

THE HARDWARE TRADE.

Wholesalers, both in Ontario and Quebec Provinces, report the hardware trade to be in a very satisfactory condition, and activity may be said to have increased perceptibly since the first of the month. Such lines as are required mainly in the summer are being re-ordered to a large extent, which shows that the demand has been even heavier than was expected. A very strong feature in the shelf hardware branch is the briskness in articles required for building. In nails, both cut and wire, the activity is marked. Prices, which are very firm, continue at \$2.25, f.o.b., Toronto, for the latter, and \$2.40 for the former. The stocks of screws are fairly large, but prices are firm. Horse nails remain as before. Bolts and nuts are meeting with good enquiry, and the mills have such large orders in hand that they experience some difficulty in keeping up with the demand. Values of cement have stiffened owing to the keen demand for building purposes. The general quotation is \$1.75 to \$2, f.o.b., Toronto, while, when wanted in a hurry, more is sometimes given. A somewhat unusually small quantity is coming in from the States. There is a particularly brisk demand for building paper. Spring hinges are meeting with a good request. Wire cloth is in the same state, and it is said there is some scarcity. Another line for which there has been a particularly brisk enquiry is poultry netting and some meshes have been rather scarce.

Similarly good reports come to hand regarding the state of trade in articles required mainly by farmers. Cordage is already in very brisk demand and Manila rope has gone up half a cent. Shovels and other tools have met with good enquiry, though now this has fallen somewhat to the normal level prevailing at this time of the year. For lawn mowers there has been exceptionally good demand. Guns and ammunition are somewhat on the quiet side, but tents, hammocks, and fishing tackle are exceptionally favored this year.

The activity in building lines of hardware is felt also in plumbers' goods. Supplies at present are fairly plentiful, but should building operations continue all summer as brisk as they promise now to do, it is believed by some they will scarcely prove adequate. Large orders are coming in for galvanized boilers to fit on kitchen ranges, while copper boilers are also wanted. For lead pipe, soil pipe, general fittings, etc., there is a satisfactory demand.

With regard to metals, conditions are very much as they have been ever since the opening of navigation. Domestic-made iron would appear to be taking the place largely of the English, which is considerably dearer. At the moment there is a sort of lull in pig iron, but the factories have still orders in hand, and there is no anxiety. Bar iron is steady. Tin plates are very active, both in Montreal and Toronto. Galvanized sheets are in rather more than ordinarily good demand. Copper and lead fluctuate considerably from week to week, but on the whole are in a satisfactory condition.

The state of the metal market in the United States may be gathered from the following extract from the "Iron Age."

Some uneasiness was at first caused by the announcement that some time since the associations in steel rails, plates, beams and steel bars had been dissolved. It has not, however, affected the prices of the commodities involved.

There has not been any of that savage price cutting which usually follows the termination of pools, with its readjustment of prices on undelivered balances of old contracts, which guarantee clauses bring with them. There are no indications anywhere that the deadlock between buyers and sellers of pig iron has been broken. Quite a fair tonnage is being placed to fill immediate requirements, and there is no indication in the form of demands to delay deliveries that consumption in the foundry branches is falling off. On the contrary, some of the jobbing foundries are confessedly doing a growing volume of work. Pig iron production is falling off, however. The United States Steel Corporation is blowing out some of its isolated plants. The steel market is easier, and some of the makers are hunting for orders here and abroad. This is in anticipation of the closing down of mills rolling the lighter lines, notably tin plate and sheets, either for repairs or for the adjustment of wages. Structural material continues in good demand, and some large-sized contracts have been awarded. Bars have been rather weaker, and in the west car-builders have purchased at least one large block at a concession. The season contracts for the agricultural implement interests are still hanging fire."

Advices from the United Kingdom say there has not been very much change in the iron situation this past month. The volume of trade is fairly large, and prices of Scotch warrants have shown an advancing tendency. Orders from the United States, however, which ordinarily bring great activity in British markets, have not been markedly large of late.



ACCOUNTS OF MUNICIPALITIES, ONTARIO.

Continuing our scrutiny into the report for 1904 of the Ontario Municipal Auditor, begun on 2nd June, we proceed to notice some of the particulars given as to the affairs of towns and villages in the Province. To deal with the hundred or more townships described would lead us too far afield. In cases where it is needful the auditor goes into detail, as, for example, in cases where citizens of a town have asked for an audit of that town's accounts, or where in the course of Mr. Laing's examinations or that of his deputies an official has been found behind-hand in his book-keeping or his balances, either consciously or unconsciously, full particulars are given. In most cases, however, the record is a condensed one, as for example, that of Durham and Glencoe. Thus:

Village of Glencoe, County of Middlesex.

Total receipts for 1903 were \$9,992.69. Total payments for 1903, \$9,892.40. Balance, \$100.29. Total assessment, \$307,435; collector's roll, \$6,173.02, nearly all paid. Tax rate, 20 mills on the dollar; total assets, \$20,929.55. Total liabilities, \$11,205.26. Treasurer gets \$50 per annum. Books well kept.

Town of Durham, County of Grey.

Total receipts for 1903, \$24,565.18. Total payments for 1903, \$21,932.46. Balance in Standard Bank, Durham, \$2,632.72. Total assessment of municipality, \$622,036, of which \$259,550 is subject to school tax only. Collector's roll, \$9,169.59. Paid in full. Tax rate, 21 mills. Total assets, \$36,327.82. Liabilities, chiefly debentures, \$50,693.96. Treasurer has been in office since 1892, and receives a salary of \$85 per annum, which is much too little for the quality of work given. I found the books of the municipality correct and well kept.

We have found it interesting to compare the rate of mills on the dollar (ten mills equal one cent) of