

NEW BRUNSWICK LETTER.

(Correspondence of the CANADA LUMBERMAN.)
 ST. JOHN, N. B., Dec. 16th, 1904.—The lumber industry in this vicinity is undergoing a period of inaction both in manufacturing and shipping circles; the mills have practically all shut down and shipments have been very light during the last fortnight.

During the past month a large quantity of English deal has been bought up by a local dealer. This quantity covers more than half the available supply. The present owner apparently has faith in a more favorable market in the near future and the feeling in general is that his expectations will be fully realized. The exact figure paid is not at present obtainable:

Cedar shingles have been moving somewhat slowly during the past month, a condition which is quite usual at this particular time of the year owing to the lack of stimulus in building circles in the New England States. The resumption of activity in this direction will, in all probability, see a change in prices in this line. It is an almost absolute certainty that this change will be in favor of the manufacturers, as it is conceded on all sides that the prices now prevalent are too low to stand much longer.

The past season has not been nearly so

productive to the manufacturers and sellers of shingles as was the case for the several preceding years. To-day there is a difference in the price of Extra Cedar Shingles of 40 cents per M. compared with the 1st of July last. This can be attributed to two circumstances—a substantial falling off in the consumption of shingles in the Eastern States (due to strikes, the high price of labor, etc.), and to an increase in the volume of importations from the Pacific coast. Whether or not this last will remain a vital condition or not is a question, but the feeling generally among those most interested is that next season will find the demand for the Eastern products just as great as it was one, two, three and four years ago.

The month of October brought a stimulus that enabled the local manufacturers to work off the greater part of their surplus stock of shingles, although this increase in demand caused no advance in prices. At present writing, with practically none being manufactured, six millions to eight millions would cover all the available shingles at this port. Perhaps two-thirds of these are of the higher grades; the balance will be disposed of in the provinces for local use.

Prices have not changed materially during the last two months. The last sales

of American shingles made brought the following figures f.o.b. St. John: Extras, \$2.75 per M.; Clears, \$2.30; 2nd Clears, \$1.85; No. 1, 90 cents.

THE OTTAWA VALLEY.

(Correspondence of the CANADA LUMBERMAN.)

OTTAWA, December 18, 1904.—The movement of lumber in the Ottawa district is at low ebb at present, but this condition of affairs is not causing any uneasiness. Dealers are busy stock-taking and are carefully refraining from taking on any new line. Business will be at a standstill until well after the new year. Manufacturers report the firm tone of the market continued with no indication of a break, and this in itself is a cause for a hopeful feeling. In no single line can a change from recorded prices be mentioned.

Reports from the limits show that the Fall has been an ideal one for log cutting, hardly an unfavorable day delaying the operations. The work is so well advanced that it is estimated that fully seventy per cent. of the contemplated log cut has been finished by the leading firms. A good depth of snow is reported on the limits, so that the work of hauling the logs should be taken up with vigor early in the new year. Leading firms such as

J. R. Booth, the W. C. Edwards Company, Gilmour & Hughson, the Hawkesbury Lumber Company, Pembroke Lumber Company, A. & P. White, McLaughlin Bros., and Shephard & Morse will cut nearly as extensively as in former years.

While the British market is looking more hopeful than at any time during the year, no sales of any consequence have yet been made for next season's cut of deals. One lot of the past summer's cut changed hands recently at a decline of five per cent. on the prices ruling a year ago, but this cannot be taken as any criterion. However, the British buyers having starved themselves on Canadian white pine, must ere long be stocking up again, so that an improvement may be looked for. On account of the condition of the British market, no contracts for next summer's cutting are expected before February, according to reliable information.

Backus & Company, who are about to build a large dam and develop a water power at Fort Frances, Ont., have asked permission from the Ontario Crown Lands Department to cut about 3,000,000 feet of timber on Stokes Bay.

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