

FOREIGN.

In the British market the tendency of lumber prices generally is upwards. This is due to the steady consumption and to the fact that the import season has closed. In spruce there has been a marked improvement and a general advance at all leading centres. At Cardiff and Manchester the advance is from 10s to 15s per standard. Spruce deals are again attracting greater attention on the east coast, and it is probable that some good-sized contracts will be entered into for next year's delivery. There were received at Glasgow this year from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia ports, a total of 54,800 loads of deals and about 20,000 loads of birch logs and planks, as against 53,000 loads of deals and 10,000 loads of birch last year. At Liverpool prices are also hardening, and there is every prospect of a good demand during the winter, so that high prices are likely to be asked for early shipments next year. At London good pine is selling freely. At the late public sales the stocks offered have consisted chiefly of common and inferior qualities, which are now well cleared off. It is noteworthy that the market is so firm at this season of the year, as increased activity is not usually looked for until after the holidays. Some uncertainty exists as to the price which first-open-water shipments will command. Very little new business has so far been placed, and for some reason importers appear to be holding off. We learn of one large contract of spruce for a Lancashire firm, to be shipped from Saguenay, Que.

STOCKS AND PRICES.

The schooner *Nimbus* sailed last week from Annapolis, N. S., for Rosario, with 755,478 feet of lumber.

The M. Brennen & Sons Company, of Huntsville, Ont., are buying quantities of pine, spruce and hardwood logs.

Herbert Taylor, of Cookshire, Que., has been given a contract to furnish 6,000 cords of pulp wood to the Cookshire Mill Company.

J. D. McArthur, of Winnipeg, Man., has sent a large gang of men to his timber limit on the Bird's Tail creek. His cut of logs this winter will be 3,000,000 feet.

This winter only 2,000,000 feet of logs will be cut on West river, at Sheet Harbor, N.S., compared with 9,000,000 feet last year. No logs will be taken out on the East river.

James Harnish, of Deep Cove, N.S., has just sold 6,000 acres of timber land in Lunenburg county to W. H. Murray and John Hamilton, of St. John, N.B., for the price of \$20,000.

J. A. Christie, of Brandon, Man., has purchased from John B. McArthur, of Winnipeg, the old McLaren-Shields timber limit in north-western Manitoba. The logs will be taken to Mr. Christie's mill at Brandon for manufacture.

The C. Beck Manufacturing Company, of Penetanguishene, Ont., have five large camps in the woods this winter. They expect to secure a large stock of logs, and in all probability their mills will be kept running constantly next season.

At a recent auction sale held by Hodson, Mabbs & Co., London, Eng., Canadian goods realized the following prices: Ex Wildcroft, from Montreal, 3-11 1st bright white pine, \$17. Ex Kirriemoor, from Quebec, 12-16, 3x9, 3rd quality spruce, \$7; 10-13, 3x7 and 8, \$6 3s 6d; 11-16, 3x6, \$6 5s; 11-14, 3x7-12, 4th quality spruce, \$6 12s 7d; 9-14, 3x5-11, \$5 15s; 10-16, 3x5-12, \$5 17s 6d.

The Kirby-Carpenter Company's three mills at Menominee, Mich., closed down last week, having cut upwards of 90,000-

000 feet of lumber. The company is operating five logging camps this winter, and will put in from 12,000,000 to 15,000,000 feet of logs. Besides these camps jobbers will get out for the company about 65,000,000 feet of logs.

A rumor has been current that the Rat Portage Lumber Company intended building a new saw mill at Winnipeg. This report is now confirmed by the manager, Mr. D. C. Cameron, who makes the following statement: "If the Winnipeg and South Eastern Railway be completed next year to Rainy Lake, I will advise my company to establish a large log cutting and lumber industry in Winnipeg, and have secured an option on certain property in Point Douglas, east of Louise bridge. We will build a mill to employ at least three hundred men, and one that will cut from 20,000,000 to 30,000,000 feet each season. This will supply the city of Winnipeg and district and points along the line of the Northern Pacific Railway. Points where we do business along the Canadian Pacific Railway in the province and the Territories, as far west as we go, will be provided for by the mill at Rat Portage."

BUFFALO AND TONAWANDA.

[Correspondence of the CANADA LUMBERMAN.]

There is much improvement in the lumber trade, all branches combining in reports of better prices and a better demand than the late setting in of winter would be supposed to warrant. If the up-turn of this branch of the trade is real and continuous, it means a great deal, as lumber has the name of feeling any change last of all the industries. We are generally under the impression that the long awaited prosperity is at hand, and lumber is doing what it can to make this a certainty.

The activity in car building is one of the features of the improvement. All of the car shops have started up with such vim that the price of lumber that is used in them has gone up materially. Some of the dealers report an advance of \$3 in yellow pine car sills, and other lumber used for this manufacture has risen also.

The lake trade in lumber has continued much later than usual, and the fact that the port of Buffalo received 27,000,000 feet of lumber and 25,000,000 shingles during November, which is often a slack month in this branch of the lake trade, is sufficient proof that dealers are at last convinced that it is going to pay to buy lumber to hold. The improved demand of late will reduce the stocks of pine, both in Buffalo and Tonawanda, so that neither port will have any more than an average stock, if it does that. Tonawanda has not received nearly as much as it sometimes does, and such big firms as Smith, Fassett & Co. report sales of late heavy enough to reduce their stocks very materially. Buffalo, which is a light shipper of lumber by canal, sent east 5,200,000 feet in November, which is about a boat load a day.

