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THE OUTLOOK FOR VESSELS.

The Kingston, Ont., *Whip* of a recent date says:—

There is considerable difference of opinion in regard to the opening of navigation and the marine trade. Some vessel men do not think the outlook is all bright, or that business will increase as the season advances. There are others who say that the vessels will be kept moderately busy, that there will be considerable freight to handle, and that some thing like living rates will be paid. Already in American ports the indications are favorable, and charters at Chicago are higher than they have been at this date in three years. "I know for a fact," said a vessel owner, "that Dunham's fleet have been chartered, some to go to Georgian Bay and some to go to Buffalo. The rate to Buffalo is 5½ cents per bushel on wheat, a figure higher than has been paid in very long time. I am also told that higher figures have been obtained by other vessels. A few days ago I read that charters to Oswego at 5½ cents per bushel was refused. That was higher than the rate paid during the whole of last year. Another thing I know, that more vessels have changed hands in Chicago and Detroit during the past three weeks than have changed in as many years previously."

The ore trade promises well. More furnaces are going in the States now than heretofore, and of course the best Canadian ore will be in demand. Considerable of the article will be shipped from Kingston. Vessels that have received only 70 cents per ton for carrying ore from Escanaba to Ohio ports have been chartered this year at \$1.10 per ton. There will also be a good deal of phosphate handled here. Some of it will be carried across the lake, while considerable will go to Montreal en route to Europe.

Of lumber the sales have eclipsed those of many previous years. More lumber will be sent from Ottawa to Oswego by the Rideau Canal than ever before. Then there will be a good business in posts and ties. As far as square timber is concerned, much of that which came from upper lake ports will be carried by steam barges and consort. Sailing vessels are not now given much of this freight. "The steam barges can handle it cheaper than we can," said a well-known captain. "Ten years ago a timber dealer would charter 100,000 cubic feet for a schooner, which would keep her busy the whole of the season; but now they can get that quantity handled at one trip by the barges and their consorts, and get the stuff to market early in the year." A vessel-owner has chartered his craft from Toledo to Kingston for four loads of timber at \$50 per M cubic feet. This a remarkable low rate. "I imagine," said Captain Booth, who was seen after the others had spoken, "that the marine business will be quick after navigation opens."

The longshoremen of Oswego have fixed the following schedule of rates for handling cargoes: All vessels and barges of 300,000 feet capacity and over, 25 cents per thousand for the entire season; all barges and vessels under 300,000 feet capacity, 20 cents per thousand until August the first; after August 1st, 25 cents per thousand; shingles, four cents per thousand; lath, five cents per thousand; timber, board measure, 35 cents per thousand; hop poles, \$3 per thousand; heading, 15 cents per thousand; hardwood 30 cents per thousand; posts, 30 cents per cord; stave bolts, 35 cents per cord; blocks, 30 cents per cord; cedar ties, 1½ cents apiece; all other ties 2 cents apiece; telegraph poles five cents each. Captains here, who have examined the list, say that the rates are such that they cannot pay, and they advise that in handling timber, etc., the contracts be made f.o.b. in and out, thus letting capital and labor fight the thing out.

Mr. Davis' shipyard is a busy one. The steam barge *Freemason* has been remodelled as to upper works; two steam yachts are being finished, to be ready for service in May. One of them is for Mr. Miller's use at Peterborough. A large sail boat has been built for Dr. Clarke. The yacht *Laura* has been lengthened and in part remodelled.

The str. *Rideau Belle* has been lengthened 16 feet, giving room for an addition of four state rooms and a ladies' cabin. A compound engine, from a Detroit model, being manufactured for her by McEwen & Son, of Kingston, will greatly increase her speed, and make her more popular than ever. She will run to Smith's Falls on the Rideau, connecting with the steamer *Olivo* for Ottawa and Montreal, thus making a through line on a most picturesque route. Captain Noonan, of the *Rideau Belle*, will make it very pleasant for passengers and tourists. He will be assisted by Captain Fleming, formerly of the steamer *Gyp*.

At Breck & Booth's wharf considerable repairs have been made to the schooner *F. J. King*. She has been altered from a two-masted to a three-masted vessel. New decks have been added, and such other improvements made as will make her a first class vessel. The cost has been about \$3,000. The schooner *Jessie H. Breck* has also been overhauled and repaired and will come out with a new suit of canvas. Her old sails were destroyed by the fire in Lewis' chandlery store. Captains of the vessels are: King, Capt. Griffin; J. H. Breck, Capt. E. A. Booth, jr. The schooner *Breck* will clear as soon as the ice disappears, for Oswego, where she will load coal for Hamilton, bringing back a cargo of timber.

