

EXTENSIVE MARKET FOR SPRUCE.

THE fact has been previously referred to in this journal that larger quantities of spruce than heretofore have this year been sold for shipment to the east coast of England, which is practically a new market for this lumber. The price of Baltic lumber, which formerly supplied the enormous ship-building and other industries of the east coast, is now so high that buyers are looking around for a suitable substitute at a lower price, and are turning their attention to the spruce lumber of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

For the purpose of investigating the prospects of obtaining a continuous supply of spruce, Mr. James Miller, representing Robson, Miller & Co., lumber importers, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, recently paid a visit to Canada. To a representative of the St. John Sun, Mr. Miller gave some interesting particulars of the situation. He said:

"The spruce ports are now on their trial. The consumption of lumber on the east coast of England is enormous. Hitherto the supply of whitewood has come from the Baltic. The mills there are more careful in manufacturing lumber and make it in sizes to suit the trade. The objection to spruce has always been that your mills do not make as good a class of lumber, or make sizes to suit. But the increase in the price of Baltic lumber has turned attention to spruce. What your manufacturers must do is to turn out well sawn lumber in the sizes needed—and nearly all sizes are required. I have talked with some of your mill owners. They say they have been accustomed to cutting 3x7, 3x9 and 3x11 in. deals, and driving their mills. In my opinion, if they would cut more slowly and get more out of the logs it would be better for them and for the lumber interests of your province. It would certainly give them a better chance to secure and hold the east coast market. The gang saws that I have seen in your mills are about or nearly twice as thick as those used in the Baltic mills. When one of your mill owners told me what logs cost, I was very much surprised that so much of the logs should be wasted by the use of thick saws.

"In order to get and hold a market, in these days of quick and world-wide communication, the wants of the market must be studied and suited. The Baltic people have been careful to do that. Your people now have the chance. I believe that four or five thousand standards of spruce have already been booked for the Tyne alone. Remember, spruce is, comparatively speaking, unknown on the east coast. It must make its way, and careful manufacture of all lumber sent there is the only means of cultivating the market. The people here have it in their own hands.

"There is an immense variety of sizes suitable to the market, ranging from 4x3/4 inch boards to 12x4 inch planks. Such sizes as 4x2, 5x2, 5x2 1/2, 6x1, 7x1, and 2 1/2 and 3 inch thicknesses in various sizes are required. There is a very large demand for 2 1/2 inch stuff.

"This (2 1/2 inch) is the size used by shipbuilders, and the ship-building industry is extremely active. All the companies and firms are filled up with orders for the year for steamers, while in the yards building warships there is three years' work booked. Though built of iron and steel, there is a great deal of lumber used in ceiling and the internal fittings of vessels. In this work 11x2 1/2 inch stuff is used, and that is a size seldom asked for on the west coast. You must remember, and manufacturers must remember, that different markets want different sizes. What suits the west coast will not suit the east. What suits the east will not suit the south coast. The sizes used in house-building on the south coast, for example, are not the same as ours on the east coast. A market will not take any size you choose to cut. You must cut the size it needs.

"The activity in ship-building has caused a corresponding activity in house building, and this creates a further demand for lumber. The price of Baltic lumber is likely to remain high, owing to the enhanced value of the forests. Our firm import lumber from the Baltic, white pine from Quebec, pitch pine from the south, and also import from Vancouver. We do not see why New Brunswick and Nova Scotia should not have a share

in the trade of the east coast. It rests with the manufacturers.

"There are ports on the Tyne, Wear, Blyth, Tees and Humber, and interior markets like Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield and others, having an enormous consumption of lumber. Such cities as Newcastle, Shields, the Hartlepoons, Sunderland, Stockton, Middlesboro, Hull, Grimsby and others afford a large market."

NOTES FROM THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

[Correspondence of the CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

LOGGING operations in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia the past winter have been done on a much smaller scale than for a number of years, owing to the drop in prices in all markets where spruce lumber obtains, and the consequence is being severely felt in all lines of trade. The quantity of sawn lumber piled on the wharves and at the mills ready for shipment is much greater than usual at this season of the year. Some few mills have small stocks of logs carried over, which, with the small cut of new logs, will give ample stocks to supply the demand.

At present it is impossible to get a quotation for English deals, and it is reported that there have been no vessels chartered for Bay of Fundy ports for same. There will be a few cargoes for French and Mediterranean ports shipped from mills at Apple River, Point Wolfe and Alma, early in the season, by C. T. White and the Alma Lumber Co. The price delivered is fixed, but vessels are not yet chartered, so it is not known yet what the net price will be.

In New Brunswick the cut is estimated to be about one-half the average quantity; a number of the large operators say they would not have cut a tree but for the fact that they had a lot of families depending on them for work, and even then they were not anxious that the workmen should over-exert themselves, as from the outlook the trees would be more valuable growing than in the pond. A few of the St. John river lumbermen, such as Hale & Murchie, Donald Fraser & Sons and R. A. Estey, Fredericton, who log on Tobique, James Murchie & Sons, Edmundston, and A. Gibson, Marysville and Blackville, will get out about their usual quantities, as also will Hon. J. B. Snowball, of Chatham. The latter is making extensive alterations and improvements in his mill, which I intend giving you a full description of when completed. William Richards, Chatham, is also improving his mill, putting in the patent haul-up and making other changes in the line of economy in handling the product of his mill. E. Hutchinson, Douglastown, is also putting in the patent haul-up, and making some changes deemed necessary for economical working when the margin of profit on lumber is as small as it is at the present time.

