

## CURRENT TRADE CONDITIONS.

## ONTARIO

No effort is being made to handle lumber while storms and deep snow cover the entire province. The snow-fall on Monday last completely paralyzed traffic in Toronto and vicinity, and in the logging districts operations have been conducted with so much difficulty that many firms have taken their men out of the woods. Building operations, which have been quiet all winter, are yet at a standstill. This is plainly shown by the falling off in the number of permits issued in Toronto during the months of January and February. There is considerable building in sight, but little progress will be made until the weather becomes more favorable. Retail dealers will not place orders for lumber so long as consumers cannot build. The present demand, therefore, is confined largely to factory lumber, for which there is a moderate inquiry. Prices generally exhibit firmness owing to the fact that there is sure to be a shortage in the log supply. Hemlock is slightly higher, as offers have been made to purchase entire cuts at \$11.50 at the mill. For the reasons above stated the movement of hardwoods is light, but it is expected that the increased activity consequent upon the opening up of spring will be accompanied by an appreciation in prices.

## QUEBEC AND NEW BRUNSWICK.

The extraordinary inclemency of the weather has made it almost impossible to move lumber and has reduced building operations almost to the minimum. Prices of spruce lumber are not as firm as at last report. Offers received from Boston show a decline of about one dollar per thousand feet. British trade is also quiet and somewhat depressed. So far this season there has been very little done on contract with Great Britain. A few French cargoes have been sold but at prices not as satisfactory to the seller as those obtained last year. Notwithstanding these facts, producers of spruce are holding their output very firmly, and if the log production should be lighter than is now anticipated, there may be some improvement in prices later in the season.

A reliable authority estimates the output of logs in the Miramichi district of New Brunswick this year to be about the same as last season. It is claimed by some operators that it will be at least 10 per cent. short of last year's output, but as the stock of sawn and round timber wintering on the Miramichi is 50 per cent., or at least 15,000,000 superficial feet greater than that of the previous winter, this increase is likely to counteract any shortage in the log production.

The late snow storms with the cold weather has made the hauling of logs more difficult than usual. The increase of wages this year will amount to 20 per cent., which must be added to a similar increase in the years 1902 and 1903. It is thus plainly evident that the stock of logs taken out this winter will cost considerably more than ever before.

## UNITED STATES.

Veritable winter conditions have prevailed over much of the United States and the pine business has been seriously hampered thereby. The prevailing dullness has resulted in a slight weakening of

prices, a few timid persons having offered stock at lower quotations and thus established a precedent for others to follow. The Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association, at a meeting on February 23rd, adopted a new price list which more nearly corresponds to current selling values. Ordinary dimensions are reduced \$1 a thousand, flat grain flooring \$1.50 to \$3, and fencing and ceiling 50 cents to \$1, while prices of heavy joists and timbers remain unchanged. In white pine, low grade lumber is sought after to some extent and is firm in price, the higher grades being in less demand and slightly weaker. Box grades are almost out of the market, having been bought up by both dealers and box factories. The heavy call for the lower grades from manufacturers has taken all the scoots offered, they having been sold in North Tonawanda as high as \$13 during the past week. Eastern dealers say that they are doing much less business than at the corresponding time last year, this being attributed solely to weather conditions. Two important purchases of white pine are reported from Duluth, White, Rider & Frost, of North Tonawanda, having last week bought 7,000,000 feet of log run, and Penderis White about 12,000,000 feet of similar stock. Reports from the white pine logging districts state that the input from Ashland eastward is likely to be less than was expected, but in the Duluth and upper Mississippi river districts the intended amount will probably be secured, though that amount will be about 25 per cent. less than last winter.

Hardwoods have shown more strength than pine. No weakness is apparent anywhere, but on the other hand the outlook has improved. The lower grades are very scarce and will be almost unobtainable before the new cut is ready for the market. White ash, elm and oak continue to lead in point of activity, but all kinds are meeting with a very satisfactory inquiry considering the conditions. Maple is perhaps in greater supply than any other hardwood, and there is some demoralization in the maple flooring trade.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

British buyers of lumber are still pursuing a very cautious policy in respect to new business. Usually a large proportion of the season's requirements has been contracted for by the end of February, but this year very little stock has been arranged for and there does not seem to be much disposition to place contracts even now. The trade of the country is moderately good, although as in Canada unfavorable weather has rendered building operations difficult and the comparative tightness of money and the caution of investors combine to make the arrangement of finance a task by no means easy for the speculative contractor. There has been a heavy decline in the deliveries of lumber from the London docks. Taking the first seven weeks of this year the falling off is 8,000,000 feet. The volume of business in the near future will depend upon whether either shippers or importers are willing to make any concessions. It is argued that the prices asked by shippers are too high to encourage buying, but on the other hand the cost of production has been so great that asking prices cannot be materially reduced without wiping out the net profit.