Extensive repairs have been made to the schooner *W. R. Taylor*. She has new decks, deck frames and other needed requirements. About three thousand dollars have been expended upon her. The schooners *White Oak*

and *Herbert Dudley* have also undergone needed repairs.

The expenditure in fitting up the steam barge *Tecumseh* and her consorts, the *M. C. Cameron* and *Cavalier*, will reach over \$6,000. The work has been under the supervision of Capt. Theo. Allen. The officers of the crafts are:—*Tecumseh*, Capt. Manson; *M. C. Cameron*, Capt. J. Miller; *Cavalier*, Capt. Anderson.

The captains of the other vessels in port are: Schooner *Annandale*, Capt. Patterson; schooner *Folger*, Capt. Dandy; schooner *Grantham*, Capt. Simmons; schooner *Oliver Mowat*, Capt. J. Saunders; schooner *Herbert Dudley*, Capt. J. Parsons; schooner *White Oak*, Capt. Joseph Dix; schooner *W. R. Taylor*, Capt. James Dix.

Capt. R. Coutts, of Bowmanville, has been engaged to command the schooner *Acadia*, Capt. Wellbanks, who was in command last year, has opened a lumber and coal yard at South Bay.

A Montrealer will ship over 1,500 tons of iron to the west. The iron will be brought to Kingston on barges and transhipped for its destination into vessels.

A REMARKABLE LUMBER RAFT.

The *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* says:—The only raft of lumber that ever ran from the mouth of the Wisconsin river through to New Orleans was started in June, 1867. There was 1,100,000 feet in the raft. It required over two months to complete the trip and cost the owners over \$1,500 aside from the cost of pilots which was nearly \$500. There was a change of pilots three times— one running from Wisconsin to St. Louis, one from St. Louis to Vicksburg, and one from there to New Orleans. There was a crew of thirty men upon the raft, and they slept and took their meals on the raft. Thousands of people viewed the raft after it had passed Vicksburg, for the people that far south had never seen a raft of such mammoth proportions, and long before it reached the Crescent City it was known as "the floating city." At New Orleans several tug-boats with city officials aboard and many prominent citizens came out to meet the fleet. A peculiar fact about this raft was that, after it was taken out on the bank at New Orleans, there was a sudden sharp advance in lumber figures at St. Louis, and the owners concluding that they could make more money out of it here than at New Orleans, had it brought back on barges and cars at a greater loss than it was sent down for.

The Michizan vessel men are endeavoring to form a combination for the purpose of delaying the shipping of lumber until what they regard as a remunerative price for freight shall be offered.

PECULIAR LUMBER SHIPMENT.

A Cumberland county, Nova Scotia, lumberman is engaging in a novel enterprise. He proposes to take about 3,000,000 superficial feet of piles, logs, spars, hardwood timber and boards to New York in the form of an immense raft. The dimensions are: Length, 410 feet; width, 55 feet; depth, 35 feet; and it will draw 21 feet of water. It is being built upon a well constructed cradle which will be launched with the raft and removed from it in the water, leaving the raft with the chains and binders to support itself. It is torpedo shaped at the bow and stern, and a cross section amidships will be in the form of an ellipse. It will, when completed, weigh 8,000 tons. The weight is so distributed over the four sets of launchways as to exert a pressure of eighty pounds to the square inch, which is about two-thirds the pressure allowable on ordinary launchways. When completed the cost will be about \$20,000.

It is proposed to tow the raft to New York by an "ocean tramp" or by two tugs as soon as launched, which is expected to be mid-summer. There have been occasional lots of spruce piles fastened together and towed to Boston or New York but they have been very small compared with the proposed raft and inquiry among Boston dealers fails to reveal that any shipment approaching anywhere near the size of the one proposed was ever before known.—Ex

"WORTHLESS" LUMBER.

Furniture makers are to-day using lumber which was called worthless ten years ago. Whitewood or poplar is used in immense quantities. The growing scarcity of our natural supply of lumber leads manufacturers to experiment with so-called "worthless" varieties. Cypress is working into favor for architectural finish, and we would not be surprised if some enterprising manufacturer should come out with a most desirable piece of furniture, possessing a delicate, finely marked grain, and yet consisting of nothing but unpretentious cypress. Hard pine makes a nice looking job when finished in good shape, but has the serious objection of being full of pitch. Cypress has much the same appearance as hard pine, but the pitch is happily absent. The wood commonly known as "gum" has been successfully utilized. It being worked into a great many forms, despite its well known warping qualities, which are represented as being so great that the lumber "will not stay in the same county two successive nights." We are informed that picture frames have been successfully made of gumwood, and rumour adds that the very qualities that have hitherto condemned it have been utilized in the manufacture of self-rocking cradles.—*Building*.

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