Adams, Burns & Co. and Sumner & Co., Bathurst, will operate on a much smaller scale than last year—just enough to keep the machinery bright.

O. F. Stacey & Co., shingle mills, Bathurst, will operate about as usual. Mr. Stacey is in California at present for his health, and while there and in Vancouver will look into the shingle business and compare methods of manufacture there with those of New Brunswick.

Gray & Lawrence Bros., Charlo, N. B., are getting their usual stock of cedar for the season. This property is for sale, and several parties have looked it over with a view of purchasing. The firm have large lumber interests in Gardner, Maine, hence the reason for selling.

Kilgour Shives, Campbellton, one of the largest shingle and lumber manufacturers in New Brunswick, took occasion to visit the English and Continental markets during the winter and make himself acquainted with the wants of the different markets in the classes of goods he manufactures, and I will venture the assertion that if there is an opening for the lines he makes or can make, and in which there is a margin of profit, he will find it and supply the goods.

The shingle market in the United States is very low, which, with the re-imposition of the duty, reflects the want of animation in the business in Campbellton, and in fact all New Brunswick and lower Quebec where this is the staple business. The mill owners are going on with their work in the hope that the near future will open up bright. Hope, like capital, is a grand thing to have, and I think lumbermen possess it to an extraordinary degree.

The early part of the winter was good for logging operations all through New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Some heavy falls of snow in February in the northern part resulted in about seven feet—while two and a half would

be the quantity in Nova Scotia. One who has never seen seven feet of snow on the level in the woods can form but a very poor idea of what the New Brunswick and Quebec lumbermen have to contend with in this respect.

The cut of lumber in Cumberland County, N. S., is very much under the average of the past ten years, in fact some of the mill owners are seriously thinking of holding over their logs unless there is an advance in price; they claim that with the cost of sawing, piling up, insuring, interest, etc., and holding for a price, it would not be as good as to leave the logs in the pond.

Prescott, Gillespie & Co., Shulie, N. S., started in to get one and a half million, but are afraid they will have two and a half.

C. I. White & Son, Sand River, N. S., are large handlers of piling, which they buy anywhere on the shores of the Bay of Fundy, and ship to New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia and other American markets. Timber not suitable for piling is sent to their saw mill to be sawn into deals.

C. T. White, Apple River, N. S., is operating getting about four million feet for his gang mill. He has a portable mill sawing hardwood and some spruce; he will get about a million feet, six hundred thousand of which is hardwood. Mr. White also owns a good lumber property at Point Wolfe, in New Brunswick, where he will get about five million feet.

A. C. & C. W. Elderkin, Advocate, N. S., purchased the lumber property, mill, and all logs, lumber and supplies from C. F. & F. R. Eaton, Eatonville, in December last. They have about three million feet ready to drive when water comes. They also have a large steam portable mill at Advocate, in which they will saw one and a half million.

Moses Hatfield, Port Greville, has a water power circular mill in which he will saw during the spring eight hundred thousand, and in a steam portable mill at Fraserville will saw about as much more.

Girvin Elderkin has a portable steam mill which he will start in a few days sawing for H. Elderkin & Co., at Port Greville, N. S. The mill is about five miles from shipping point, and the deals are run down in a water sluice at very little expense.

At Parrsboro, where there was a very large export of lumber last year, and charters for thirty million feet made by the 1st of March, 1897, there is said to be now not one vessel chartered. Of course there will be considerable lumber go out from here, but at present lumber is quiet.

Pugsley Bros. mills at Five Islands and River Hebert have five million feet. Huntley & Fypps have one million feet. Newville Lumber Co., Newville, got out three million feet, with one and a half over from last year.

W. J. P.

The construction of the Manitoulin and North Shore Railway will join Manitoulin Island with the mainland. The island is richly timbered, and contains large quantities of pulp-wood, which will no doubt be utilized as soon as railway facilities are secured. There are many good water powers on the island.

"Use and Care of Band Resaws" is the title of a creditable hand-book published by W. B. Mershon & Co., of Saginaw, Mich. This is the third edition, and its preparation was rendered necessary earlier than was expected owing to the great demand for the second edition. The compilers claim that it represents a line of machines excelling anything so far attempted in band resawing machinery. The Standard, Perfect, Saginaw and Ideal resaws, special band edgers, and many other types of machines are nicely illustrated and described. As a treatise on the use and care of band resaw blades it should be of value to filers and mill superintendents.

A Canadian engineer has evolved a theory that forest fires are often started by the friction of trees rubbing against one another. He claims to have discovered an instance of that kind. While with a government surveying party in the far northwest, where forest fires are frequent, he happened to catch a tree in the very act of setting fire to itself and its companion trees. It had been partly uprooted by a windstorm, and leaned against the trees near, some of which were dead. Gusts of wind from the mountains caused the inclined tree to rub those against which it rested. This developed much friction, and after several hours the dead wood on which this friction was exerted began to glow, and at length burst into flame, and a fire which swept through miles of valuable timber was the result.