

THE TRADE SITUATION.

THE trade in the Ottawa district has been fairly good during the month, with no material change in prices. Dullness continues in the upper grades of pine, while box and common have been moving more freely than during October. Shingles and lath, both dull. Navigation being practically closed, distribution of wood products must necessarily be by rail, which will no doubt be at the minimum until after the holidays. Upon the whole manufacturers have had to wrestle with a falling market, and the sanguine prospects of the early spring, will, as a rule, be far from realized.

The month of November should have been one of the busiest of the season with the Toronto wholesale men, but owing to what was practically a break down of the car service of the G. T. R. there has been quite a large falling off in the business done as compared with previous months or the same month last year. The demand has been fairly active, both for the local and western trade, but it has been impossible to fill orders with any degree of promptness, and in many cases orders have been cancelled. It was stated by a general freight agent of the G. T. R. before the Board of Trade the other day that the receipts of the G. T. R. in Toronto were largely in excess of the year 1888 up to Oct. 31st, 1889, but in November there was a falling off in the single item of lumber of 300 cars in fifteen days, proving conclusively that the car shortage complained of is an active grievance.

Although the weather for the past month has been very favorable for shipping by vessel the season of navigation was practically closed early in the month. Vessels begin to lay up just as soon as wages and insurance rates advance, and shippers find it difficult to obtain suitable vessels even at advanced freights.

The sensation of the month has been the action of the lumber section of the Board of Trade in regard to the shortage of cars. The situation became so desperate that the dealers composing the section called upon the council of the Board of Trade for assistance in obtaining relief. The result was the appointment of a committee of investigation composed of Messrs. E. Gurney, Wm. Christie, Robert Jaffray, Hugh B. J., Elias Rogers and J. Donogh. The lumber section appointed a committee of four consisting of Messrs. H. H. Cook, M. P., T. H. Willmott, Jas. Tennant and George Gall, to act in conjunction with the Board of Trade committee. The joint committee issued a circular addressed to all the leading lumber dealers and manufacturers asking for information as to the number of cars required to fill past orders, and the replies received when tabulated showed an actual shortage of over 2,100 cars on the Northern and Midland Divisions. The lumber dealers made out such a good case that the Board of Trade council immediately appointed a deputation to wait upon Mr. Hickson and urge the application of some remedy. The absence of Mr. Hickson from Montreal prevented the deputation from obtaining an interview, but the deputation met with Local Manager Wragge and discussed all the points very fully, and left him with the understanding that he would make a written report to the committee covering the whole question of car shortage and remedies that should be provided for it.

The action of the Board of Trade has at least had the effect of stirring up the Grand Trunk officials, and during the past fortnight they have endeavored to as far as possible accommodate the trade with the limited number of cars at their disposal. It has been shown also that by united action the lumber trade can make its influence felt and obtain a redress of grievances.

It is to be regretted that petty jealousies seem to prevent this harmony of action from being freely consummated. This was evidenced by the fact that when the Board of Trade deputation had their interview with Mr. Wragge, he exhibited to them letters from wholesale dealers in Toronto who had been most clamorous at the meeting of the lumber section, who apparently from fear of retaliation, assured the local manager that they were being amply supplied with

cars and had no cause for complaint. It is such weak-backed dealers who effectually prevent the lumber trade from obtaining the concession to which they are entitled.

SPLINTERS.

OUR attention has been called to an error in the last issue of THE LUMBERMAN which we take the first opportunity of correcting. In our mention of rafts and their contents passing down the Ottawa during the past season, where the number of cribs and feet was given it should have been cribs and pieces. Each piece averages 50 to 80 feet, which makes a wonderful difference in the total amount. The ordinary raft has 150,000 to 175,000 cubic feet, with 50 to 60 men one each.

In order to close up the business of W. R. Thistle & Co., they will offer for sale at public auction, at Pembroke, Ont. on December 4th., the Pembroke saw mill, the Chalk River saw mill with piling grounds, booms, piers buildings &c; about 120 square miles of timber limits; six million feet of sawn lumber and dimension timber, horses shanties, &c. See advertisement in another column.

Mr. F. J. Drake, of Belleville, Ont., is largely engaged in the manufacture of saw, shingle and lath machinery. Mr. Drake is the patentee of a number of machines, notably Drake's Patent Dauntless Shingle and Heading Machine, and Drake's Improved Shingle Edger, both of which are spoken of highly by those who have them in use. See his advertisement on another page.

GENERAL NOTES.

—McCuaig & Moorhead are getting out square timber and logs, up in Temiscamingue.

—James McCool, Mattawa, Ont., has sold out his store and will devote his time in the future to the lumber trade.

—Mr. Chas. McGibbon, Penetanguishene, has done a fairly good season's work, having cut about three million feet of oak, basswood, hemlock and pine.

—Messrs. McCuaig and Moorehead, of Bryson, have purchased from the E. B. Eddy company the latter's Black River timber limits. The limits are situated on the Black River, P. Q., and are about 100 square miles in area.

—The lumbering operations on the Upper Ottawa are being vigorously pushed, the season being very favorable for log making and square timber-making. The indications are that a great deal of square timber will be made during the winter.

