone of the Louise Embankment at Quebec on Thursday last. H. R. H. accompanied by Prince Leopold sailed for England on Saturday.

—On Thursday last twenty-four members of Parliament and other gentlemen breakfasted at the Palace Hotel, London, Eng., under the Presidency of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, to meet Sir Charles Tupper and Senator Vidal. Sir Wilfrid Lawson congratulated the Canadians on having passed a measure to prohibit the liquor traffic. Sir Charles Tupper responded in an appropriate speech.