Some business in pine deals has been done, chiefly for the better qualities, the lower grades being difficult to place. Contracts have also been made for a few cargoes of New Brunswick spruce on the basis of £6 5s. to £6 7s. 6d. per standard. The most favorable report comes from Cardiff, where it is said spruce deals are going rapidly into consumption, the stock held at that port being exceedingly light. At the last auction sale at London spruce deals and battens were weaker, 3x9 second quality bringing £10 10s. and £10 per standard; third quality 3x9, £9 10s.; 3x7 second quality battens, £7 15s. and third quality £7 5s.

## STOCKS AND PRICES.

Ritchie Bros., of Aylmer, Que., are reported to have purchased 340 square miles of timber limits near Mattawa, Ont.

D. R. Fraser & Company are asking for tenders for the rafting of about 2,000,000 ft. of logs from the bank of the river up about 50 miles to the mills at Edmonton, N.W.T.

The Rathbun Company's four camps in Haliburton County closed down last week owing to the excessive depth of snow and cold weather, which greatly retarded the work of cutting and hauling the logs. Two of the camps were located in Gooderham vicinity and two north of Wilberforce. As a result of the suspension of operations nearly a month earlier than usual, the cut will be much smaller than last year.

We quote as follows from the market report of Messrs. Clairmonte, Man & Co., of Barbadoes: "There has been no arrival with lumber during the fortnight. Our market is well stocked with white pine and spruce, but prices have been fairly maintained. The last sale of white pine for a cargo on the spot was at \$25 per thousand for merchantable and \$20 for second quality; spruce, \$21.17 for merchantable and \$17.17 for second quality. Last sales of Gaspé Long Cedar shingles were at \$6.01; Cedar Laying, \$2.05 to \$2.07 1/2."

Concerning white cedar products at Buffalo the American Lumberman says: There is a good demand for all cuts of white cedar, unless it be for shingles, which are rather undersold by Pacific coast products. The supply is not large. Sales of shingles at low prices are noted, but a jobber gives the following figures: Extra "A", \$2.90; "A", \$2.65; cedar butts, \$2.30, sound butts, \$1.40; culls, \$1.10. Ties, 55 cents for No. 1, 32 to 33 cents for No. 2; posts, 8-foot, 15 cents for 3 to 4 1/2-inch tops; 18 cents for 4 1/2 to 6-inch tops; 20 cents for 6-inch; 22 cents for 7-inch. Ten-foot lengths, 20 cents for 3-inch tops; 22 cents for 4-inch; 25 cents for 5-inch; 30 cents for 6-inch. Twelve-foot lengths, 35 cents for 5-inch tops; 38 cents for 6-inch. It now looks as though the stock of cedar will be pretty well sold out by the opening of the lakes.

## CANADIAN FORESTRY ASSOCIATION CONVENTION.

The fifth annual meeting of the Canadian Forestry Association will be held in Toronto on the 10th and 11th of March next, commencing at 10 a.m. The following papers have been promised: "Systems of Administration of Timber Lands in Canada," by Aubrey White, Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands, Toronto, Ont.; "Forest Management," by John Bertram, Toronto; "The Laurentides National Park," by W. C. J. Hall, Department of Lands, Forests and Fisheries, Quebec, P.Q.; "Forestry in Relation to Irrigation," by J. S. Dennis, Superintendent of Irrigation of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, Calgary, Alberta; "Forest Reproduction in Germany," by Dr. A. Harold Unwin (graduate of the Royal Saxonian Forest Academy, Tharandt, Germany), of the Dominion Forestry Branch, Ottawa; "Our Native Forest Trees and Their Use in Ornamental Planting," by F. G. Todd, Landscape Architect, Montreal; "Farm Forestry," by Professor Hutt, of the Agricultural College, Guelph. There will also be an address on "Forestry Education" by President Loudon, of Toronto University. A banquet will be held at the King Edward Hotel on Thursday evening, at which speeches will be delivered by prominent public men.

The programme for the meeting is sufficiently attractive to warrant the attendance of all persons interested in the subject of forestry, and it is expected that there will be a full discussion of the many valuable papers to be presented. Any lumberman who can make it convenient to be present will no doubt find the proceedings very interesting and instructive.

The business sessions will be held in the Parliament Buildings, Queen's Park.

The assignment is announced of John Inksetter, lumber dealer and saw-mill operator, Dundas, Ont. His liabilities are said to be fairly large.

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