—W. R. Thompson, of Teeswater, Ont. has cut this summer about a million feet of hardwood, of which he shipped 25 cars direct to Liverpool. He has also turned out 500,000 broom handles, the largest quantity made by any one firm in the Dominion.

—The lumber shipments at Miramichi, N. B., have closed for the season. The total export is 100,000,000 feet exclusive of pilings. Last year's exports were 73,000,000. The shipping amounted to 161 vessels of 115,000 tons, being 43 vessels and 35,000 tons more than last year.

—Messrs. Perley & Pattee are about to introduce a Glover steam logger, to be used on their Pettawawa limits. This is a giant machine, 28 feet long, weighing 12 tons, that can be driven by steam on a snow road, and is estimated to draw as many as 30,000 to 40,000 logs. The mechanism is simple. Nearly over the centre of the hind part of a double sled sits a small engine power, whilst the boiler is located in the centre. The boiler is of steel 5½ feet in diameter, 7½ feet high; and gauged to a pressure of 150 lbs. Either coal or wood can be used as fuel. There are 4 wheels on the driving axle each 4 feet in diameter, and weighing 3 tons, whilst a wheel in front acts as a helm. These wheels literally work in a steam box, and are heated by steam, so that when they pass over snow it is damped and compressed, and in cold weather immediately converted into solid ice. The chain running from the loaded sleighs may be hitched either to the frame itself or a foot and a-half higher. The speed attained is about five miles an hour, and it can be easily turned.

A saw mill in the township of Romney, owned by Samuel Fuller, of Leamington, Ont. was burned Nov. 1st. The mill had not been in operation for some time.

How to Select Good Timber.

Professor Rankin says. "There are certain appearances which are characteristic of strong and durable timber to what class soever it belongs. 1. In the same species of timber that specimen will in general be the strongest and most durable which has grown the slowest, as shown by the narrowness of the annual rings. 2. The cellular tissue, as seen in the medullary rays (when visible) should be hard and compact. 3. The vascular or fibrous tissue should adhere firmly together and should show no wooliness at a freshly-cut surface, nor should it clog the teeth of the saw with loose fibers. 4. If the wood is colored, darkness of color is in general a sign of strength and durability. 5. The freshly-cut surface of the wood should be firm and shining, and should have somewhat of a translucent appearance. A dull, chalky appearance is a sign of bad timber. 6. In wood of a given species, the heaviest specimens are in general the strongest and most lasting. 7. Among resinous woods, those which have least resin in their pores, and among non-resinous woods, those which have least sap or gum in them, are in general the strongest and most lasting. 8. It is stated by some authors that in fir wood that which has the most sap wood, and in hard wood that which has the least, is the most durable—but the universality of this law is doubtful. Timber should be free from such blemishes as clefts or cracks radiating from the centre; 'cup-shakes' or cracks which partially separate one annual layer from another; 'V'upsets, where the fibres have been crippled by compression; 'V'ringalls, or wounds in a layer of the wood which have been covered and concealed by the growth of subsequent layers over them."

Terra Cotta Lumber.

"Terra cotta lumber is destined to assume great importance in the future as a building material than during the last two years," says a Chicago builder. "Its cheapness as compared to brick and wooden material for many purposes, with its positively fireproof qualities can not help but make it a prime favorite with builders of the better grade of structures everywhere, both in this country and abroad. It is cheaper than brick, weighing only about one-third as much, and for many purposes is vastly superior. One thing to recommend it to lumbermen is the fact that a large percentage of the waste product of the sawmill—the sawdust—can be profitably utilized in its manufacture, sawdust being shipped at the present time from Muskegon to Chicago for this purpose. At all of the leading mill centres many dollars could be annually saved by the organization of local companies for the manufacture of this modern product. While there may not be 'millions in it', yet there is sufficient inducement to justify every millman at least to investigate its merits, Chicago builders are largely utilizing it."

Machines for Veneering.

The largest machine for cutting veneers yet constructed is in operation in California, and is said to shave up logs 10 feet 8 inches in length with the greatest ease. The shavings which come from these machines are great, long sheets, in each of which is almost the entire wood of a big log, and from a single shaving is frequently made a mass of 2,000 to 5,000 berry boxes. The logs are first cut into the desired length, then placed in a large steam box and left for twelve hours subjected to the effects of exhaust steam, which so softens the wood that it can be cut into thin sheets desired without checking or splitting into fragments; when sufficiently softened, the log is pushed into an immense lathe and revolves in front of the great blade, exactly as a strip of wood in a turner's lathe revolves toward the chisel. After the water-soaked outer portions of the log have been trimmed off a number of small, chisel-like instruments are adjusted, with the sharp cutting edges pressing against the log which make parallel lines partly cut through the whole length of the great white streaming shaving—these lines are the points of bending when the boxes are formed, and make that operation nothing more than a simple mechanical movement, as the wood bends readily at the partial cuts and forms the angles of the boxes. All but the core of the log is turned off into this long shaving, 1-20th of an inch in thickness and nearly 1000 feet long, which is folded and broken into convenient lengths or strips, and of the width for a box. The last step in the manufacture is the fastening of the bottom and side strips together by an instrument called a stapler.