But for the giving out of the big Black Rock yards of Arthur Hill & Co. and the Holland & Emery Company, there would have been more lumber stocked in Buffalo for the winter than usual, for several of the up-town firms have more than they had one year ago. The Arthur Hill yard has now practically gone out of existence, all of the lumber having been sold sometime ago, and the Holland yard has not laid in much stock. It was the severe falling-off of the custom planing mill trade of these two yards that brought the Plummer mill to extremities, and drove it into bankruptcy.

The box makers are the most active members of the wood-working trade, and most of them are reporting an increase of custom at a time when it is common to reduce force and wait for spring business. There is so much demand for boxes that some of the mills are still obliged to turn away orders, and none of them are slack or likely to be right away. But for the advance of all sorts of box lumber there would be good profit in the business, but the fact is that so many concerns have gone into the making of boxes that profits were at one time next to nothing.

I find that there is an uneasy feeling in the air on account of the expected scarcity of all sorts of pine lumber before long. It is already a fact that hardwood is so difficult to keep in stock that it is practically sold as soon as it is bought, and something of the sort is looked for in pine. Only from the south is the sentiment against the reduction of the tariff on lumber at all unanimous. Many of the northern dealers who were so eager to shut out Canadian lumber are now more than willing to see it come in again. But the south sees in it a strong competitor of the woods peculiar to that sec-

tion, and it will fight free trade with all its might.

There is a good supply of Pacific coast shingles laid in for the winter, considering the scarcity of all shingles of late, and much effort has been made to add to the supply of pine. Though the entire stock cannot be called large, it appears to be larger than it has been, and the price is fairly good.

The general all-round demand for hardwoods continues, and the opening of the south-west, though late on account of the continuation of yellow fever quarantine, will soon add to the scant stocks in that direction. There is no poplar of account to be had yet, and the demand for it is so good that it will be a long time before it is plenty again. All regular hardwoods are scarce, and will remain so right along now. The supply is too light for any of them to become really plentiful.

T. Sullivan & Co. are sticking close to ash and elm, with additions of special lots of other hardwoods that happen to come their way. They reported a month ago that they had doubled the sales of 1897.

There is a stir in the hemlock trade. Dealers are of the opinion that this lumber will be higher soon, and counsel holding off unless top prices can be obtained. The price of hemlock is so low that it has to be handled with care—that is, not handled at all between the producer and the consumer unless it is strictly necessary. There is considerable Michigan hemlock in the trade, but the Pennsylvania producers have got the handling of it down so fine, and know so well what the east wants, that western hemlock stays out of competition for the most part. Besides, the west is its own market, and is really paying more accordingly for lumber than the east is. The Atlantic seaboard has been very slow till of late. Just now there is a diversion on account of the preparation of the government to buy lumber in large quantities to ship to Cuba. It looks as though this move would alone be enough to advance the prices, especially as they are so strong to begin with.

BUFFALO, December 5th, 1898. J.C.

PACIFIC COAST LUMBERMEN IN CONFERENCE.

An important private meeting of the representative lumbermen of the Pacific coast, including the British Columbia mills, was held recently at San Francisco, the object being in connection with the contemplated alliance of interests in order to secure better prices for lumber. What brought the subject of a combination to a head again and resulted in the conference being held was the scarcity of logs. It has been recognized for a long time that the day would come when the supply of logs within easy reach of the coast must fail, but no one seemed to realize that it would come all at once; yet this is just what has happened. The logs on the coast are scarce, and now they have to be cut so far from the water that railways will have to be put in to bring things back to their normal condition of supply. The price of logs has advanced to \$6 and \$7, and they are scarce even at that figure. The result is that some of the mills have had to pay pretty heavy demurrage in some cases for vessels waiting to load. Other mills—the Chemamus, for example—have had a supply on hand from the old prices, and therefore can hold their own at the present price of lumber, which is nominally \$9. This condition of things, however, will not likely last for more than five or six months, by which time logging railways will be in operation and the price of logs will fall. Even then, however, it is confidently expected by lumbermen that the price of lumber will not drop again to the old figure, which left no profit at all to the mills, they only cutting to fill orders, so as to hold their customers till better times came to the industry. It is understood that at the conference most of the mills on the Sound and in British Columbia were represented.

Mr. Buckner's planing mill at Orrville, Ont., was totally destroyed by fire recently, at a loss of \$2,000. There was no insurance.

MILLMEN

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BUSINESS NOTES.

J. H. Dansereau & Co., lumber dealers, Montreal, have registered partnership.

Dame E. M. Thomas has registered proprietress of the business of E. L. Keene, lumber dealer, Sherbrooke, Que.

E. F. Sasseville & Company, lumber jobbers and traders in the province of Quebec, are reported to be financially embarrassed.

The stock of lumber held by J. M. Hall, Winnipeg, Man., has been taken over by the Rat Portage Lumber Company, and the business will probably be closed out.

The assignment is reported of Lelebre, Mantha & Laperrriere, sash and door manufacturers, Montreal, with liabilities about \$40,000. A meeting of creditors will be held on 9th inst.

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